

# Reflection and Creativity of Preservice English Teachers: An Empirical Study

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## Abstract

Reflection and creativity are important quality for preservice English teachers and they are of great significance for the preservice English teachers to both become professional teachers and foster creative intellectuals. They are the focus of educational concerns and have attracted the attention of researchers. However, reflection and creativity of preservice English teachers are underexplored. The present research aimed to investigate preservice English teachers' status quo of reflection and creativity, detecting the relationship between them. Self-reflection and Insight Scale (SRIS) and Creativity Scale (CS) were employed as the research instruments. 293 preservice English teachers were sampled as the research subjects. The research found that the preservice English teachers enjoyed medium-high level of reflection and creativity, and that reflection positively correlated with creativity at low degree. Measures could be adopted to promote preservice English teachers' reflection and creativity.

**Keywords:** Preservice English Teachers; Reflection; Creativity; Empirical Study

## 1. Introduction

Education in the 21st century attaches great importance to the cultivation of core competencies, which reshapes the role of English teachers. Their responsibilities exceed merely imparting language knowledge and they need to become guides who can stimulate students' critical thinking and innovative abilities. Against this backdrop, reflection and creativity have been established as two indispensable core competencies in teachers' professional qualities (Baran-Lucarz & Klimas, 2020; De Leon-Pineda & Prudente, 2022). Reflection skills are necessary for teachers to be reflective practitioners (Demirel et al., 2015). Creativity is of great significance for teachers to both become professional teachers and foster creative intellectuals (Zhong et al., 2023). Preservice English teachers are no exception. For pre-service English teachers, who are in the

critical period of forming and solidifying their professional identities, the collaborative cultivation of these two capabilities is a cornerstone for the future vitality of education.

Despite the wide acknowledgement of the importance of reflection and creativity in teacher education, significant empirical gaps remain in the understanding of these fundamental issues concerning preservice English teachers. For one thing, there is a lack of systematic investigation into the actual status of preservice English teachers' reflection and creativity. For another, while it is commonly theorized that profound reflection can foster more creative teaching practices (Flavell, 1979), this crucial hypothesis within the preservice education context still lacks robust validation from empirical data. The ambiguity of the current state and the unverified relationship hinder the refinement of teacher education programs by obscuring precise targets for intervention.

This study aims to systematically delineate the landscape of reflection and creativity among preservice English teachers through an empirical investigation and to explore the relationship between them. Theoretically, this study could provide empirical evidence for the correlation between reflection and creativity in the pre-service stage, supplementing the theoretical system of teacher education. Practically, the research findings could illuminate targeted suggestions for optimizing preservice English teacher training programs.

## 2. Literature Review

The reflection of preservice teachers is the focus of educational concerns and it has attracted the attention of researchers. Some studies are concerned with investigating the reflection level of preservice teachers. With undergraduates as research subjects, Costa et al. (2020) surveyed the levels and nature of reflection of 13 preservice Chemistry teachers in Brazil. Based on the data collected by questionnaires and the autoscopies of their microteachings, Costa et al. (2020) found that the reflection in which the preservice Chemistry teachers were involved was of three distinct levels and six categories. Employing reflection reports and interviews as the research instruments, Turhan and Kirkgöz (2023) analyzed the qualitative data of 10 preservice English teachers in Turkish. The subjects were found to have been involved in lower level of reflection. Other studies are interested in the themes or cultivation of preservice teachers' reflection. For example, Bowling et al. (2022) revealed five themes of reflective observation based on the data analysis of a collective case study. In order to identify preservice teachers' self-efficacy for reflection, Hußner et al. (2023) investigated 248 preservice teachers who mainly majored in German, Sports and English. After a semester of systematic reflection on their micro-teaching experiences, the preservice teachers were found to have significantly improved their self-efficacy for reflection. Another study, Wang and Ko (2025), focused on the reflective journals of preservice teachers in China. The majors of the preservice teachers mainly consisted of math, language studies, science studies and primary education studies. Data analysis revealed that reflection tasks contributed to the reflection depth of the preservice teachers by promoting professional identity and pedagogical knowledge. Previous studies have investigated the reflection of preservice teachers in various majors. It is agreed that training facilitates to improve preservice teachers' reflection. However,

mix results are yielded when it is concerned with their levels of reflection. In addition, inadequate studies focused on pre-service English teachers' reflection.

Studies concerning preservice teachers' creativity are conducted. Some focus on preservice teachers' perspective on creativity. For example, Keiner et al. (2020) conducted the qualitative research to inspect 83 German chemistry preservice teachers' perspective on creativity. The results yielded positive attitudes to creativity and the significance of integrating it in Chemistry classroom. Conducting a qualitative research, Michaelidou and Pitri (2022) interviewed 15 early childhood preservice teachers to examine their perspectives on creativity. It was concluded that creativity was positively related to several qualities of thinking and to instructional design and application. Similarly, Hua and Yang (2024) performed a qualitative study to investigate preservice teachers' beliefs on creativity, creative individuals and creative learning environments. The subjects were 13 early childhood preservice teachers in China. The data of interviews revealed that the preservice teachers knew little about creativity and creative individuals but they valued the cultivation of creativity without constructing creativity-supportive environments in their actual pedagogical practice. More studies focus on the development of preservice teachers' creativity. For instance, Sánchez et al. (2022) adopted 198 preservice teachers in a masters' program as the research subjects. The preservice teachers' comments on creativity in the masters' final project were employed as the research corpus. Conclusions were drawn that their creativity was indirectly developed from the tasks of problem posing, argumentation, modelling, cooperative work and the employment of manipulatives. A study in 2023 by Park tested the effect of the Theory of Inventive Problem Solving on boosting South Korean preservice teachers' creativity and their creativity beliefs. The results proved the effectiveness of the instruction. With a quasi-experimental design, Novak et al. (2024) attempted to improve preservice elementary teachers' creativity in computer education. 76 subjects were divided into the experimental group and the control group, and the experimental group were instructed with a creativity-enhancement intervention. The research findings indicated that the intervention did work and that the experimental group outperformed the control group concerning person-, process-, and Scratch product-related creativity. Utilizing questionnaires as the research instruments, Zhong et al. (2024) quantitatively explored the factors influencing preservice teachers' creativity development. The subjects were 349 preservice teachers majoring in teacher education. According to the results, the factors having effect on the preservice teachers' creativity development included intrinsic motivation, teaching models, learner traits and teacher influence. Findings of previous studies confirmed the importance of creativity for preservice teachers and the boosting effect of instruction to creativity enhancement. However, the status quo of preservice teachers' creativity has been neglected, let alone that of preservice English teachers.

In summary, previous studies have explored the reflection and creativity of preservice teachers of various disciplines, depicting a general picture of their reflection and creativity. It has also been testified that preservice teachers' reflection and creativity could be cultivated and enhanced. However, conflicting results concerning the status quo of reflection are yielded by previous studies. In addition, previous studies seldom pay attention to the current situation of preservice

teachers' creativity. What's more, very little is known about preservice English teachers' reflection and creativity, let alone the relationship between them.

### 3. Research Design

#### 3.1. Research Questions

In order to detect the status quo of Preservice English teachers' reflection, creativity and the relationship between them, three research questions were posed. They were as follows:

RQ1: What is the status quo of reflection of Preservice English teachers?

RQ2: What is the status quo of creativity of Preservice English teachers?

RQ3: What is the relationship between the status quo of reflection and that of creativity of Preservice English teachers?

#### 3.2. Research Subjects

The research subjects involved 293 English major students in a Normal University in the North of China. They were preservice English teachers, covering freshmen (N=110), sophomores (N=135) and juniors (N=48). As was seen in Table 1, the average age of the research subjects was 22.7 years old, and there were more females (N=262) than males (N=31).

**Table 1. Research Subjects**

	Number	Percentage (%)	Mean Age	Gender	
				Female	Male
Freshman	110	37.5	19.08	105	5
Sophomore	135	46.1	20.14	124	11
Junior	48	16.4	19.42	33	15
Total	293	100.0	19.62	262	31

#### 3.3. Research Instruments

Quantitative research, which is characterized by structured and objective methodology, is conducive to generalizable conclusions. The present research employed a quantitative research method and questionnaires were adopted to detect the status quo of reflection and creativity of the preservice English teachers.

##### 3.3.1. Self-reflection and Insight Scale (SRIS)

In order to investigate the preservice English teachers' status quo of reflection, Self-reflection and Insight Scale (SRIS) was adopted as one of the research instruments. The Self-reflection and Insight Scale (SRIS) was developed by Grant et al. in 2002. Having 20 items, it consists of 3 dimensions (subscales), which are Engagement in Self-reflection (ESR), Need for Self-reflection

(NSR) and Insight (I). It was adopted in the research as a 7-point Likert scale. According to reliability analysis results, the overall reliability of SRIS was 0.814, the reliability of the sub-scale of Engagement in Self-reflection (ESR) was 0.637, that of Need for Self-reflection (NSR) was 0.772 and that of Insight (I) was 0.592 (Table 2). Cronbach's Alpha Value higher than 0.8 signifies high reliability, that between 0.7 and 0.8 indicates good reliability and that close to 0.6 is marginally accepted reliability. The reliability analysis results illustrated that Self-reflection and Insight Scale (SRIS) and its sub-scales generally enjoyed good reliability, which means that SRIS could be used for the present study.

**Table 2. Reliability Analysis of SRIS**

Scales		Alpha
SRIS	ESR	0.637
	NSR	0.772
	I	0.592
	Total	0.814

Confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) was conducted to test the construct validity of the questionnaire SRIS. For good construct validity, it is generally required that  $X^2/Df$  does not exceed 3, that RMSEA and SRMR are both lower than 0.1, and that TLI and CFI are both higher than 0.9. According to the results, the value of  $X^2/Df$  equaled 2.446, that of RMSEA was 0.056, that of SRMR was 0.049, that of TLI was 0.912, and that of CFI was 0.907 (Table 3). The results indicated good validity of the questionnaire.

**Table 3. Validity Analysis of SRIS**

Indices	Threshold Criteria	Current Value	Result
$\chi^2$	-	357.137	-
Df	-	146	-
$\chi^2/df$	<3	2.446	Pass
RMSEA	<0.1	0.056	Pass
SRMR	<0.1	0.049	Pass
TLI	>0.9	0.912	Pass
CFI	>0.9	0.907	Pass

### 3.3.2. Creativity Scale (CS)

Creativity Scale was employed to investigate the preservice English teachers' status quo of creativity. The Creativity Scale was designed by the author. It is a 7-point-Likert Scale, which

consists of 19 items. It is made up of 4 dimensions (sub-scales), which are Creativity Behavior (CB), Self-efficacy of Creativity (SC), Creative Thoughts and Creativity Awareness (CTCA), and Creativity Intention (CI).

According to reliability analysis results, the overall reliability of the Creativity Scale (CS) was 0.963, the reliability of the sub-scale of Creativity Behavior (CB) was 0.902, that of Self-efficacy of Creativity (SC) was 0.923, that of Creative Thoughts and Creativity Awareness (CTCA) was 0.842 and that of Creativity Intention (CI) was 0.897 (Table 4). Cronbach's Alpha Value higher than 0.8 signifies high reliability, that between 0.7 and 0.8 indicates good reliability and that close to 0.6 is marginally accepted reliability. The results illustrated that both CS and its sub-scales enjoyed high reliability, which means the Creativity Scale (CS) could be used for the present study.

**Table 4. Reliability Analysis of CS**

Scales		Alpha
	CB	0.902
	SC	0.923
CS	CTCA	0.842
	CI	0.897
	Total	0.963

**Table 5. Validity Analysis of CS**

Indices	Threshold Criteria	Current Value	Result
$\chi^2$	-	394.679	-
Df	-	146	-
$\chi^2/df$	<3	2.703	Pass
RMSEA	<0.1	0.063	Pass
SRMR	<0.1	0.047	Pass
TLI	>0.9	0.917	Pass
CFI	>0.9	0.903	Pass

Confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) was conducted to test the construct validity of the questionnaire CS. For good construct validity, it is generally required that  $X^2/Df$  does not exceed 3, that RMSEA and SRMR are both lower than 0.1, and that TLI and CFI are both higher than 0.9. As was shown in Table 5, the value of  $X^2/Df$  equaled 2.703, that of RMSEA was 0.063, that of

SRMR was 0.047, that of TLI was 0.917, and that of CFI was 0.903. The results indicated that the questionnaire CS was of good validity.

### **3.4. Ethical Issues of the Study**

Before data collection, the preservice English teachers were asked for consent. Those who volunteered to answer the questionnaires were informed of the purpose of the investigation, their rights, the manipulation of the data and data privacy issues. They were also informed that they would answer the questionnaires anonymously and they were free to opt out during the data collection and that their answers would not be related to their grades. Informed consent was given by all the subjects.

### **3.5. Data Collection and Analysis**

To obtain the research subjects' responses about their status quo of reflection and creativity, questionnaires were employed to enable the collection of data. Before the administration of the questionnaire, the reliability and validity of the questionnaires were tested. Then, they were distributed to the research subjects in March, 2024. The questionnaires were in digital form and the subjects were required to answer the questionnaire online within a week. 297 questionnaires were collected, among which 293 questionnaires were valid.

After the data were collected, quantitative analyses were statistically computed with the software of SPSS 26 so as to inspect the status quo of the preservice English teachers' reflection and creativity and the relationship between them. Firstly, descriptive analyses were employed to examine the status quo of the preservice English teachers' reflection, namely, the mean obtained by the general scale and those obtained by the sub-scales of reflection. The Self-reflection and Insight Scale (SRIS) is a 7-likert scale. The higher a preservice teacher scores on the scale, the higher level of reflection the preservice teacher illustrates. Secondly, the preservice English teachers' status quo of creativity, which were represented by the mean of the general scale and those of the sub-scales, were detected by making use of descriptive analyses. The Creativity Scale (CS) is also a 7-likert scale. The higher score a preservice teacher achieves, the higher level of creativity the preservice teacher possesses. Lastly, bivariate correlations analyses were conducted to examine the relationship between the subjects' reflection and their creativity. The correlation coefficient of reflection and creativity was calculated, and so did those of the dimensions of reflection and creativity. The correlation coefficient varies between "-1" and "+1". "+1" means perfectly positive correlation and "-1" denotes perfectly negative correlation. The larger the absolute value of correlation coefficient is, the higher level of correlation is demonstrated.

## **4. Results**

### **4.1. Preservice English Teachers' Status Quo of Reflection**

The first research question was what was the status quo of reflection of preservice English teachers. In order to answer this question, Self-reflection and Insight Scale (SRIS) was employed and 293 preservice English teachers were sampled as the research subjects. They were informed in advance the purposes of the questionnaires. The results were shown in Table 6.



**Table 6. Descriptive Analysis of Reflection**

Scales		Number	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Standard Deviation
SRIS	ESR	293	2.17	7.00	4.6320	0.84255
	NSR	293	2.00	7.00	4.9192	0.84147
	I	293	2.00	6.75	4.1020	0.66668
	Total	293	2.79	6.79	4.5511	0.63556

As was shown in Table 6, the preservice English teachers enjoyed medium-high level of reflection. The mean of the general scale of SRIS was 4.5511, which was higher than the mid-point of the 7-point Likert scale, and so were the means of the three sub-scales. Among the three sub-scales, Need for Self-reflection (NSR) reported the highest mean ( $M=4.9192$ ;  $SD=0.84225$ ) and Insight (I) revealed the lowest mean ( $M=4.1020$ ;  $SD=0.63556$ ).

#### 4.2. Preservice English Teachers' Status Quo of Creativity

The second research question was “What is the status quo of creativity of preservice English teachers?” The 293 preservice English teachers were surveyed with the questionnaire Creativity Scale (CS) to answer this research question. They were informed in advance the purposes of the questionnaires. The results were shown in Table 7.

**Table 7. Descriptive Analysis of Creativity**

		Number	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Standard Deviation
CS	CB	293	1.60	7.00	4.9311	1.01578
	SC	293	1.00	7.00	4.8404	1.10723
	CTCA	293	1.75	7.00	5.0111	0.99446
	CI	293	2.00	7.00	5.1086	0.95167
	Total	293	1.94	7.00	4.9728	0.93473

As was illustrated in Table 7, the preservice English teachers reported medium-high level of creativity. The mean of the overall scale--Creativity Scale--was 4.9728 ( $SD=0.93473$ ), which was higher than the mid-point of the 7-point Likert Scale of Creation Scale (CS). The mean of Creativity Behavior (CB) ( $M=4.9311$ ;  $SD=1.01578$ ), that of Self-efficacy of Creativity (SC) ( $M=4.8404$ ;  $SD=1.10723$ ), that of Creative Thoughts and Creativity Awareness (CTCA) ( $M=5.0111$ ;  $SD=0.99446$ ) and that of Creativity Intention (CI) ( $M=5.1086$ ;  $SD=0.95167$ ) were all higher than 3.5, the mid-point of the scale. Among the four dimensions, Creativity Intention (CI) reported the highest mean and Self-efficacy of Creativity (SC) the lowest mean.



### 4.3. The Relationship Between the Preservice English Teachers' Reflection and Creativity

The third research question was: "What is the relationship between the status quo of reflection and that of creativity of the preservice English teachers?" Correlation analyses were conducted to answer the question. The results were shown in Table 8.

**Table 8. Correlation Analysis**

		CB	SC	CTCA	CI	CS
ESR	Pearson Correlation	.174**	.069	.185**	.214**	.180**
	Sig.(2-tailed)	.003	.241	.002	.000	.002
NSR	Pearson Correlation	.345**	.285**	.387**	.419**	.402**
	Sig.(2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000
I	Pearson Correlation	.109	.041	.150*	.148*	.142*
	Sig.(2-tailed)	.062	.486	.010	.011	.015
SRIS	Pearson Correlation	.267**	.170**	.305**	.331**	.307**
	Sig.(2-tailed)	.000	.003	.000	.000	.000

\*\*Correlation is significant at the level 0.01 level (2-tailed).

\* Correlation is significant at the level 0.05 level (2-tailed).

The correlation analyses results revealed that the preservice English teachers' reflection positively correlated with creativity. As was shown in Table 8, low correlation was found between the mean of Self-reflection and Insight (SRIS) and that of Creativity Scale (CS) because correlation coefficient was .307. As for the four sub-scales, low correlation was found between Need for Self-reflection (NSR) and Creative Thoughts and Creativity Awareness (CTCA) (correlation coefficient = .387), and moderate correlation was revealed between Need for Self-reflection (NSR) and Creativity Intention (CI) (correlation coefficient = .419).

## 5. Discussion

This study explored the status quo of Preservice English teachers' reflection, creativity and the relationship between them. Results showed that the preservice English teachers enjoyed medium-

high level of reflection and medium-high level of creativity respectively. Low degree of positive correlation was detected between the teachers' reflection and creativity.

The preservice English teachers reported medium-high level of reflection ( $M=4.5511$ ;  $SD=0.63556$ ) and the highest mean of Need for Self-reflection (NSR) ( $M=4.9192$ ;  $SD=0.84225$ ) among the three subscales. According to Deci and Ryan (2012), intrinsic motivation could promote individual's personal growth. The preservice English teachers usually have intrinsic motivation to develop English proficiency, which contributes to foster deeper self-reflection. Besides, collaborative learning is generally encouraged in the university of the preservice English teachers. The preservice English teachers were encouraged to engage in self-assessment and reflection, which could account for the research finding that the highest mean was yielded by the sub-scale of Need for Self-reflection (NSR). Intrinsic motivation and collaborative learning are proposed as possible explanatory variables for the research findings concerning reflection. However, since these variables were not empirically measured in the current study, their role could be tentative and hypothesized. Hypotheses could be developed that intrinsic motivation is a key predictor for preservice English teachers' reflection and that positive correlation exists between collaborative learning and Need for Self-reflection (NSR) of the preservice English teachers. Future research could empirically test these hypotheses so as to provide more robust causal evidence for the findings of this study.

The preservice English teachers reported medium-high level of creativity ( $M=4.9728$ ;  $SD=0.93473$ ) and the highest mean of Creativity Intention (CI) ( $M=5.1086$ ;  $SD=0.93473$ ) among the four subscales. The preservice English teachers have the opportunity to contact with multiple languages and cultures. Diverse ideas originating from different cultures could enhance the preservice English teachers' creativity thinking (Earley & Ang, 2003). Aiming at achieving language proficiency and personal goals, the preservice English teachers might strive to seek various opportunities for creative expression. Therefore, multilingual and multicultural contact and achievement-oriented pursuit could be postulated as the reasons why the preservice English teachers illustrated medium-high creativity and the highest creativity intention among the four dimensions. However, since these variables were not empirically measured in the current study, their role could be tentative and hypothesized. Hypotheses could be developed that the multilingual and multicultural contact is positively correlated with the creativity of the preservice English teachers, and that their achievement-oriented pursuit of language proficiency and personal development is positively correlated with their creativity intention. Future research could empirically test these hypotheses to provide supporting evidence for the research findings.

The preservice English teachers' reflection was revealed to be positively correlated with creativity at low degree ( $r=.307$ ). Reflection and creativity are correlated (Flavell, 1979). When preservice English teachers reflectively assessed their learning experiences, creativity could be enhanced by reflection. However, the context where preservice English teachers reflected might hinder creative thinking, leading to low correlation between them. In the university of the preservice English teachers, reflection and creativity are cultivated independently. Activities aimed at cultivating reflection are often segregated from those designed to foster creativity; the levels and types of reflection fail to effectively lead to innovation. It is worthwhile to notice that

moderate correlation was revealed between Need for Self-reflection (NSR) and Creativity Intention (CI). When preservice English teachers felt the need for self-reflection, they might be more open to experimentation and growth, and then greater intention might be motivated to be more creative (Dweck, 2006).

## 6. Pedagogical Implications for Future Teacher Training

Pedagogical implications for teacher training could be developed based on the findings of the present research.

Firstly, it is necessary to take measures to enhance preservice English teachers' reflection. According to the results of the present research, the reflection of the preservice English teachers was of medium-high level. Future teacher training could adopt different strategies to reinforce preservice English teachers' reflection. To begin with, reflection practice could be incorporated into the teacher education programs. Structured reflective tasks, including reflective journals and discussions guided by reflection scaffolding, contribute to strengthen preservice teachers' reflection (Larrivee, 2000). Besides, future teacher training could cultivate reflection-supportive environment. Providing opportunities for preservice teachers to self-assess and set goals helps to construct reflective environment (Fendler, 2003). For example, cooperative learning is an environment conducive to self-assessment, goal setting, questioning and discussion, which is beneficial for reflection development. What's more, Contradictory Case Analysis Method could be introduced into preservice English teachers' education programs. Research findings illustrate that the preservice English teachers scored the lowest in the subscale of Insight, which indicates that the curriculum was insufficient in cultivating students' ability to deeply identify the essence of problems and establish cross-disciplinary connections. Contradictory Case Analysis Method could compel preservice teachers to examine teaching issues from opposing perspectives, thereby training their ability to discover underlying connections.

Secondly, it is obligatory to adopt strategies to strengthen preservice English teachers' creativity. Teacher training courses should be directed at enhancing preservice teachers' creativity (Baran-Łucarz & Klimas, 2020). Research findings reveal that the preservice English teachers illustrated creativity of medium-high level. In the process of future teacher training, creativity-facilitating tactics could be employed to enhance preservice teachers' creativity. "TRIZ" (teoriya resheniya izobretatelskikh zadach) (Shih et al., 2013), a technique for creative problem-solving, could be integrated into teacher education program. It helps to achieve innovative solutions by identifying and then overcoming the contradictions impeding the realization of ideal solutions (Kaliteevskii et al., 2022; Park, 2023). It has been verified as an effective tactic to improve preservice teachers' creativity beliefs and creativity (Park, 2023). Besides, inter-disciplinary knowledge could be integrated into the teacher education program. Inter-disciplinary learning is more engaging than traditional lessons (Baillat & Niclot, 2010). It will enable preservice teachers to make connections between different subjects, which requires them to think critically and creatively, inspiring creativity and innovation among the preservice English teachers. In addition, it is advised to systematically incorporate "micro-teaching innovation labs" into the teacher

training curriculum. The lowest score of Self-efficacy of Creativity (SC) among the four subscales signifies that the preservice English teachers lack experience in translating creative ideas into practice and obtaining successful validation. “Micro-teaching innovation labs” could allow students to implement their innovative lesson plans in a controlled environment and build their creative confidence through immediate, positive feedback.

Lastly, it is vital to integrate the cultivation of reflection with that of creativity. The research findings indicate that the preservice English teachers’ reflection was positively correlated with creativity at low degree. Future curriculum design could go beyond treating reflection cultivation and creativity cultivation as separate parallel objectives and actively build scaffolds to connect the two. For one thing, innovative directives could be embedded in reflective activities. When required to reflect on teaching practices, preservice teachers could be urged to not stop at “what happened” and “why,” but could be compelled to advance to the “how to innovate” stage. For example, “Based on this reflection, how will you redesign this teaching segment to stimulate greater creativity in students?” For another, reflective components could be integrated into creative practices. After preservice English teachers complete a creative task, they should be guided through “meta-creative” reflection. For example, “Looking back on the entire design process, which key reflection helped you break through the initial cognitive fixedness?”

## 7. Conclusions

The present research aimed to investigate the preservice English teachers’ status quo of reflection and creativity, detecting the relationship between them. Self-reflection and Insight Scale (SRIS) and Creativity Scale (CS) were employed as the research instruments. The research findings were yielded that the preservice English teachers enjoyed medium-high level of reflection and creativity, and that reflection positively correlated with creativity at low degree.

Measures could be adopted to promote preservice English teachers’ reflection and creativity in future teacher training. Above all, future teacher training could incorporate regular reflective activities, construct reflection-supportive environment and introduce Contradictory Case Analysis Method to enhance preservice English teachers’ reflection skills. In addition, “TRIZ”, interdisciplinary knowledge and “micro-teaching innovation labs” could be integrated into future teacher training program so as to promote preservice teachers’ creativity. What’s more, future teacher training program could integrate the cultivation of reflection with that of creativity.

## Author Contributions:

Conceptualization, Jiangtao Ma; methodology, Jiangtao Ma; software, Yifei Du; validation, Jiangtao Ma; formal analysis, Jiangtao Ma; investigation, Jiangtao Ma; resources, Jiangtao Ma; data curation, Yifei Du; writing—original draft preparation, Jiangtao Ma; writing—review and editing, Jiangtao Ma; visualization, Jiangtao Ma; supervision, Jiangtao Ma; project administration, Jiangtao Ma; funding acquisition, Jiangtao Ma. All authors have read and agreed to the published version of the manuscript.

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### **Institutional Review Board Statement:**

Ethical review and approval were waived for this study due to its nature as an educational, non-interventional study conducted in accordance with local regulations in China. No personal or sensitive data were collected, and all participants provided informed consent voluntarily.

### **Informed Consent Statement:**

Informed consent was obtained from all subjects involved in the study.

### **Data Availability Statement:**

The datasets presented in this article are not readily available because the data are part of an ongoing study.

### **Conflict of Interest:**

The authors declare no conflict of interest.

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