

Energizing Teacher Research

Edited by
Kenan Dikilitaş, Mark Wyatt, Anne Burns, Gary Barkhuizen



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Kenan Dikilitaş
Mark Wyatt
Anne Burns
Gary Barkhuizen

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IATEFL Research Special Interest Group



Kenan Dikilitaş
Faculty of Arts and
Education
University of Stavanger
Stavanger, Norway

Mark Wyatt
Department of English,
Khalifa University, Abu
Dhabi, UAE

Anne Burns
School of Education,
University of New South
Wales, Australia

Gary Barkhuizen
Applied Language Studies
and Linguistics, University
of Auckland, New Zealand

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The organization of an international annual conference, even a small local one, requires a lot of work because it takes considerable planning, effort, time and management. It needs to be started months, or even a year ago in order to make sure that everything is ready by the time it starts. To a certain extent, organizing a successful conference is mostly about the details of its publicity, web page and updates, registration process, evaluation of the abstracts, all the correspondence concerning abstracts, institutional confirmation letters, invitations, venue planning, permissions, reservations, cancellations or delays and rearrangements, programme schedule, booklet content and reviewing, editing and publishing it, copyrights, deadlines, reminders, sponsorship agreements, management and furnishing of the space, lunch and catering, accommodation, transportation, security issues and so on. As the Chair of IATEFL Research SIG İstanbul 2018 Organizing Committee, I would like to express my gratitude and cordial thanks to the following organizations and individuals (named in alphabetical order within paragraphs), for their support, which contributed greatly to the success of the conference:

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Elif Canan ONAT

The Head of Modern Languages Department

August 2019

Introduction

Kenan Dikilitaş, Mark Wyatt, Anne Burns and Gary Barkhuizen

This is the fifth and, for now, final volume in a series of annual collections of teacher research that emerged from IATEFL ReSIG conferences in Turkey. The first two of these conferences (in 2014 and 2015) were held in İzmir, a city on Turkey's Aegean coast, while the last three conferences (in 2016, 2017 and 2018) were held at Bahçeşehir University in Istanbul. These conferences aligned closely to the IATEFL ReSIG's goal to promote, in different national contexts, teacher research, that is, "research by English language teachers into their own practice, for their own purposes and those of their students" (Burns et al., 2017, p. 1). The ReSIG conferences in İzmir and Istanbul, initiated by Kenan Dikilitaş and supported by plenary speakers over the years including Dick Allwright, Derin Atay, Gary Barkhuizen, Anne Burns, Ayşen Güven, Judith Hanks, Angi Malderez, Richard Smith, Flávia Vieira and Mark Wyatt, have attracted participants from around Turkey and beyond. The participatory nature of the conferences and their focus on helping teachers to share their stories appears to us to have had a powerful energizing impact. As editors of this volume, we now discuss this energizing impact, drawing reflectively on theoretical insights and on our experiences of organizing and speaking at these conferences over the years.

Energizing language teacher research from an empowerment through action research perspective

The title of this volume, *Energizing teacher research*, can be read in two ways. On the one hand we are at a point in the field of English language teaching where the enterprise of teacher research in different parts of the world is searching for new ways to introduce teachers to its possibilities, and to engage them in processes of professional investigation, analysis and reflection. Here the question is: How do we continue to energize teacher research as an accessible professional activity for teachers? While

there are various models and processes available in the literature, such as (exploratory) action research, participatory practice, reflective practice, and lesson study, each of these is best achieved by being contextualised within local personal and institutional conditions and carried out through methodologies that fit with constraints on teachers' time, syllabus and assessment demands, and policy expectations. Given the many diverse contexts across the world in which teachers, and the teacher educators who work with them, may wish to empower themselves through research, it behoves us to (re)imagine new ways that teacher research can be energized at the local level. There are many examples in this volume showing how teachers and teacher educators in Turkey, as well as other countries, created innovative processes and resources to carry out this kind of contextually relevant research.

On the other hand, there is much growing evidence that teacher research is energizing for teachers – and here a caveat is in order – where it is carried out under conditions that support rather than oppress teachers. In this sense the question is: How can we continue to show evidence that teacher research energizes teachers and under what conditions? Various studies (e.g. Borg, 2013, Edwards & Burns, 2016) argue that, among the conditions that facilitate teacher research and enable teachers to be energized as researchers, are teachers' voluntary involvement in research, recognition and support from the institutions where they work, opportunities for collaboration and dialogue, access to the professional resources they need, and time to conduct research. Many of the authors in this volume address these issues and illustrate the value of ensuring that at least most, if not all of these conditions are in place in the institutions where they work in Turkey and elsewhere.

Despite its growth over the last two decades, teacher research in ELT is still something of a 'work in progress'. What we are beginning to learn, however, through contributions such as this volume, is that it has the capacity to provide deeply empowering and energizing personal and professional growth through which one's identity as a 'teacher-researcher' begins to expand.

Energizing language teacher research from a teacher identity perspective

When teachers participated in the IATEFL ReSIG conferences in Turkey, either as teacher-researchers presenting their studies or as active members of the audience, they were performing their language teacher identities. By 'performing' we mean that by interacting with others at the conference they were negotiating who they were as teachers. In the process, they displayed to others what kind of language teacher they were – for example, a teacher-researcher, a conference presenter, a supportive listener, an asker of

questions, a wide reader, an innovator, a school leader. These different kinds of language teachers are parts of our teacher *identities*. At the conferences all participants displayed or *projected* them to others, and in turn they were *recognised* by others. In short, being who we are as language teachers and teacher-researchers requires *identity work*.

And work requires energy! From our experience of engaging with teacher researchers at the IATEFL ReSIG conferences in Turkey the energy was palpable. The supportive environment at the conferences meant that teacher-researchers were very willing to claim identity spaces for themselves; in other words, to show who they are, to talk about the work they do, to listen to feedback, to learn from each other. Teacher-researcher identities came into contact and mingled. The result was vibrant conversations – during presentations, over lunch, at social events. Not everyone agreed all the time, and there were gaps to be filled in some of the research. Some ideas were contested, even resisted, but others were developed collaboratively and harmoniously. In all cases, the outcome was growth, or professional (teacher-researcher) development. The chapters in this book are clear evidence of this. These ideas are perhaps summed up in the following definition from Barkhuizen (2017). Note keywords such as ‘emotional’, ‘dynamic’, ‘foregrounded and backgrounded’, and ‘change’. All these words imply energy, and that is certainly what we experienced at all the conferences.

Language teacher identities (LTIs) are cognitive, social, emotional ... They are core and peripheral, personal and professional, they are dynamic, multiple, and hybrid, and they are foregrounded and backgrounded. And LTIs change, short-term and over time – discursively in social interaction with teacher educators, learners, teachers, administrators, and the wider community, and in material interaction with spaces, places and objects in classrooms, institutions, and online (Barkhuizen, 2017, p, 4).

Energizing language teacher research from a teacher motivation perspective

One abiding memory of the IATEFL ReSIG conferences in Turkey is of how deeply engaged, passionate and enthusiastic the participating teacher-researchers have seemed to be, as, lost in the flow of intense experience, they have presented and discussed their classroom-based research with peers who have seemed deeply interested. There has been much evidence, then, of ‘teacher enthusiasm’ (Kunter & Holzberger, 2014), which is an indicator of intrinsic motivation, i.e. engagement in the activity of teacher research for the love of it. Sources of this research engagement may have included enjoyment of the research process, pleasure in working collaboratively with colleagues and helping students learn, as well as the satisfaction that comes from sens-

ing one's one personal professional growth; such growth may have been experienced in areas such as deeper practical knowledge of language learning and teaching processes and of collaborative research.

One theoretical framework that can help us to make sense of the high levels of intrinsic motivation that have been evident amongst the teacher-researchers at the IATEFL ReSIG conferences in Turkey is Ryan and Deci's (2000) self-determination theory. Crucial for intrinsic motivation in this theory is the satisfaction of needs for competence, relatedness and autonomy, and one can see how conducting teacher research could have supported the satisfaction of these needs. Firstly, with regards to autonomy, the teacher-researchers have been presenting on topics that they would, in consultation in some cases with mentors, have chosen to research. Through the process of identifying a topic, formulating a research question, doing some background reading, developing research methods, collecting and then analysing data, and writing up or choosing how to present the research, they would have had considerable freedom to make meaningful choices, and therefore experience considerable autonomy. Secondly, many of these teacher-researchers have also been working collaboratively with colleagues while engaging interactively with their students with a view to helping them address their needs, and these processes would have strengthened their sense of relatedness. Thirdly, while focusing on teaching/learning and research tasks, these teacher-researchers would have been developing a more powerful sense of competence relating to their professional classroom actions, in the form of more positive teachers' and teacher-researchers' self-efficacy beliefs. Case study research conducted by Wyatt and Dikilitaş (2016) has documented such growth in the context of these IATEFL ReSIG conferences in Turkey.

Of course, it is unfortunately the case that many of the teacher-researchers presenting at the IATEFL ReSIG conferences in Turkey would have been teaching in environments where external pressures, e.g. in the form of teaching loads, can be high, potentially challenging their motivation. Nevertheless, while speaking at the conferences, presenters have tended to radiate considerable energy suggestive of intrinsic motivation, which can be explained by motivation theory. Since teacher research can help teachers feel more autonomous, relate more closely to their colleagues and students, and experience a greater sense of competence, their motives may more easily be intrinsic, which can encourage them to put more effort into conducting teacher research and to persist when facing environmental challenges. This greater effort, accompanied by a greater sense of well-being, in turn is likely to influence project completion, which then allows the teacher-researchers, at the end of a research cycle, to present their work enthusiastically to like-minded colleagues, a phenomenon we have witnessed at the IATEFL ReSIG conferences.

Energizing language teacher research within the context of education in Turkey

Although, as noted above, there are contextual restraints that can inhibit teacher research in Turkey, the activity has nevertheless spread in this context through a ‘ripple effect’ (Edwards & Burns, 2016). Teacher research is recognized in Turkey as providing positive experiences, beneficially influencing teacher and student learning. Teacher research initiatives across universities in Turkey, supported by the IATEFL ReSIG teacher research conferences, have led to:

- dynamic energy in the form of inspiration
- commitment to personal development
- dedication to writing up reflective accounts
- willingness to collaborate with national and international researchers
- desire to develop as teachers
- passion to positively influence students in various ways

The publications and conferences connected with the IATEFL ReSIG brought together numerous teachers from various parts of Turkey and beyond. This research-oriented initiative offered support for the development of teachers’ skills to engage in further collaboration and communication as well as in problem-solving, creativity, and flexibility, which research engagement inherently nurtures.

In the previous volume in this series (Barkhuizen, et al., 2018), we, as editors, concluded with an emphasis on two themes: Firstly, further developing sustainability in teacher research and secondly, developing teacher-researcher identities. Although these themes imply long-term investment involving multidimensional support, we can see that teacher research has already become a sustainable enterprise in various ways and at various levels of education in Turkey. For example, Akcan ([this volume](#)) and Eraldemir-Tuyan ([this volume](#)) report introducing their research experiences to pre-service teachers. So, it appears that teacher research has already been integrated into courses in the departments of English language teacher education at different universities, which demonstrates how the role of teacher research in energizing people and institutions is being fulfilled.

It is gratifying that more and more English language teachers in Turkey are interested in developing their skills and pedagogical capacities through engagement in research that they are conducting in their own classrooms with their own students. One effect of this is that the edited books in this series, through including teachers’ reflective research accounts, have become a powerful means of opening the doors of the class-

rooms in Turkey to the international world. This has not only led to interest in English language teaching in Turkey but has also motivated the teachers and researchers in this context to seek ways of integrating themselves into international communities of researchers and practitioners. Besides such effects, there might also be untraceable impacts of these teacher research initiatives which might have led to a range of impacts. We leave this to the interpretation of readers.

Positive impacts of teacher research have been achieved with the promotional support offered by the head office staff at IATEFL, support which has been invaluable for the organization of conferences, and also with the support of the IATEFL ReSIG, which has been a dynamic force in helping to develop an ecologically sustainable research community in Turkey. The IATEFL ReSIG has stimulated motivation to learn through research-based professional development.

A feature of the ecologically sustainable research community in Turkey that has developed around the IATEFL ReSIG events is a growing culture of research mentoring; some teacher trainers and teacher-researchers in this context have assumed research mentor roles (see chapters 2-5 in [Barkhuizen, et al., 2018](#)). The process of becoming teacher-researchers and research mentors can be immensely rewarding and energizing, as case study data documenting the development of three novice research mentors, who were leading the way in mentoring teachers to conduct research in their own institutions, has revealed ([Dikilitas & Wyatt, 2018](#)). Similarly, Cemile Doğan, whose work appeared in [Barkhuizen, et al. \(2018\)](#), reflected on her mentoring of teacher research as follows:

As the mentor of the study, I felt proud of my mentees' success in refining their thinking and attitude towards teaching and I was energized by the production of a three-month enterprise ([Doğan, 2018, p. 15](#)).

The organization of this volume

The chapters of teacher research presented in the volume are organized in the following way. In Section One, entitled '*Mentoring teacher-researchers and teachers*', experienced research mentors reflect on supporting forms of teacher research, including exploratory practice ([Hanks, 2017](#)), action research ([Burns, 2010](#)) and lesson study ([Cajkler & Wood, 2016](#)), with in-service and pre-service teachers, at universities in the UK and Turkey. In Section Two, entitled '*Developing as a pre-service teacher through research*', pre-service teachers reflect on issues such as reducing their own classroom anxiety, minimizing their own use of the learners' first language in class to increase students' exposure to the target language, working on learners' pronunciation, increasing their students' participation and helping these students to become more autonomous. In Section Three, entitled '*Sup-*

porting teachers' continuing professional developmental needs', the value of teacher learning through approaches such as collaborative teacher research and flipped instruction are highlighted, while there is also a concern for providing flexible curricula for teachers and students. In Section Four, entitled 'Supporting learners and learning', attention shifts primarily to the learner, with in-service teachers reporting on initiatives designed, for example, to involve their students in syllabus design, conduct research, and/or develop their higher order thinking skills; writing skills development, vocabulary growth and technology use are also addressed in these studies.

Final thoughts...

At the outset, we highlighted that this is the fifth and, for now, final volume in a series of annual collections of teacher research that have emerged from IATEFL ReSIG conferences in Turkey. We should emphasize that the main reason for the break is that the instigator of these conferences, Kenan Dikilitaş, has recently relocated to Norway, which made the prospect of a 2019 conference rather impractical. Of course, organizing a series of international conference involves considerable work and the support of main people, as acknowledgements, produced by Elif Canan Onat (the head of the 2018 organizing committee at Bahçeşehir University), testify. This intense hard work is nevertheless worthwhile. Enthusiasm for such conferences amongst teacher-researchers in Turkey remains high, and it is to be hoped that the IATEFL ReSIG events in Turkey resume in future years. As we have explained in this introduction, they have had a highly energizing effect.

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Section 1

Mentoring teacher-researchers and teachers

1. Developing a Teacher Learning Community through Exploratory Practice - **Assia Slimani-Rolls**
2. From In-service to Pre-service: A Comparative Look at my Action Research Mentoring Experience - **Seden Eraldemir-Tuyan**
3. Reframing as a Mentor-Coaching Technique in Initial EFL Teacher Education - **Özgehan Uştuk & İrem Çomođlu**

Developing a Teacher Learning Community through Exploratory Practice

*Assia Slimani-Rolls
Regent's University, London*

- ▶ Introduction
- ▶ Mentoring background
- ▶ The mentoring processes
- ▶ Developing as researchers and research mentors
- ▶ Looking to the future
- ▶ References

Introduction

Exploratory Practice (EP) is an innovative form of practitioner research designed to empower teachers and their learners to develop a better understanding of their classroom practice (Allwright & Bailey, 1991; Allwright & Hanks 2009). Following a one-year long project to enable language and business studies teachers to use the EP principled framework in their respective classrooms (Slimani-Rolls & Kiely, 2014), it became clear to the project leaders that in order to implement EP fully and develop a deep understanding of how it actually operates in a normal classroom environment, the teachers needed the opportunity to be immersed in its use for a longer period of time.

Mentoring background

To create opportunities for EP immersion, teachers were invited to join a two-year long project (2014-2016) whose main objective was to implement EP for professional development. Six language teachers came forward. Space constraint precludes providing a detailed description of the volunteering teachers' and project leaders' backgrounds, professional status and experiences. Suffice it to say for the purpose of this chapter that five of the teachers had a master's degree and all six had over 15 years each of teaching experience. Any research undertaken previously was integral to their MA studies. The project leaders were experienced researchers with involvement in prospective and in-service teacher education projects, some of which used EP as their theoretical framework. The participants were awarded one to two hours a week of time abatement depending on whether they were full-time or part-time university employees (For further details on the project participants, see chapter 4 in Slimani-Rolls & Kiely, 2018).

In advance of the teaching term, EP-based studies were sent to the project participants in preparation for a meeting to enhance their knowledge about EP, its principles and learner propositions as well as establish our working procedures. It was crucial to ensure that the participants' roles and the shared understandings of the EP vision, its underlying principles and theories of language learning were clear, including the time that we needed to create together these shared understandings (Malderez & Bodoczky, 1999). Hence, we considered ways of enhancing collegiality and agreed on the following research programme. First, it was recommended that the project participants engage with the institutional peer observation of teaching amongst themselves to create partnerships, and conversations about their teaching. Second, the participants asked where to find help when they encounter difficulties with their research so, as I was the on-campus project leader, I made myself available as a mentor to all six participants. Finally, both project leaders added that, besides the mentoring sessions,

we would meet every six weeks with the participating teachers as a group to discuss the challenges and opportunities that we experienced in our efforts to understand and implement EP in the classroom. This group discussion would be attended by the second external project leader to share his views on the overall work of the group and contribute to its advancement. This collaborative work between researchers and teachers is seen as a way forward (Allwright & Bailey, 1991; Borg, 2010) to help them to move between and cross the boundaries that separates their communities of practice (Tavakoli, 2015).

The mentoring processes

Following a literature review of ‘mentoring’, Roberts (2000) found that ‘the definitional clarity of mentoring is a problematic area’ (p. 150) but space limitation does not allow us to examine these definitional complexities. Hence, we consider the mentoring process ‘as being supportive of the transformation or development of the mentee and of their acceptance into a professional community’ (Malderez, 2009, p. 260). This process was used to provide personalised professional support in a climate that ensured trust and confidentiality to enable the teachers’ acculturation into researching their own classroom environment. In this respect, the mentoring process was offered on a voluntary basis and the mentor endeavoured to fit in with the teachers’ working schedules.

The teachers seemed, at first, preoccupied mainly with conventional research that required tremendous amounts of data which, some of them had produced in spite of the informational EP session that was specifically organised for them. They felt disempowered and expressed doubts about the value of their puzzles as research questions and the quality of their potential findings. To alleviate their perceived deficiencies in their capacity to engage in research (Borg, 2010), attention was focussed on the expert role that teachers play in the planning and managing of classroom activities which are still far from being understood in the field. These possibilities were highlighted, and respect was shown to the classroom achievements that they routinely accomplish and on which the field of English language teaching needs to build on to extend our understanding of classroom practice. As the mentor, I helped them also to ‘notice’ their practice. In this respect, Allwright and Bailey (1991) explain that being a good classroom teacher means being **alive** (my emphasis) to what goes on in the classroom’ (p. 194). Indeed, the skill of professional noticing is an important component of deconstructing core practices of teaching to make them visible in order to analyse them and better understand them.

At this point, it is useful to provide an example of the kind of EP approach adopted by the participants and how their research focus was mentored. John Houghton, one of the participating teachers who has written about the experience (Houghton, 2018),

aimed at understanding why he felt that he needed to improve his skills of teaching speaking. He felt that he was doing something wrong because he could not understand why very little, if any, of the vocabulary and grammar that he taught appeared, soon afterwards, in the students' performance. He videotaped a large number of his classes but could not find the time to view any of the vast data that he had accumulated. I asked him to talk about what represented, in his views, a good vocabulary lesson; the types of exercises that are generally recommended by the experts whose textbooks he used and the roles that his students played in his classroom interaction in order to enable him to 'notice' things in his teaching routine. Subsequently, John was invited to view one of his typical videotaped vocabulary teaching sessions in an attempt to identify some of the features that he had just reported.

John was relieved to confirm that what he did in his lesson bore much resemblance to the description of the events that he previously discussed. However, he also reported that he 'noticed' something interesting in some of the students' use of vocabulary. Although none of the items that were on his plan were employed, John noticed that some of the students picked up words that were originally used by their peers. These words were first used inadequately but, after few corrections by John, he heard them being used correctly later on in the lesson. Hence, the students used some of their peers' lexical items which emerged as a by-product of the task and amidst the interaction that happened amongst the students, thus, highlighting that the teacher is not the only target of attention or source of learning for the student. This occurrence served also to bring to the open the complexity of the relationship between teaching and learning which is often taken for granted when teachers 'transmit' information to the learners. As a result of this understanding, John reformulated his puzzle involving the learners as co-partners in the search for understanding 'why learners don't necessarily learn what is taught'. This instance is only one of the many that represent the work undertaken by the mentor depending on the participants' needs, personal circumstances and stage within their puzzle elucidation. John is currently studying for an MA (For further details, see [Houghton, 2018](#)).

As illustrated in the example above, the teachers clarified views, expressed apprehensions, doubts, misunderstandings but also understandings and breakthroughs during the mentoring sessions. With their permission, some of these realities were subsequently shared during the group discussions so all the participants, including the external project leader, were aware of the multitude of experiences that they are respectively experiencing. Hence, the participant-led group discussion was yet another valuable forum to weld teacher collaboration in order to stay on task and share their views, resources and strategies. Indeed, the mentoring partnership, together with the group discussion, boosted the resources that exist in relationships 'between individuals as opposed to the resources of a specific individual' ([Daly, Moolenaar, Bolivar & Burke, 2009](#)).

Furthermore, to consolidate the project participants' collaborative work established through the mentoring, peer observation of teaching and group discussions, an institutional workshop was organised for the teachers to present their preliminary understanding to the staff, including the senior management, to celebrate the end of the first year of the project. It was suggested that teachers use a poster presentational style with the view to reduce some of the pressures that presenting might generate. This activity opened up yet again varied ways and opportunities to mentor the participants to construct the posters. The design of the posters offered further space for the practitioners to collaborate with one another to continue to make sense of their puzzles in ways that were comprehensible. Two researchers and EP advocates - Judith Hanks and Inés Miller - were guest speakers and the event was mediated by the external project leader as rapporteur to stimulate the interactive, dialogic format that would be supportive, stimulating and professionally worthwhile for the practitioner researchers. Indeed, the exchanges that took place between them and the audience helped them to feel like researchers in their own right, capable of talking about their research. This was another new experience that stood proudly as a landmark in the teachers' minds, making them want to disseminate their work further.

During the second year of the project, the agenda was firmly in the practitioners' hands as several of them asked the mentor to help them write an abstract for an external workshop or a conference while continuing with the investigation of their puzzles. By the end of year two, all had presented their research, at least, at one event and had accepted the offer of being mentored to write about their lived experiences. In this respect, Burton (2009) explains that 'writing has the potential to function as a uniquely effective reflective tool' (p. 303) which research participants can incorporate into their teaching routine with the view of assisting their professional development. Hence the project was voluntarily extended by one extra year to take up further mentoring in writing up their narratives which led to a publication (Slimani-Rolls & Kiely, 2018).

In defining mentoring, Roberts (2000, p. 148) refers to Stammers (1992) who argued that there is no 'single animal' called mentor, rather a group of tasks associated with the role'. Indeed, the mentoring processes described above included a variety of tools and strategies starting with the one to one relationship between the practitioner researchers and the project leader which was enhanced by the peer observation of teaching and further consolidated by the group discussion. Individual, pair and group reflective work cohabited together, with oral and written communication being used to drive the mentoring processes forward. These processes led to a team-based professional development, whereby each group member had the opportunity to extend their learning about each other's world in connection to teaching, learning and research and, throughout three years of collaborative work, to create a professional community.

Developing as researchers and research mentors

The mentoring as described above enabled the development of a professional community in terms of collegial trust, conceptual change, disciplinary understanding and comprehension of students' perspectives. Throughout the duration of the project, only one participant missed one group work. By the end of the first twelve weeks, the practising teachers had regularly seen the mentor and established their mentoring needs. Mentoring was undeniably valuable in scaffolding the mentees' efforts to pursue their implementation of the EP principles in their respective classrooms. However, the participating teachers also remained clearly at the heart of this process-oriented enterprise as they worked on their own agenda, as advocated by EP, rather than following a pre-established schedule. The participating practitioners responded enthusiastically to working collaboratively and showed appreciation of working with experienced researchers (Czerniawski, Guberman & MacPhail, 2016), whose experiences demonstrated the EP vision, commitment and intellectual strength that were necessary to enable them to achieve transformation of their own views about teaching. Furthermore, Burns (2009) contends that 'participation in a community of inquiry is likely to have a more productive and lasting impact on practice than individualized learning' (p. 294).

As asserted by Houghton (2018), 'the [EP] experience has been a professionally enriching experience which has had a more profound impact on my thinking and my teaching than any other Continuing Professional Development opportunity in which I have participated' (p. 164). Indeed, the teacher practitioners rose to the challenges of questioning their practice, worked alongside their peers and students, turned their classroom activities into research tools, read the literature voluntarily to adopt a 'socioliterate' approach to teacher development, enhanced their understanding and disseminated it professionally internally and externally. The mentors learned from the mentees about the processes which enabled them to transform their views about the learners as co-partners and the use of normal teaching activities as research tools. The closeness of the relationship that I developed with the mentees enabled me to recognise where the mentees were heading with their development and to offer appropriately challenging tasks without preventing their creativity. Banister (2018), one of the participants in the process, notes 'both project leads were very generous with their time and set me back on track without removing my agency or negatively impacting my self-efficacy' (p. 147).

Looking to the future

For the participating practitioner researchers, this project was a life changing experience because the mentoring process created the necessary space for them to pursue collaboratively their investigative efforts and to develop meaningful learning situati-

ons for themselves, their students, their peers and the mentors who led the research processes. When teachers are given voice, time and opportunities for collaboration, they use them creatively. Things have progressed since the 1980s and 1990s when academics (e.g. Block, 2000) admitted to having failed to sustain their mentees' efforts to implement practitioner research. Today, universities require that their staff engage with research and scholarship and this requirement contributes to making them more amenable to undertake research. Block (2000) explains that 'still, the problem which remains is that such research is not likely to ever get beyond the very localized contexts in which it is carried out (unless, as Allwright suggests, exploring teachers put together poster presentations and are able to make a long journey to an international conference)' (p. 139). In this respect, see Dikilitaş & Hanks, (2018), Slimani-Rolls & Kiely (2018), and Hanks (2017) on the wider uptake of Exploratory Practice since it was designed over 25 years ago. Moreover, much work has been undertaken by professional bodies such as the IATEFL Teacher Research Special Interest Group, and academics (Barkhuizen, Burns, Dikilitaş & Wyatt 2018; Bullock & Smith 2015) creating online venues, workshops and conferences across the world to open up inclusive practitioner research to teachers and innovate new dissemination genres to make it feasible for them to engage with research. From this perspective, the future looks bright.

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From In-service to Pre-service: A Comparative Look at my Action Research Mentoring Experience

*Seden Eraldemir-Tuyan
Çağ University, Adana, Turkey*

- ▶ Mentoring background
- ▶ The TR mentoring process in pre-service
- ▶ My TR mentoring approach to tutoring pre-service teachers
- ▶ The instructors
- ▶ A comparative look at my TR mentoring experience in both contexts
- ▶ The pre-service teachers
- ▶ Final thoughts...
- ▶ My gains as a TR mentor in both contexts
- ▶ References

Mentoring background

My mentoring history dates back to 2014, when I attended the IATEFL ReSIG Conference in İzmir and met Kenan Dikilitaş who was leading a project focused on creating different *teacher research (TR)* teams across Turkey. Upon his invitation, as a staff developer who was craving some enthusiasm and innovation in-service teacher development, I wanted to involve my university as a partner of the project. Consequently, by creating our own project under my leadership, *teacher research* became a Continuous Professional Development (CPD) activity in the School of Foreign Languages (YADYO) at Çukurova University. Here, I had the chance to mentor three groups of EFL instructors during the three years that followed (see [Eraldemir-Tuyan, 2016](#); [Eraldemir-Tuyan, 2017](#); [Eraldemir-Tuyan, 2018](#)).

Following the last of these research mentoring projects, I started to work at a private university located in the neighbouring province, Çağ University, where I was going to be faculty member of the ELT Department. This would, I thought, add a new perspective to my TR mentoring experience since I was going to teach at the pre-service level where research engagement is relatively scarce. It was a new chapter in my career which also brought new responsibilities and experiences as a research mentor.

Changing my context and shifting my role as a TR mentor from in-service to pre-service, required me to retune my TR mentoring model. The need for this adjustment was due to my newly added responsibilities, first, as a tutor while delivering the Action Research (AR) course offered to the undergraduate students by the university, and second, as a supervisor during the practicum process, which required observing the student teachers' in-class teaching experience and giving constructive feedback to help them find their own ways in their future careers after graduation. Hence, this shifting role also made some valuable contributions to my professional growth as a TR mentor, helping me to understand how mentoring in-service teachers is different from pre-service teachers. In this paper, I first describe my TR mentoring process in pre-service, next specify my TR mentoring approach to tutoring pre-service teachers and then have a comparative look at my TR mentoring experience in both contexts, highlighting my gains and final thoughts as a TR mentor at the end.

The TR mentoring process in pre-service

When I started to work at the new university, the AR course had been delivered to the undergraduate students, customarily in the spring semester since 2016, as part of the 'My Story in Practicum (MySIP)' project (see [Şahinkarakaş & Tokoz-Göktepe, 2018](#)) and was based on 'the collaborative practicum model' (p. 41) in which student-teachers, AR mentors, university supervisors and school mentors work collaboratively. I took over the course tutoring and improvised the materials and the mentoring process, which I detail throughout the chapter.

Through the AR course, the students learned the basics of conducting action research, by focusing on their own teaching practice and preparing their action plan regarding an area of their teaching practice they would like to change or improve. Then, as a requirement of the course, they would present their plans to their peers and to the course tutor who also supervised the teaching practice. Only after clarifying their AR cycles, could the students start their implementations and collect their data. Student-teachers were also given critical feedback during their data collection process to help them interpret their collected data and see appropriate solutions regarding the issue they experienced in their teaching practice. As another requirement of the AR course, they were expected to write their reports in the form of assignments to be evaluated for their progress. In 2016, the MySIP project also encouraged the organisation of an in-house conference where students were provided with the opportunity to share their AR studies in the form of poster presentations at the end of the semester.

AR was part of the school culture when I joined the team and it was the third year of the MySIP project. In the 2017-2018 spring semester, the AR course started again with a total of 43 student-teachers who were placed into three different groups as A, B and C. I was tutoring two of these groups which consisted of 30 students, in collaboration with a colleague who was tutoring the other group. In the same term our students started their teaching practice. During this process, as one of their supervisors, I also had the chance to accompany their in-class teaching experience by observing, giving supportive feedback and exchanging ideas.

My TR mentoring approach to tutoring pre-service teachers

Facilitating the process of pre-service teachers' professional development requires understanding of what and how they think about their teaching process. In this respect, they usually need further guidance and assistance to link theory into practice, while also handling the issue they are researching in their practice teaching. Consequently, shifting my role from the previous in-service action research mentoring which included work even with MA and Ph.D. holders to tutoring an action research course for pre-service teachers required thinking about ways to attune to myself to my new context. When I became responsible for tutoring the two-hour AR course in pre-service, my aim was to facilitate this process by helping the students understand the nature of the steps they needed to follow to explore their teaching experiences during practicum. After four weeks of introduction to conducting AR, taking Anne Burns' book (2010) as the major reference, the remaining 10 weeks of the course never felt long enough for feedback sessions. These sessions were given to the student teachers as part of the AR course related to the puzzles/problems they experienced, mainly about the area of their teaching practice which they would like to change or improve within their individual AR plans. The university supervisors' team also collaborated to help student teachers find their way through their AR cycles, which helped a lot regarding the time constraints.

I tried to minimize the negative influence of possible challenges by implementing ideas from Freire's concept of dialogic pedagogy (Freire, 1994). This type of dialogue aimed to include the various elements suggested through this theory; always aiming to ensure trust, commitment, care, humility, hope, humour, critical thinking, faith and silence when required among the student teachers who were conducting their AR studies. In this way, as a teacher educator who was tutoring the AR course, I drew on my three-year TR mentoring experience to better serve the needs of my student-teacher mentees within my new context.

A comparative look at my TR mentoring experience in both contexts

Looking back at my three-year TR mentoring experience in the in-service context and considering my new one-year pre-service experience, I noted some differences. To analyse some of these differences, I made use of a survey which I gave the student-teachers towards the end of the semester (see [Appendix 1](#)).

Keeping the differing contexts of my mentees in mind, my discussion regarding the differences in my TR mentoring experience follows under two separate headings, relating to instructors and pre-service teachers. In this respect, the points I made can be classified into five main categories:

1. Compulsory versus voluntary participation
2. Availability of support
3. Time pressures
4. Professional gains
5. Choice of research topic

The instructors

1. AR as an in-service CPD activity was on voluntary basis. I believe, the voluntary participation contributed to the participants' perseverance to meet the various challenges faced during their individual AR processes as well as helping to retain their enthusiasm to develop professionally through AR.
2. In the in-service situation, there was a lack of financial and administrative support and limited encouragement. Therefore, what happened was that many did not volunteer. However, those who did were highly enthusiastic to participate in conducting research in their classrooms.

3. Instructors found time management a challenge because of their workload. Despite their volunteering attitude, it was almost impossible for me to meet the instructors weekly because of their workloads. As the mentor, I needed to create new spaces to guide them throughout their individual AR experiences, such as forming a WhatsApp group to communicate our progress, giving individual feedback sessions, organising informal coffee gatherings, and making room visits.
4. Related to their professional gains, the minority who participated found AR an effective tool for their professional development in terms of improving awareness of their teaching processes besides increasing their self-efficacy, self-confidence and motivation. They also claimed that they felt protected from burn-out by conducting AR and experienced enjoyment of teaching.
5. In terms of the research topics covered, in-service teachers preferred to study more student-oriented topics. These included teachers' feedback, peer-assessment creative writing, students' active participation, learner autonomy, training EFL students in effective study habits, goal setting, students' happiness, brainstorming techniques, cooperative learning, and peripheral teaching.

The pre-service teachers

1. AR was a compulsory course for the pre-service teachers. This situation made student-teachers feel under pressure as they had concerns about passing the course successfully. However, concerning the meeting times, the compulsory two-hour AR course given in pre-service had the power to bring me together with the student teachers every week as was scheduled in the program.
2. While mentoring student-teachers I was also a teacher educator who needed to enable student-teachers' understanding and learning in a compulsory AR course offered during their practicum. In addition, I was supervising them and giving supportive feedback throughout their personal and professional experiences. The supportive guidance and constructive feedback provided to the pre-service teachers throughout the compulsory AR course increased their motivation to conduct real research and helped them focus on real problems and develop themselves as future teachers.
3. In the practicum process, arranging to conduct AR within a limited time in a borrowed class was a big challenge for the pre-service teachers.
4. Related to the professional gains, pre-service teachers believed they had improved their vision of effective teaching through conducting AR during their practicum processes. They also considered AR an effective tool for their professional development in terms of gaining awareness of the teaching process, and increasing their self-efficacy, self-confidence and motivation along the way.

5. Pre-service teachers chose more teacher-oriented topics as their priority was to improve their teaching strategies. Accordingly, they focused on topics such as classroom dynamics, classroom management, student motivation, teacher motivation, teacher talking time, teacher perfectionism, teacher anxiety, teacher feedback, student engagement, and teaching methods and techniques.

My gains as a TR mentor in both contexts

Considering my experiences in both these contexts, I realized how effective mentoring could be in increasing the potential of a group of mentees. Working with the pre-service teachers strengthened my belief that a good TR mentor should take responsibility for providing trusting, supportive, respectful and safe environments to help mentees feel part of a community. This approach can aid personal and professional development, and lead to more fruitful outcomes. In addition, in both contexts, as an AR mentor I had the chance to develop my problem solving and critical thinking skills. My mentoring skills and knowledge were focused mainly on practical and pedagogical content, and knowledge of how to conduct research. I also practised eliciting, scaffolding, and giving supportive feedback to the participants in a way that was practical. Therefore, my self-efficacy in teacher research mentoring increased. The more I observed myself handling an issue successfully, the better I felt, and satisfactory outcomes made me feel proud. I was able to become more confident about the challenging issues I encountered, which also helped strengthen my resilience and positivity. My understanding of the needs, preferences, working styles and working paces of my mentees improved. As I began to understand my different roles as a mentor better, I realised the importance of giving psychological support to my mentees, whether they were in-service or pre-service teachers. This realisation led me to research and read more about this role, through which I discovered the concept of dialogic pedagogy (Freire, 1994). These ideas relate to teaching as well as to TR mentoring and adopting them in my approach to tutoring the AR course ensured satisfactory outcomes with the pre-service teachers.

Final thoughts...

As an academic and a devoted practitioner, I believe AR is an essential tool for professional development. My four-year experience of TR mentoring further justifies my belief. AR is not only a magical tool that can cure teacher burnout, but also an inspiring door which opens up more dynamic classrooms, achieves more effective learning outcomes and results in happier students. As a CPD activity in an in-service context and as a course during a practicum, AR serves the needs of participants by helping them to gain new perspectives, look for more creative solutions and become more

autonomous, while dealing with challenges to be faced. However, being a TR mentor who provides assistance and supervision to a large group of mentees is not always an easy process. In my experience, in both a pre-service and in-service context, the mentor's dialogue, the development of a positive and nurturing relationship with the mentees, and the establishment of an encouraging, supportive attitude are important for productive outcomes.

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Appendix 1

☺ SURVEY FOR EVALUATION ☺

THE EXPLORATORY ACTION RESEARCH PROJECT IN PRACTICUM AND THE COURSE COORDINATOR

Dear Student,

This survey aims to elicit detailed information about the processes you have gone through both as a senior student in this class and as pre-service teacher researchers in your own practicum classrooms. I would like you to include your experiences concerning your involvement in the AR course and my mentoring to the group as you perceive. As constructive feedback is an indispensable step to improvement and betterment, the information you provide will have an invaluable contribution to the improvement of the course content for the future as well as the construction/reconstruction of my mentorship qualities. Thank you very much for your collaboration ☺

Seden Tuyan

1. Please specify your gains or losses by taking this AR course and conducting exploratory action research in practicum...

My gains:

My losses:

2. How would you describe the course coordinator's role (Seden Tuyan) in supporting your action research process in practicum?
3. To what extent have I been able to address your questions and problems?
4. Could you please list some of the questions and problems that have emerged during the action research process?
5. Do you think my support influences you as a pre-service teacher this AR course? If so, how? Can you give a specific example?
6. At which stage of the project do you think my contribution to the research is more important?
7. What are the ideal characteristics of a research mentor (in our case the AR course coordinator) to you?
8. Considering your answer to Q7 how would you evaluate my characteristics as your research mentor (the course coordinator)? In other words, can you specify my positive and negative characteristics as a research mentor, and clarify why you like/dislike (or any kind of feeling...) them?
9. What can course coordinators do to support teacher research in a positive and practical way in pre-service teacher education during the practicum process?
10. If you have any other suggestions for improvement, please write.

Reframing as a Mentor-Coaching Technique in Initial EFL Teacher Education

Özgehan Uştuk, Balıkesir University, Balıkesir, Turkey
İrem Çomoğlu, Dokuz Eylül University İzmir, Turkey

- ▶ Background to the research
- ▶ The mentoring process: Settling in and moving on
- ▶ Responding to the critical incident
- ▶ Findings and discussion
- ▶ Looking to the future
- ▶ References

Background to the research

Our experience of mentor-coaching started with a doctoral dissertation project in which the first author is a Ph.D. candidate and the second author is his academic supervisor. Our intention was to understand the influence of teacher collaboration through *lesson study*, a teacher development model based on collaborative lesson planning (Hiebert & Stigler, 2005) and to revise the lessons to address a learning challenge or lesson study aim based on student observations (Cajkler & Wood, 2016). We believed that lesson study can address the drawbacks of top-down characteristics of teacher development in which the topics are decided by administrative superiors rather than teachers themselves. Additionally, as teacher educators working in a major undergraduate EFL teacher education program in Turkey, we believe that initial teacher education is composed of many critical phases and that arguably one of the most challenging of these phases is the school practicum. In the context of the current study, the school practicum takes place in a state school where a cohort of senior pre-service teachers are appointed to work with an experienced teacher, the mentor. The pre-service teachers follow the classes and create a portfolio composed of their observation notes and lesson plans, and the tasks assigned by their mentor and their academic advisor at university.

Many problems regarding the practicum that concern interpersonal communication, such as tensions between mentors and mentee or among mentees, have been reported by earlier studies (Hudson, 2005; Hudson & Hudson 2018). More specific problems in the Turkish context, such as the inability to engage in reflective practice or a lack of assertive communication among practicum agents, were also reported in the literature (for an extended meta-synthesis, see Ceylan, Uştuk, & Çomoğlu, 2017). In the current study, we aimed to overcome the interpersonal difficulties faced during the practicum by creating a more beneficial and collaborative practicum atmosphere by mentor-coaching. Thus, the present study reports the practicum experience of five pre-service EFL teachers who implemented a lesson study process coached by their supervisors. At the beginning of the second semester in the 2017-2018 academic year, we called for a cohort of senior pre-service teachers to participate in the EFL practicum process, which would adopt a lesson study approach in contrast to the more conventional practicum track used previously. The first cohort who answered the call was invited to a meeting in which the lesson study model and the research aim was explained. In the meantime, we applied to the ethical committee of the Graduate School of Education and received the necessary ethical approval for the research. We formed the first version of our study group from the five pre-service teachers who gave their consent to be included in the research and started the mentoring-coaching process. However, more surprising outcomes and unexpected challenges occurred later on in the study.

The mentoring process: Settling in and moving on

With the study group, we visited the practicum mentor who was randomly assigned. After we explained to the mentor about the dynamics of lesson study and our focus as the supervisors, she agreed to participate in the study group and to contribute to the whole process. In short, our study group was composed of the two authors as the mentor-coaches and practicum supervisors, one practicum mentor, and five pre-service EFL teachers. The five pre-service EFL teachers are referred to as the lesson study group as they more closely engaged among themselves throughout the research.

The following week, we were ready to begin the first phase of the lesson study. We used Cajkler and Wood's (2016) lesson study cycle and took it as a model for our structure. This model consists of five steps starting with identification of a goal in the teaching context. Later the group members collaboratively plan a research lesson to fulfil this goal. In the third step, one of teachers teach the research lesson while others observe the students with a specific focus on learning rather than the instruction. Next, the group discuss their experience, evaluate the research lesson through the feedback, and revise the research lesson accordingly. If needed, they re-teach the research lesson so that the recursive process is concluded.

Having decided what their goal for the whole process was, the pre-service teachers planned their first research lesson accordingly. They wanted to create an engaging teaching/learning atmosphere where the majority would participate rather than just a few bright and attentive students. One of the pre-service teachers would teach the lesson, while the others would observe the particular students in the class, whom they already knew from the previous lessons they had observed. While working on planning the research lesson, the group worked on the procedures and techniques to cover the content decided by the practicum mentor. They also wrote a couple of examples of activities and worked on the design collaboratively. However, when it came to preparing all the activities for the whole lesson such as, audio/video-recordings (if planned), and in-class assessment tools like worksheets, the group failed to maintain and sustain collaborative action, which led to communication breakdown among them.

Thus, collaboration was jeopardized at the initial steps of the practicum process as the members continued arguing and some of them even shared their intention to leave the study group. This was a critical incident for us as mentor-coaches, as it could have been a breaking point in the whole practicum process. However, we decided to see this incident as an opportunity rather than a reason to abandon the process. At this point, we decided to use a specific technique to help the participants to 'think out of the box', see the unseen, and discover ways to 'move on'. We implemented the technique of 'reframing' which is widely used within the framework of Neuro-Linguistic Programming (NLP).

Responding to the critical incident

In response to this crisis, reframing provided us with a useful way to proceed. Reframing, as Eckstein (1997, p. 420) explains, “is changing the conceptual and emotional setting or viewpoint in relation to which a situation is experienced”. The belief underlying the process of reframing as a form of encouragement is the NLP presupposition that “every behavior has a positive intention”, which redefines a negative interpretation into a positive one (Eckstein, 1997; Elston & Spohrer, 2009).

Reframing is grounded in the idea that people can change the content or meaning of a situation by what they choose to focus on and that the intention behind every behaviour is a good intention. For example, a student in class may complain: “I get annoyed when my teacher stands behind me while I am working”. However, this situation can be reframed as, “Is it possible she wants to help and does not know how to offer her assistance in any other way?” (Elston & Spohrer, 2009). Reframing, as one of the core techniques of NLP, enables a change in one’s perception of reality. Hence, when the meaning changes, the responses and behaviours also change (Bandler & Grinder, 1982).

As already mentioned, we had not expected to encounter such a communication crisis among our participants before we started the study. What we originally anticipated was how lesson study-oriented teacher collaboration may influence pre-service EFL teachers’ cognition and their practicum experience. However, when we decided to overcome the critical incident by using the reframing technique, the idea of the current research emerged. The research became a case study allowing us to understand how the reframing technique affected the lesson study group throughout the practicum process after the critical incident occurred.

Case studies are limited to a specific scope and a bounded system (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). In our case, our lesson study group’s practicum experience constituted a bounded system comprising individual beliefs about EFL instruction and a representative view of the department’s socio-economic background, which allowed us to reach an analytic perspective through our case (Kelly, 2017; Yin, 2014). Although generalizations cannot be reached in qualitative studies, analytic perspectives can be generated as a result of case studies, which allows for the exploration of significant constructs of teacher beliefs for alternative explanations.

Findings and discussion

After the critical incident, we, the researchers, met together several times, and once with the practicum mentor. Özgehan then organized a meeting with the participants to explain how we would assist them to move forward from the problems they were

experiencing. In this meeting, he introduced the technique that would enable the participants to create a new ‘frame’ about the importance of the practicum experience for their careers. Özgehan also asked for their additional consent, as following the critical incident, we felt that it would be ethical to revise the consent forms and statements of voluntary participation. All members of the study group agreed and gave their consent.

We collected our data in various ways to maintain triangulation for the case study. First, Özgehan kept field notes and a researcher journal that included tracking contextual information for each lesson study meeting such as venue, date, atmosphere, participants, and critical incidents. Moreover, member checking was applied to all data analyzed to avoid researcher bias. Second, the participants were asked to keep audio-journals. The audio-journals were personal and the participants made their entries on a weekly basis regarding what they thought, knew, and became aware of in the process. Later, the audio-journal entries and fieldnotes were used as stimulators to form semi-structured interview protocols for each participant. Third, we conducted an unstructured conversation with the practicum mentor to include her observations as a ‘third eye’. To analyse the data, we transcribed them orthographically and followed the steps of thematic analysis suggested by Clarke and Braun (2017). The thematic-analytic discussion of the data below demonstrate our attempt to look for the positive aspects introduced by reframing that came after the initial negative critical incident of the practicum experience.

For example, the following shows an example of reframing that emerged during a conversation with *Participant 1* after the critical incident. The excerpt is noted down and taken from the fieldnotes:

P 1:	“It has actually been a very beneficial experience for me. I understood more about people and learned how difficult they can be.”
Özgehan:	“It is very good that you see yourself having a new understanding. Do you really think the learning part of this experience is ended. Do you think you can learn even more?”

Below is another excerpt from fieldnotes exemplifying a reframing in a conversation with *participant 5*. This participant was selected to teach the first lesson, but because of a health problem, at the last minute he asked to be replaced, which created another reason for the discontent triggering the critical incident. Özgehan reported their conversation as follows:

P 5:	“I don’t understand why people hesitate to teach in the first lesson. I obviously can’t, so I asked for help. We have been trained for such difficult cases for four years. Now I see all this training was just in vain.”
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Özgehan:	“Is it possible that your peers want their first practicum experience to be a nice one and want to do their best? Maybe that is why they are concerned about it and see this as a venture.”
P 5:	“Yes, you are probably right.”

The examples above illustrate the register we adopted to transform conceptual and emotional viewpoints with regard to a controversial situation. Our data showed that a reframing register empowered by NLP resulted in a transformative practicum atmosphere. More specifically, the analysis of the data reflected two overarching themes, illustrating the possible impact of using reframing in our case study. The first was that reframing helped participants to gain a broader perspective on personal problems that occurred during the practicum, as illustrated below:

P 3:	“My enthusiasm is gone as a result of this dispute. I think your intervention that day showed us how serious the situation is. It was like seeing something that you think you know even much clearer, an illumination. From then on, I decided to do the best I can.”
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Another excerpt from the stimulated recall also hints at the new understanding and perspective that supported the participants’ motivation:

P 2:	“Your approach helped me to find the positive side of this bad experience and it worked. That certainly does not make me a Pollyanna (i.e. an excessively optimistic person); it helped me to see I need to prioritize the practicum above everything.”
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The second major theme showed that reframing helped the practicum group to maintain and sustain a collaborative working environment, as the following excerpt supports:

P 2:	“I learned what it takes to be a group. Our dispute and your (hesitates) I don’t know how to tell, suggestions maybe? They taught it to me.”
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This theme is confirmed by the practicum mentor who highlighted the successful working collaboration created during the practicum experience:

“I have been a practicum mentor for a long while. It is the first time I have seen a group that is so protective for one another and acts as a team.”

“Their communication with you (Özgehan) is unusual. It is generally the mentor that acts as a bridge over the gap between pre-service teachers and the supervisor. But, the trust and respect for you is different than others (practicum groups).”

Our findings indicated that teacher candidates' beliefs can be reformed by Neuro-linguistics, in that reframing can boost motivation among them and support healthy group dynamics. We, as the mentor-coaches, also expanded our understanding of how group dynamics work both in the practicum and lesson study. Our experience showed how crucial it is for mentor-coaches to be able to use reframing as an advanced interpersonal communication and management technique. Additionally, this experience was another example showing how critical it is for mentor-coaches to be open to new experiences throughout the process. Even though things may not develop as they were planned, every experience contains unique opportunities for mentor-coaches. This experience also showed us that when a researcher intends to engage in a lesson study oriented process as a mentor-coach, group dynamics and interpersonal communication of the group members play a major role on the outcome of the process: therefore, a mentor-coach should be able to use techniques like reframing, when necessary.

Looking to the future

Our experience as teacher educators has shown that the nature of the practicum is rather problematic for many pre-service teachers due to tensions in interpersonal communication. Instead of individual planning and teaching, a collaborative working atmosphere in which pre-service teachers learn from each other is now generally supported by universities. Yet, pre-service teachers are not always provided with the necessary professional and psychosocial support to be able to work collaboratively, as the lesson study model implemented in our study revealed. Therefore, this experience allowed us to see more clearly that the use of mentor-coaching during peer collaboration for pre-service teachers is essential, since many pre-service teachers risk losing their motivation and enthusiasm at the very beginning of their teaching practice, if help is not provided. We have come to realize that as academic supervisors we need to be more knowledgeable about the vision and the reality of mentor-coaching, which includes supporting and encouraging pre-service teachers in several ways such as reframing.

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Section 2:

Developing as a pre-service teacher through research

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Exploratory Action Research Practices in a Language Teacher Education Programme

*Sumru Akcan, Simge Büyükgümüş, Kübra Mor, Mukaddes Çoban
Boğaziçi University, Department of Foreign Language Education, Istanbul, Turkey*

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Introduction

Sumru Akcan

Action research requires teachers to engage in self-reflective and critical explorations of their own classroom settings in order to promote instruction for their learners. In action research, teachers identify a problem in their own teaching or classroom that they aim to improve. Teachers go through the process of “planning, action, observation, and reflection” in order to solve problems (Kemmis & McTaggart, 1988, p. 14). In this chapter, the pre-service English teachers engaged in exploratory action research (Smith, 2015), in which they aimed to understand their own strengths and weaknesses during the practice teaching process at their practicum schools. Exploratory action research is influenced by both action research and exploratory practice. Exploratory practice, as described by Allwright (2005), favours teachers and learners investigating their own ‘puzzles’ as opposed to engaging in problem-solving and aims at an improved understanding. In exploratory action research, ‘deep exploration of a particular area of concern precedes coming up with a plan for change and evaluating a new intervention’ (Smith, 2015, p. 42). This chapter presents three pre-service English language teachers’ exploratory action research projects which they carried out while taking a practicum course during the academic year of 2016-2017. The pre-service teachers first explored an area of concern in their own teaching practices in their practicum schools, in classes where they observed and taught, then developed a plan for change and evaluated their performance.

The practicum course in a language teacher education programme

The exploratory action research took place in the context of a practicum course offered by the Department of Foreign Language Education of Boğaziçi University. In this department, the students were provided with a foundation in theoretical and applied areas through courses in English linguistics and literature, the teaching of grammar and the four skills (reading, writing, speaking and understanding), first and second language acquisition, teaching young children, materials development, syllabus design, language testing, and foreign language teaching methodology to prepare them to teach English at primary, secondary and tertiary level. With a focus on the teaching of English as a foreign language, the program offered courses such as school experience and practice teaching (the practicum) in selected private and state schools as part of the practical application.

The practice teaching experience component at the Department of Foreign Language Education consists of two school experience courses and a practice teaching experience course. The pre-service teachers spend one day per week in cooperating schools, observe classes and do peer observations, teach in the classes they observe and discuss their experiences with their peers and university supervisors.

The pre-service teachers with an age range of 20 to 22 are considered as highly motivated students who are being educated to become teachers. Apart from the practice teaching, the student teachers also meet for a two-hour seminar course once per week, led by the university supervisor, to share their experiences in their practicum schools. The seminar classes aim to help pre-service teachers make connections between the course material and the classes they observe and eventually teach.

As a partial fulfilment of the practicum course, six exploratory action research projects were conducted by six pre-service teachers who were doing their practicum at different schools. The final product was presented at the IATEFL SIG Teacher Research Conference on June 2-3, 2017 at Bahçeşehir University. Three of the research projects are presented below:

Personalizing the classroom: students' participation and their level of motivation

Simge Büyükgümüş
Boğaziçi University

My research

During my practicum experience at a private school in Istanbul, working with 8th grade students who were 13-14 years old, I became increasingly concerned about students having motivational problems, with their attention continuously shifting away from lesson content. They were preparing for an important English exam before starting high school, and this exam would determine whether they needed a preparatory year or not. The lessons were mostly focused on grammar-improvement and involved considerable teacher talk and little personal interaction. I became curious as to whether allowing students to freely express their ideas in the classroom would add to their motivation and enrich their thinking processes and experiences, instead of pure grammar instruction by the teacher.

I decided to conduct an exploratory action research to investigate this matter. I wanted to encourage students to create their own content, produce their own examples, and/or share their own experiences and opinions. Thus, over the course of six lessons, I used activities such as:

- rewritings where students would create their own sentences - instead of working with pre-made sentences
- letter writing to a friend telling of an occasion they are going to organize
- playing a card game in groups where they would share their own likes and dislikes
- imagining interviewing a celebrity and rewriting the interview

At times, when I had to work from the grammar book used in the classroom, I still made an effort to get the students to comment on the texts and share their similar experiences or opinions on the different matters.

Then, after teaching the six lessons, I administered a questionnaire, asking students for their opinions about the experience. The results were positive, showing that most of the students did indeed enjoy at least a touch of creativity in their activities as well as opportunities to personalize learning. From my observations too, I noticed that students seem to pay more attention when a classmate is sharing something personal and respond in a more motivated manner. When I asked a student if and why this was the case, he said: “Because it feels like normal conversation. It could be something I do or think.” However, one other answer I received from a student stated that when there’s “too much” personalization in the classroom, “it feels like not a lesson.” When I asked the student to elaborate, she added that when there is a lot of personalized content in the lesson, she feels like she is not learning as much as their “usual classes.” This point is worth mentioning, as it reveals an opposition to the face-value of the personalized classroom that I have taken for granted until now.



Presenting my research at the IATEFL conference

My reflections

My exploratory action research centred on personalizing the classroom achieved some positive results. I found that generally, when asked to speak or write about their own ideas, experiences or feelings, students show more willingness to participate in the activities or discussions and are motivated more to be involved in the classroom. Thus, by using creative activities, even simple questions concerning the personal opinions

or experiences of the students, teachers can motivate their students to be more active in the classroom as well as strengthen their classroom relationships. A well-built and positive relationship between the teacher and the students is expected to increase participation in class activities by contributing to a sense of security in the classroom, making students feel more comfortable about sharing opinions and thus increasing second language production.

This exploratory action research helped me see the importance of free speech in the classroom, and how big of a role personalization plays for student motivation while helping me draw a route for my future teachings. Without a doubt, it added a new dimension to my teaching philosophy. During the first weeks of my planning, I had difficulty in coming up with such activities that would interest the students, feel both authentic and didactic, and that would not drift far away from their syllabus. These initial difficulties I faced gave me practical experience in solving them for my future endeavours and improved my skills in creating and searching for classroom material. Along with these improvements, my intervention process also aided me in gaining experience in building positive relationships with students; and I believe using personalized lesson plans can help accelerate this process of connecting between teachers and students (although caution must be taken regarding differences in learner types). And hopefully, a personalized classroom environment can help other teachers achieve similar results in increasing the effectiveness of their lessons, boosting motivation levels of remove students along with strengthening remove teacher-student relationships.

Giving clear instructions in teaching English as a foreign language

Muazzez Kubra Mor
Boğaziçi University

My research

While I was teaching English as a pre-service English teacher at a private primary school in Istanbul, I worked with 6th grade students who were 13 years old and I found out that some of the students had difficulty in understanding my instructions clearly as they were asking their peers what they were supposed to do after instructions were given. This was time-consuming for us during the lessons, seemingly diminishing the effectiveness of the lessons. Therefore, I decided to carry out some exploratory action research to find reasons for my instructions being difficult to understand for students. While reviewing the literature, I discovered some strategies which can be used to give clear instructions. Some of these strategies are as follows:

- Giving the instructions by splitting them into smaller pieces
- Giving instructions before distributing the handouts

- Waiting enough to elicit answers after giving the instructions
- Choosing one of the students and asking him or her to explain the instructions in his or her words to classmates after giving the instructions myself
- Using visuals and modelling after giving instructions orally

During the implementation process, students were surprised by some of the strategies I had used. For example, when I asked students to explain the instructions in their own words, they did not know what to do. After a while, they got used to the new strategies and they were more willing to participate in the lessons. During the implementation process, I received feedback from my mentor teacher and integrated strategies suggested into the following lesson plans accordingly. In other words, I did not use all strategies in any one lesson. After I implemented some strategies for the first time, my mentor teacher told me that using those strategies helped me to give clearer instructions and, from her observation, this also increased students' motivation.

As a result of this exploratory action research, I have observed that implementing these strategies in my lessons improved the effectiveness of my instructions over time. For example, students no longer asked their peers to explain what they were supposed to do. Visualization and demonstration of instructions attracted the attention of students, and asking one of the students to paraphrase the instructions increased student participation in the lesson. These strategies made time and classroom management easier.



Presenting my research at the IATEFL conference.

My reflections

The purpose of my exploratory action research was to understand how to give clear instructions to students during English lessons and I found some new strategies to give clear instructions. Techniques such as splitting instructions into smaller pieces, providing visuals and modeling how to complete the activity, giving some time to students after giving the instructions and asking students to paraphrase the instructions in their own words, improved the effectiveness of my instructions. Using these strategies also increased the motivation and participation of students. Learning how to use such strategies during the lessons also made me feel ready to cope with similar problems I can face in my real classrooms in the future. I have also understood that making a change in one aspect of teaching can make other positive changes in the other aspects indirectly. For example, using these strategies helped me to manage my time easily.

While it is true that integrating these strategies into my lesson plans, I sometimes had difficulty in deciding which strategy to use for a specific lesson, fortunately I was in communication with my mentor teacher and she also guided me throughout the implementation process. This showed me the importance of getting in touch with colleagues in a teaching environment.

Carrying out this exploratory action research was a great source of experience for me to learn how to reflect upon my teaching practices and improve my teaching by using the findings of my own research. I will be ready and willing to carry out such research to find possible solutions to problems I can face within my real classrooms in the future. Hopefully, too, using the strategies I have discussed can help other teachers give clear instructions in their classes.

Giving classroom instructions: How to make instructions more understandable for students

Mukaddes Çoban
Bahçeşehir University

My research

The focus of my research was on learning to give clearer instructions. During my practicum as a pre-service teacher at one of the private schools in Istanbul, I conducted an exploratory action research project in my class. This was during the second term, when I observed only secondary school students, who were 5th graders. Besides observing them, I also conducted six macro-teaching practice sessions, when my mentor teacher, my supervisor at the university and one of my pre-service teacher peers observed me.

During the first macro-teaching practice session, I realized there were problems regarding my classroom instructions and their transfer to the students. These problems seemed mostly due to the order of instructions, vocabulary choice and lack of clarification. Even though I reduced these problems with clearer instructions in the second macro-teaching session, it seemed there were still many students who could not understand the instructions for the activities done in the classroom. Therefore, I decided to focus on giving instructions as the problem of my exploratory action research because giving clear instructions is one of the crucial factors affecting the learning process. If the directions are not clear and effective, some students may not be involved in activities and tasks, and may feel helpless and lost, even though there may be other students who focus on the classroom tasks amazingly well. If students are unable to follow instructions, this will result in frustration for both the teacher and students.

I searched the literature for some strategies to make classroom instructions effective and understandable for my students. Some of the techniques that I came across include the following: making sure that all students pay attention to the teacher before the giving of instructions; providing brief and precise explanations; offering repetitions; paraphrasing directives; presenting the instructions in different ways and using illustrations and demonstrations. I chose two of these strategies to implement in my last two macro-teaching practice sessions. One of the strategies I used was to ask students to clarify what they understood regarding the activity with the given instructions. In order to accomplish this, I picked one or two students to explain the steps in the activity to their classmates. The other thing I did was to give more time for demonstrations and further explanations about the activity, if needed.

When I implemented these strategies in the last two macro-teaching sessions, the students were able to do the activities and participated in them well, which showed that the instructions were transferred clearly to the students. Moreover, I received useful feedback from my supervisor at the university, mentor teacher and pre-service teacher peers. My supervisor and mentor teacher provided me the feedback orally while my peers, who were also pre-service teachers from my department and were student teachers in the same school, included their feedback in their written evaluations of my teaching practices. The results of feedback showed that providing demonstrations and making one of the students explain the instructions to the rest of the class are effective ways I can use for fostering the understanding of the students. These techniques seemed to work well for me when they were used together and in an appropriate way, with instructions that were precise and not too long.

My reflections

As a pre-service teacher, conducting exploratory action research for a problem in my teaching made me realize that it is an ongoing process that teachers can engage in as

part of continuing professional development. This is because a teacher is an observer of their own teaching experience and the one who will find solutions or apply small changes to the problems in the classroom. I learned that even a small problem can be a huge barrier or distraction for the learning process of students. To talk about the 'clear instructions issue' specifically, I will pay more attention to my classroom instructions with regards vocabulary choice and the order of instructions. In order to help learners visualize instructions, I will employ demonstrations more. I will also make use of student explanations when I realize some students appear distracted during the giving of directions because students sometimes pay more attention to their peers. However, of course, the strategies employed will also depend on the classroom atmosphere.

Conducting the exploratory action research was very beneficial to me. Conducting scientific work focusing on all the steps of exploratory action research supported my development. I had the chance to see the practical outcomes of research in my own field. Beforehand, I had always put academic research and the practice of teaching in different places in my mind. However, when I did the exploratory action research, I realized that they are connected to and feed into each other. Language teaching is not only applying what we learned at the university; it is also monitoring our teaching environment and students, with the aim of improving poor conditions and using our own experiences in order to contribute to others' development. This experience made me feel much closer to the field than I had before. I became more aware of teaching/learning processes and was excited, looking forward to teaching in the real classroom.



Standing in front of my poster at the conference

Conclusion

Sumru Akcan

As we have seen above, Simge, Kübra and Mukaddes focused on topics such as personalization in the classroom to increase student participation and giving clear instructions to improve the quality of instruction. As these teachers' reflections on their teaching practices demonstrate, learning how to increase student motivation and give clear instructions are important issues for beginning teachers. Conducting exploratory action research into such practices is really valuable for early career teachers such as these.

Indeed, as Dikilitaş and Yaylı (2018) report, conducting action research is a key professional development strategy for language teachers. As the supervisor of the practicum course, I integrated a practitioner research component into the syllabus of the course for the academic year of 2016-2017. I am pleased with the outcome of this invaluable addition to the syllabus. The exploratory action research projects improved the quality of the interaction among the pre-service teachers, the supervisor and the mentor teachers. The pre-service teachers reported that engaging in inquiry about their own teaching experience increased their awareness of their own teaching. Their sense of belonging to the profession was also enhanced while working with their peers and mentors collectively. Furthermore, the pre-service teachers had an opportunity to analyze and understand their teaching more critically; they constantly received feedback from their supervisor, mentor teachers, and peers. As a supervisor, I strongly believe that exploratory action research practices in teacher education programmes foster professional development by establishing collegial relationships in the learning community. Exploratory action research components should be integrated into the syllabus of practicum courses as a way to practice reflective teaching/thinking and promote professionalism in the teaching field.

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Reducing my Classroom Stage Anxiety

Nazlıcan Ak

*Teacher Candidate, Department of English Language Teaching, Çağ University
Mersin, Turkey*

- ▶ My research
- ▶ My reflections
- ▶ References

My research

Classroom anxiety or stage fright (or my term, ‘classroom stage anxiety’, which suggests that the teacher’s role includes ‘acting’ on the classroom stage) is a problem that almost every pre-service teacher faces while teaching in a real classroom. Due to the nature of the problem, this anxiety both damages the teacher’s performance and students’ confidence in the teacher’s teaching competency. First of all, when a teacher feels anxious in the classroom, students also feel anxious because anxiety happens to be contagious. Secondly, everywhere in the world, first impressions matter. If the first impression the teacher gives the students is of being an anxious teacher, students may not take the teacher seriously, and they may not take the lesson seriously. Thus, unfortunately, showing signs of anxiety can damage both a teacher’s self-esteem and students’ behaviour towards the teacher.

I decided to focus on this issue through action research conducted at Fatih Tarsus Anatolian High School, Tarsus, when I realized that I was suffering from classroom stage anxiety. This was while teaching 9th and 11th grade practicum classes of approximately 25-30 students. After teaching these classes several times, I realized that I was suffering quite acutely. Both my supervisor and mentor pointed out that I appeared always extremely anxious in the classroom. Thinking about this made me feel even more anxious, and this anxiety then unfortunately led me to make mistakes, sweat a lot and breathe irregularly; I was also unable to think straight. Therefore, when I had to take control of the class I could not decide what to do. The purpose of this study was to address this issue. The research question was “*How can I overcome classroom stage anxiety?*”

For data collection, I used a reflective teacher diary, peer observations and video-recordings of my practice teaching. Reflecting in my teacher diary after every lesson helped me see how I could improve my teaching, as I highlighted reasons for being overstressed and anxious while teaching. In addition to this, during every lesson I asked my peers to video-record my teaching practice and provide their reflective observation notes on my teaching, so that I could see where, when and why I was nervous. I followed Burns’ (2010, pp. 108-109) possible steps for analysing the gathered data. Then, my peers, faculty supervisor and mentor checked the emergent themes with me, indicating whether they agreed with the way I had grouped them.

Results showed I felt anxious mostly while I was giving instructions, making grammar mistakes, losing control and correcting students’ answers. Anxiety seemed to lead to further anxiety. To overcome this problem, every week I tried different techniques and strategies to calm down. These included tying up my hair in order not to play with it, washing my face beforehand, chatting to other teachers, going to the classroom early to communicate with students, carrying a picture of a person I love to get strength from it and looking at myself in front of a mirror to see myself as a teacher. During the

lesson, I brought water to drink, used better organized lesson plans, started with ice breakers, looked at the picture of a loved one, and tried not to look at the supervisor who was observing my classroom. After applying these techniques, my anxiety levels seemed to drop steadily.



Presenting my research at the IATEFL conference

My reflections

After sharing my research, I realized that most pre-service teachers experience classroom stage anxiety and are desperate about it. Classroom stage anxiety can be overcome by believing in yourself and using methods to boost self-esteem. In order to achieve this, I tried the various techniques described above.

Action research showed me how to solve a problem in a classroom, step by step. As a pre-service teacher, I benefited from it considerably, in the process learning how to develop myself. This action research helped me understand that there is no impossible obstacle if we put our mind on addressing it. This is crucial because, as future teachers we are the ones who will guide the students and teach them. It is useful to remember that everyone at some point was a beginner and we should not feel overwhelmed, but take the challenges we face as an opportunity to become better at our jobs. Now that I have overcome my problem, I see it as a good experience that improved me. In the future, as a teacher, I believe that action research will helpfully be by my side.

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Dealing with Teacher Perfectionism during my Practicum Process

Ahmet Ekmekçi

Teacher Candidate, Department of English Language Teaching, Çağ University, Mersin, Turkey

- ▶ My research
- ▶ My reflections
- ▶ References

My research

While many teachers who are perfectionists believe that it makes them better teachers (Tustin, 2017), this is actually debatable. I am a perfectionist teacher; I realized this when I started teaching my first lesson during the practicum. Unfortunately, I could not cover my lesson plan because of all the activities I included. I wanted to finish every single activity and I wanted to take care of each student individually; as such I was having a time problem. Therefore, I presume that ‘teacher perfectionism’ is not always helpful for teachers.

As a pre-service teacher, my first aim in conducting this study was to find the effects of teacher perfectionism on both me as the teacher and on the students in the classroom. My second aim was to find ways to minimize my perfectionist approach for more efficient and effective EFL lessons. Therefore, with this study, I tried to answer the question: ‘How can I overcome my perfectionism in my practicum EFL class while I am teaching?’.

The 35 students involved in this study were 2nd and 3rd graders from two classes at a state primary school in Yenice, Turkey. I collected data using classroom observations, journal entries and checklists to investigate my problem and to discover the effects of my implementations.

As perfectionism is a kind of obsessive behaviour, my goal was to overcome this behaviour for my whole life with attractive and interesting techniques like ‘wearing a watch’, ‘catching the time’, ‘advancing the lesson’. An understanding I gained through reading related articles is that ‘advancing the lesson’ is very important because perfectionism is a kind of obsession and if people try to overcome it once, they realize that they do not repeat it again. ‘Advancing the lesson’ is the name of the technique. I tried this technique; I did not stick to one activity and one student.

As it is also suggested, if you do not know when you should advance the lesson, you need to wear a watch. The reason behind this technique is to call your attention to when you should finish your activity in your lesson. The important thing here is that the teacher should advance the lesson. This technique needs a good lesson plan which shows you the timing of activities.

In the beginning, I started to calculate the time of my activities. I started to prepare my lesson plan with this time calculated. I wore a watch in the lesson. I followed the lesson plan and I checked my watch when the time was up for the activity; then I passed to the next activity. When I used this technique in the first lesson, I finished my lesson as I stated in my plan. When I checked my teacher journal entries, I realized that my behaviour in the lessons had changed. Moreover, I could control my feelings and behaviour more.



My reflections

I think learning how to conduct action research is the most important lesson that I have taken from this experience, since it has led me to develop my teaching day by day. Through action research, the teacher turns into a researcher, researching continuously. In this process, I saw what I have done well, what I have missed, and I saw my lacks, weaknesses and strengths during my teaching journey. For example, I realized that one of my weaknesses is being impatient, wanting to reach a conclusion immediately. To address this, I learned assorted techniques and changed my behaviour. In this manner, I am going to plan how to utilise strategies in my future teaching.

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Minimizing the Use of L1: A Pre-service Teacher's Experience in an EFL Classroom

İsmail Barlak

Teacher Candidate, Department of English Language Teaching, Çaç University, Mersin, Turkey

- ▶ My research
- ▶ Mentoring background
- ▶ The mentoring processes
- ▶ Developing as researchers and research mentors
- ▶ Looking to the future
- ▶ References

My research

According to Pan & Pan (2010), the use of L1 in foreign language (FL) classrooms is acceptable, but none of the supporters of this idea approve its limitless use. As most of my friends and I experienced during the practicum, making appropriate use of the mother tongue (Turkish in our case) in teaching English as a foreign language can be a significant challenge, especially while explaining grammar rules or the meanings of some words. This is because, in the process of learning a new language, a teacher's providing his/her students with required second language (L2) input is one of the most important things to consider for their exposure to the target language (TL) and their language proficiency (Krashen, 1982; Chaudron, 1988). In this respect, excessive use of the mother tongue (L1) might discourage the students to develop their proficiency in the TL while influencing their use of L2 in a negative way. Therefore, during their classroom teaching experience in pre-service teacher education, student teachers like me to have questions in their minds, such as; 'How will we teach English to students without using the L1?' 'Does use of L1 interfere with students' learning the TL?'. This is because, speaking from my background knowledge, I have also learnt that we should maximize L2 use to provide an interactive teaching environment.

However, in my practicum, I realized I was using too much L1 in class; I was using the L2 just while giving feedback, as in: 'Good, Well done, Okay'. This was apparent when I watched a video recording of my lesson and took feedback from other pre-service teachers and my supervisor. Recognizing my overuse of L1 during my teaching practice, I designed an action research study, aiming to help myself to minimize my use of L1 (Turkish) in L2 (English) classrooms. 67 Grade 4 students from Yenice Şehit Buminhan Temizkan Primary School accompanied my journey. For data, I used video-recordings of my lessons, journal entries, other pre-service teachers' feedback, as well as my mentor teacher's feedback.

During my research, I came across different teaching strategies and kinds of activities that foster English use in teaching practice. As an example of my learnings, as suggested by Gardner & Gardner (2000), while dealing with board work, I caught the attention of my students by saying 'Everyone look at the board, please' (p. 25); I wrote the word on the board and showed realia or a picture. Only when I didn't have the realia or a picture, I said its meaning once, in LI. By following these kinds of suggestions, I did not need to use too much L1 and I could give basic instructions like 'sit down' or 'come here', while demonstrating through hands and gestures. In this way, I maximized my use of English in just the first week in the greeting part of my lesson at the pre-stage. However, week by week, as I developed my teaching, I started to use English more in instructions, error correction and feedback. In instructions, for instance, when I said 'open page 55', I opened my book and showed the page. In error correction, I corrected their mistakes with intonation. For example: when X student said, 'he do his homework', I said 'he *does* his homework', I emphasized 'does.' My

findings revealed to me that it is possible to minimize the use of Turkish in English classrooms if I change my teaching strategies and style.



With my supervisor, Seden Tuyan, at the IATEFL ReSIG 2018 Conference, İstanbul

My reflections

To minimize L1 use, I searched different sources to expand my knowledge on how to teach more effectively by using the TL and I learnt a lot. Thanks to this action research, I have learnt that changing my teaching style and strategies in the EFL classroom could give me the chance to minimize my use of Turkish; due to this study I now use Turkish rarely, only while explaining grammar rules if the student does not understand. I believe this research helped me to be a better role model for my students because if I, as their teacher, do not use the target language in my EFL classroom, how can I expect my students to talk in English? Additionally, I realized that providing the input in English is one of the most important things to consider for effective EFL teaching and learning. All in all, I feel that it is much easier to use English as the language for instruction when I use the strategies and techniques described above because I do not have any worries that my students will not understand me if I speak in English.

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Helping my Students Understand What I Say through Different Listening Activities

M. Asya Delibalta

Teacher Candidate, Department of English Language Teaching, Çağ University, Mersin, Turkey

- ▶ My research
- ▶ My reflections
- ▶ References

My research

Listening is of vital importance in language learning and every day communication, and is central to the curriculum. The major purpose of the study was to check students' listening competence and help them understand teacher instructions through different materials and activities in my practicum classroom. According to the curriculum, the students (2nd graders) should learn English through listening and speaking. My class had recently started learning the English language (with theme-based basic structures) without any previous language background. As a pre-service teacher, I wanted to contribute to their base of language learning with listening activities and materials, and I also thought that my students should learn the English language in order to use it in their daily lives rather than using the language just to learn. That is the main reason why I conducted this action research (Burns, 2010) with my 2nd grade practicum students.

The participants were twenty-four 2nd grade students at Atatürk Primary/Secondary School in Yenice, Mersin. Most were Turkish, but I also had two immigrant students. During the first term of my practicum, while conducting weekly observations of the class under the guidance of my mentor teacher, I noticed that the students were having difficulty to understand instructions and comprehend activities as their listening comprehension was limited; this may have been due to them not having been exposed to the target language much before. Since my view on teaching the English language is to help students use it for their daily lives while having fun, I decided to help them develop their listening comprehension skills through different listening activities such as songs, rhymes, short and simple dialogues between two speakers and through using several colourful listening posters and teacher-made materials.

To conduct this study, I used various data collection instruments. These included classroom interaction observation checklists, which were adapted from Nunan (1990), for each teaching practice. I also used classroom video-recordings, which were focused on me and excluded students' faces for ethical reasons; I analysed these video-recordings with the checklists. I also kept a teaching journal, and interviewed my mentor teacher (pre-data collection) to gather information about participants.

Using these methods worked well. For example, classroom video recordings helped me to see myself and notice how my students' reactions and my teaching were. And keeping a teacher journal showed me my progress and the process of my journey and helped me write my action research story.

Findings were positive, in that I learned that students love listening activities and they are willing to learn English. In my teacher journal, I recorded the following:

“I noticed that students love using body movements when they learn the subject of the day. For instance, I taught ‘in’, ‘on’, ‘under’ with hand movements by using song today and they really liked it. Therefore, I should use body movements more during the lesson. Maybe I should dance more - related to topic- while teaching English. (12.03.2018)”



Presenting my research at the IATEFL conference

My reflections

Doing action research was a very different experience for me. My students were 2nd graders and they did not have any English language background. For this reason, I always thought that I had an important role to teach the language through appropriate methods; it was the beginning for students. Therefore, as a teacher I should create a strong base for them. Beginning is always a very significant step for both students and teacher.

After starting to do action research, I noticed that my students could not understand my instructions and I tried to solve these issues and I did. Action research helped me become a better teacher. Being a good teacher requires being a researcher, innovator, counselor, and helper, and I found I had these qualities in the classroom through action research. In other words, action research encouraged me to be a better teacher and provided a very rewarding experience for me.

I also learned how patient I am as a teacher with young learners. I used listening-based activities due to my topic and I believe I reached my goals. Seeing the improvement after the action research increased my motivation as a teacher candidate. I also observed the power of songs to teach the English language to young learners. Action research provided me access to the young learners' world and helped to answer these questions: *How can I teach English? What is the appropriate way to support learning for students?*

This action research study also showed me that we should not dismiss young learners' potential, saying they do not understand anything. There is always a way that reaches your students to help them learn English. As teachers we should never give up on finding this way. Knowing about your students lets you find the most appropriate way to teach them English.

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How Do I Stop Students Using the Mother Tongue So Much in my EFL Classroom?

Büşra Özgür

Teacher Candidate, Department of English Language Teaching, Çağ University, Mersin, Turkey

- ▶ My research
- ▶ My reflection

My research

This action research study, focused on reducing mother tongue use, was conducted in Şehit Buminhan Secondary School in Tarsus, Yenice, Turkey; there were 28 participants, whose ages ranged from 12 to 13 years old. Having had the opportunity to observe my practice teaching classroom in the first term had allowed me to realise that these students were overusing the mother tongue and experiencing difficulty in using the target language: English. I also discovered that most of the students were feeling shy when they spoke English or they preferred to be silent even when they knew the answer. This is because I feel that they were afraid of making mistakes in the target language and/or of being humiliated by their friends. Therefore, most of the students did not want to try to speak English in the classroom. For these reasons, I decided to conduct action research in order to help those students and decrease the amount of mother tongue use through incorporating different activities and materials. As a teacher candidate, I personally believe that students should feel secure and relaxed when using the L2 in the classroom; they should feel as relaxed as when using the mother tongue. I also think that group work activities can really help students learn the language in a classroom setting, as they feel more comfortable and confident.

This study therefore aims to explore some possible ways, including through group work, to reduce mother tongue use in my practice teaching classroom and help the learners speak the target language. To collect data, I used different instruments such as classroom video-recordings, a teaching journal, the students' feedback notes, weekly observation checklists, feedback notes from the supervisor and mentor teacher, and also peer observations on my teaching practices. For an example of how I used these methods, after I watched myself through video-recordings, I took some critical reflective points on my teaching and gained a clearer understanding of what I should improve on for the coming teaching session and I also observed my students' attitude and participation in the lesson. Through such methods, I learned my students' needs, interests, lacks and gained insights into my own strengths and weaknesses. Data gathered through methods such as weekly observation checklists and feedback notes from my mentors were analysed through content analysis.

Through conducting my study, I found that group work activities, colourful flashcards, and games increased the students' participation in the classroom. These activities played a significant role to arouse students' interests and motivation during the lesson. I also gave simple instructions to my students to explain the activities, and demonstrated first before asking them to start. When my students participated in the activity, I gave them positive praise and in the target language. I encouraged the students to use English in all activities. Through several group work activities, my students have learned sharing, helping each other and getting on with their friends. In addition, they tried to speak English in the classroom. I was so happy to see that they were highly motivated while speaking in English, even if they spoke little. Thus, I

thought using communicative materials and the teacher's attitude played an important role in increasing students' motivation. I gave simple instructions in the target language to increase participation and checked their understanding. In addition, I used gestures, facial expressions and mimes while explaining the instructions.



Presenting my research at the IATEFL conference

My reflection

Overall, I feel I have gained many different perspectives and thoughts during my teaching process by doing action research. It helped me to see I should design activities to increase my students' participation in the classroom, considering my students' needs and interests. Use of different materials helped my students in this process. I have found that my students needed to be encouraged to use English in the lesson. Group work activities contributed a lot to help me reach my aims. I was feeling like a lost traveller until I engaged in my action research study. And my action research journey was like a compass, because this study helped me to discover myself and my students on my way to becoming a teacher. I experienced different feelings during my action research study by realising my strengths and weaknesses. I really feel that I improved my teaching day by day and gained self-confidence.

Improving Students' Pronunciation by Using Various Techniques in an EFL Classroom in Turkey

Semiha Okur

Teacher Candidate, Department of English Language Teaching, Çağ University, Mersin, Turkey

- ▶ My research
- ▶ My reflection



My research

As a result of globalization, the English language is taught commonly in international settings for different purposes, as it is important for communication. However, I observed during my practicum that most young learners have some problems while learning English as a foreign language; they especially have difficulties pronouncing sounds correctly and clearly. While a person who speaks another language will realise that it may be hard to produce the sounds of a foreign language as easily as the sounds of the mother tongue, I believe that perhaps many teachers do not devote enough time

to help students improve their pronunciation abilities, as they do not provide opportunities to practise speaking in the EFL classroom.

I conducted this action research study to learn how, as a pre-service teacher, I can use different fun activities to help my students improve their pronunciation skills as well as enjoy learning English. In my opinion, the most important point is that knowing grammar and vocabulary is never enough for students to convey their intended messages during communication in the target language. Language should primarily be intelligible. For this reason, I believe that one's pronunciation should be clear enough for anyone to understand.

This action research study was conducted in Atatürk primary school in Tarsus-Yenice, with 24 students, aged from 8 to 9 years old. Their proficiency level and social economic situation were quite inadequate, and they included different ethnic groups speaking different first languages. Discovering that my learners had difficulty with the pronunciation of newly learnt vocabulary items in English, I also observed their teacher mispronounce the word "mouth - /maʊθ/ as -/mant/; the students continued to pronounce the word as /mant/, even when I tried to correct it later. This suggests that a teacher's pronunciation mistakes can have a vital role in students' learning. At the same time, it seems crucial that teachers should correct students' pronunciation mistakes before they become fixed. I tried to help the students improve their pronunciation by using different techniques such as song, drama and picture activities while learning English as a foreign language.

In order to collect qualitative data, I used three different types of methods: video-recordings of the different lessons I watched afterwards, feedback from the supervisor and journal entries. During the process, I used these methods, together with different strategies each week. In the first week, I used pictures and flashcards to assess which sounds the students had problems pronouncing. In the second week, I used a song,

provided background instruction about it, and played it three times; I asked them to sing the song together so that I could hear any words they mispronounced; I corrected these immediately. In the third week, I used a drama activity, with the help of a mask I prepared. Data gathered through video-recordings of the different lessons, journal entries and feedback from the supervisor were subjected to analysis and interpretation.

The findings showed that students' pronunciation improved through the motivating use of pictures, songs and drama activities. For instance, during the picture activity;

Teacher: Ok ! what do you see in this picture ?

Students: /maʊθ/ !

Teacher ; Well done ! what about this picture?

Students ; /heər/!

Teacher ; /ɪər/! I can't remember what it is in this picture, say again, what is this?

Students ; /ɪər/!

Teacher ; Well done ! You're perfect!

As can be seen in the example, I caught the students' attention by using the pictures. In addition, students could produce the sounds freely. During the process, they seemed energetic, happy and willing to participate in my lesson actively. These techniques encouraged them to produce sounds correctly and fluently. Before implementing the activities, students had hesitation while pronouncing the words. However, thanks to these activities my students felt more efficacious.

My reflection

At the beginning of my practicum, I thought that pronunciation did not have a significant role in primary school students' EFL learning. However, by carrying out observations which led into this action research study, I was able to see that error correction is an important issue for students' EFL learning. I became worried about errors being fossilised, and developed techniques to help students produce the sounds correctly and fluently. Thanks to this research, I also realised what kinds of difficulties with the pronunciation of English vocabulary items students might have, so this experience will shed light on my future teaching processes. Now, I am more aware of my strengths and weaknesses about my teaching style. This study also gave me an opportunity to understand that all language learning processes constitute a joint venture and effort between teachers and students.

Go Beyond ‘Listen and Repeat’: Ways of Improving my Students’ Pronunciation

Sude Yeniçikan

Teacher Candidate, Department of English Language Teaching, Çağ University, Mersin, Turkey

- ▶ My research
- ▶ My reflections

My research

Learning a language includes mastering a number of skills. However, while developing clear pronunciation is definitely one of the most important skills while learning a foreign language, unfortunately most EFL learners believe that they cannot pronounce or speak correctly because of their speaking anxiety and fear of making errors while articulating the words. Teachers, therefore, need to improve students' pronunciation using different communicative activities to minimise students' fear of making errors while speaking.

Since the first day I started teaching in my practicum, I have reflected on my strengths and weaknesses to see what is going on in my classroom. One of the issues that I have found is the students are having problems with their pronunciation, especially while reading a text aloud in the classroom and responding to questions. I think the reasons for these problems derive from the phonological differences between Turkish and English, which cause mispronunciation. The students have more difficulties in articulating the vowel sounds in English than the consonants. The purpose of this action research is therefore to find out some ways to improve students' pronunciation through use of different pronunciation materials.

This study was conducted in my practicum classroom, consisting of only eleven students of the eight-grade at Atatürk Secondary School in Yenice, Mersin. In order to collect data, I used several instruments, such as feedback notes and discussions from my supervisors and mentors, classroom video-recordings for each lesson, a teaching diary, semi-structured interviews with the mentor teacher and the students, and discussion notes with the students. To help my students improve their pronunciation I used different pronunciation activities, such as different listening tasks, audio-visuals, songs, and matching games each week.

The results revealed that the students might have fear of speaking in the classroom because of making errors in pronunciation. Moreover, it seems indirect error correction, and different pronunciation activities might help students overcome their speaking anxiety, which in turn might help them to improve their pronunciation.



Presenting my research at the IATEFL conference

My reflections

The fundamental objective of doing this action research was to discover how to help my students rather than just tell them not to have speaking anxiety and dread of making errors. Therefore, this action research sought to find ways to improve my students' pronunciation through different materials.

In my action research, the focus was on offering both appropriate pronunciation materials and activities, which were attractive and interesting; these included pronunciation group work activities, audio visuals, videos, in-class speaking and listening activities. In my view, offering boring activities such as drilling sounds over and over again and only asking students to repeat the words leads students to feel disappointment and discouragement. Consequently, I wanted to avoid this; I wanted my students to be guided by legitimate and verifiable error correction techniques and by suitable materials. I believe that through the way I provided different materials, I helped students learn how to improve their pronunciation themselves. I aimed to show them how to get a fish metaphorically, rather than give them a fish.

I think that action research is the most important lesson that I have taken since it leads to developing my teaching day by day. I saw what I have done well, what I have missed, and I saw my lacks, weaknesses and strengths during my teaching journey. I learned diverse strategies and created distinctive materials. I am planning to utilize these strategies and materials in my future teaching.

Above all, I noticed I could overcome a problematic issue in the classroom through conducting action research. I believe that action research has risen to settle the weaknesses of the instructor or students. It is an interminable and recurrent process. Through action research, the teacher turns into a continuing researcher.

Maximising Student's Participation in the Language Classroom

Pınar Günsür

Teacher Candidate, Department of English Language Teaching, Çağ University, Mersin, Turkey

- ▶ My research
- ▶ My reflections
- ▶ References

My research

I started this action research project, which was carried out during my practicum, in a class with 10th grade students in Kasım Ekenler Vocational and Technical High School in Tarsus, Mersin, when I realized with concern that many of the students appeared to be passive learners who barely participated in the lesson. While all the students had the same right to speak, only a minority were taking it. It seemed that most students did not listen to my lesson and indeed did not seem to care about it.

The main aim of my action research was to find ways to attract students' attention and improve their participation. To support this, I aimed to increase the use of learner-centred activities, so students would participate more fully. To investigate, I used a questionnaire (administered in Turkish), which was adapted from Kumar's (2007) action research study. The questionnaire, which contained Likert scale and open-ended questions, elicited information about the types of activities students wanted, if they were to participate in the lesson.

Four skills activities proved popular, and accordingly I prepared an activity which included both speaking and reading. I gave them some reading passages. After the students had read, we talked about issues such as introducing yourself, likes/dislikes, hobbies, and so on. During the lesson, I observed that almost every student participated in the lesson. Additionally, the students wanted to work in small groups so I designed a pairwork activity. On the board, there were some verb phrases, and two students came to the board. One student asked the other about what they planned to do the next day. The other student picked an appropriate verb from the board and answered the question.

My research also elicited how students felt when the teacher asked them questions. I had thought that students were not interested and did not want to participate in the lesson. However, when I looked at the answers, the students actually wanted to participate. They indicated they felt shy and were afraid to make mistakes. After checking the answers, I decided to encourage students to talk more. I learned students' names in order to address them by name, listened to them talk and did not interrupt them, even if they made mistakes, so as not to break their courage. If they could not correct their mistakes afterwards, I asked the other students: "What do you think of your friend's answer?" I aimed to help students become aware of their own mistakes and/or of their peers' mistakes.



Presenting my research at the IATEFL conference

My reflections

The study helped me learn how to increase students' participation. The teacher should know how to do this, through different procedures and activities, because active students make the lesson more effective. If the students do not ask questions or do not want to answer the questions, we should encourage them to ask or to answer. The other option to help the students is by listening to them without interrupting, in order not to break their self-confidence. This is important because the students are already afraid of making mistakes. We have to be careful while correcting their mistakes.

This action research helped me see the importance of working to improve students' participation in the classroom. Thanks to this process, I gained a new teaching perspective. I realised how important it is to encourage students. In the first teaching on my practicum, it was too difficult for me to get the attention of students. But then, with some observation and research, I figured out how I can get the better of this problem. Finally, with these gains, I managed to establish better relations with my students. If we can build good relationships with our students, worries about getting them to participate disappear.

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“Let Students Take Control!” Promoting Learner Autonomy in my Practicum Classroom

Tuğçe Baş

Teacher Candidate, Department of English Language Teaching, Çağ University, Mersin, Turkey

- ▶ My research
- ▶ My reflections
- ▶ References

My research

Before commencing this study, I had the chance to observe and teach in an 8th grade class in Atatürk Secondary School in Yenice, Turkey. One thing I noticed was that students seemed passive and dependent on the teacher as the only learning resource. The lack of evidence of learner autonomy troubled me. This is because developing learner autonomy is an essential part of creating a learner-centered classroom in which individuals with different abilities and interests are considered. According to Van Lier (1996), autonomy is being able to decide what, how and when to learn. By helping our students become autonomous, we help them learn beyond the classroom and help them become life-long learners.



Presenting my research at IATEFL 2018 conference

Consequently, given my concerns, I developed an action research study to promote learner autonomy in my practicum classroom; I wanted to introduce effective activities and strategies. Focusing on eight students in the class, I posed the questions: “*How autonomous are my students?*” and “*How can I promote their autonomy?*”

Data were collected through various instruments, including a student autonomy questionnaire and group discussions, which I subjected to discourse analysis after Burns (2010). I used peer and mentor checklists to evaluate my activities and teaching each week. I also kept a teaching journal to record my thoughts after each lesson, completing this after watching classroom video recordings.

Findings from the initial student autonomy questionnaire revealed three major issues with my students’ autonomy: dependence on the teacher, lack of self-awareness and limited self-study. Regarding the last two of these points, students seemed unaware of their own strengths and weaknesses, and appeared unable to evaluate themselves; they did not seem to make adequate use of self-study resources and appeared to employ ineffective self-study strategies.

Since dependence on the teacher was the major issue identified, I introduced group and pair activities to promote peer learning. While deciding on these activities, I offered more than one option and encouraged the students to make their own choices. At the end of each lesson, I asked for feedback since it was important both for me to learn from their reflections and for them to become more aware through reflection on their learning processes.

I also introduced the students to some vocabulary learning strategies and Duolingo (www.duolingo.com) to enhance the effectiveness of their self-study time. Additionally, I presented them other online resources, such as dictionaries and instructional websites like Storybird (www.storybird.com), to raise their awareness of available resources. I received many positive written and spoken comments in feedback from the students regarding these resources. They especially enjoyed using Duolingo and in the following weeks most of them reported having used it at home.

Developing learner autonomy is a process which requires time. Thus, the teacher needs to be aware of this and to be persistent in developing learner autonomy. Because of this, I cannot say that my students were fully autonomous after four weeks. However, they were more aware of effective methods for learning English. They have raised their self-awareness about the available resources and discovered a new use of the Internet as a learning tool.

My reflections

I learned from this action research many things, including that there can be many different facets of student autonomy. Little (1991) states that learner autonomy can “take numerous different forms, depending on the students’ age, how far they have progressed with their learning, what they perceive their immediate learning needs to be” (p. 4). We as teachers need to first understand the importance of learner autonomy, think about what it should be for our students and then guide them to achieve their goals. Teachers have a crucial role in this process as they reinforce these new behaviors and encourage students to turn them into habits.

The idea that action research is a cycle and needs evaluation helped me to view teaching in a new light. What I like about it is that I can experiment. It is liberating to know that when I discover a puzzle or an issue in the classroom, I know how to look for reasons and come up with solutions. If it does not work the first time, I know how to evaluate.

Finally, I learned how important it is to be reflective. Keeping a teaching journal helped me to clear my thoughts and evaluate the lessons more calmly. I was able to correct any mistake that I made during the practicum thanks to this journal and feedback from my peers and mentors.

Autonomy has been seen as a difficult subject because of many restrictions such as time, syllabus, and overcrowded classrooms. Additionally, it requires patience. But now I know there are little chances every teacher can make use of to promote autonomy. Over time, utilizing these small chances certainly will create new habits and help students to become life-long learners.

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Section 3:

Supporting teachers' continuing professional developmental needs

14. Continuous Professional Development through Collaboration in Research: A Case Study of Two EFL Instructors Growing Together - **Aliye Evin Yörüdü & Ece Selva Küçükoğlu**
15. Instructors' and Students' Curricular Needs on an EFL Program - **Yunus Emre Akbana**
16. Lessons Learned from an Innovative Flipped Teaching Experience: Prospective Teachers' and a Teacher Educator's Perspectives - **Işıl Günseli Kaçar**

Continuous Professional Development through Collaboration in Research: A Case Study of Two EFL Instructors Growing Together

Aliye Evin Yörüdü, Bursa Uludağ University, Bursa, Turkey

Ece Selva Küçükkoğlu, Middle East Technical University, Ankara, Turkey

- ▶ Main focus
- ▶ Background
- ▶ Research methodology
- ▶ Findings and discussion
- ▶ Reflections and looking into the future
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Main focus

Providing high-quality CPD opportunities for language teachers around the world is a key concern of the ELT field (Edwards & Burns, 2016). One of the reasons why CPD is stated to be vital is that it helps retain the ‘interest, creativity, and enthusiasm of experienced language teachers in their profession’ (Richards & Farrell, 2005, p. 4). Barduhn (2002) emphasizes that as teachers gain experience, they may face teacher burnout. The authors of this paper, who both have more than 20 years of ELT experience at tertiary level, found the solution in collaborative research. The aim of this small-scale teacher research is to elaborate on their critical friendship experience and their use of collaborative research for CPD, which may prove to be a worthwhile example for not only experienced teachers but also their novice counterparts.

Background

Collaboration is a powerful tool because according to Vygotsky (1978), the founding father of socio-cultural theory, shared processes contribute greatly to individual and collective growth and co-constructed understanding and knowledge. Collaboration comes in various forms within the field of education, such as teacher collaboration in the classroom, collaborative learning among learners themselves, *collaborative research*, and *collaborative teacher development* (Barfield, 2016, p. 222).

The reason we emphasize collaborative research and collaborative teacher development is that we have found through experience that CPD is not only possible but also ‘productive and enjoyable through collaborative research’ (Datnow, 2011, p. 155). Different collaborative arrangements are possible. We call ours more of a ‘*critical friendship*’ as Farrell (2001, p. 368) and Richards and Farrell (2005, p. 14) put it. This form of CPD activity is one-to-one, where two colleagues collaborate for self and mutual benefit. Collaborative research is one of many other activities we carry out together, such as analyzing critical incidents during teaching and peer coaching.

The aim of this small-scale teacher research, then, is to elaborate on our critical friendship experience through collaborative research, which in turn has substantially contributed to our CPD.

Research methodology

Participants

Because critical friendship is a one-to-one CPD activity, we are the participants in this small-scale case study as the two instructors teaching in intensive English programs (IEP) of two state universities in Turkey, one of which follows English-medium in-

struction and the other Turkish-medium. We are both female within the 40-49 age range with a minimum of 20-years of experience in ELT at tertiary level. We both have MA degrees in TEFL, one of us holding a PhD degree in ELT, and the other pursuing one.

Data collection and data analysis

We used two instruments as the sources of data collection: *document analysis* and *research diary entries*. We decided on the document analysis due to the ease of tracking since we were analyzing a collaborative research partnership that extended over a 16-year period. What's more, we preferred to keep a research diary individually primarily because it facilitates reflection (Murray, 2010).

Document analysis

We analyzed the documents consisting of publications and paper presentations produced as a result of the participants' collaborative research as 'critical friends' throughout a 16-year period. Specifically, we listed four publications and fourteen paper presentations, and we conducted an analysis of the main themes that emerged from the documents.

Research diary entries

In contrast to the documents, we kept research diaries for just four months. For the purposes of this small-scale case study, we formed the following six open-ended items as the basis of the data in the diaries:

1. How did you start collaborative research?
2. What are the advantages of collaborative research in terms of CPD?
3. What are the advantages of collaborative research in terms of personal development?
4. Are there any challenges of the collaborative research journey extended over a 16-year period? If yes, please explain how you have overcome the challenge(s).
5. Collaboration with my critical friend means...
6. Key features of collaborative research are...

For the analysis of the research diaries, first, preliminary categories emerging from the data were determined according to Creswell (2012) and Lacey and Luff (2007). Next,

following Brown and Rodgers (2002), each category was assigned a particular color, and participants' responses were gone through by color-coding them accordingly. At the final stage of the data analysis process, emerging categories highlighted through color-coding were finalized, and the relationships among the finalized categories were explored. In order to exemplify each category, as many quotes as possible by the participants were presented in the findings and discussion section.

Findings and discussion

Document analysis

The themes of four publications and fourteen presentations can be listed as skills in ELT (4), teaching approaches and methods (3), testing and assessment (2), and CPD (2). The numbers in parentheses indicate the frequency distributions of the themes.

Out of four publications and fourteen paper presentations, four of them focus on *skills in ELT*: specifically, two of them study *reading* with a focus on ways to encourage extensive reading and how to develop reading comprehension questions to help students become interactive readers. Another focuses on *writing*, specifically the use of cohesive devices in Turkish EFL learners' argumentative writing. Next comes a study on *vocabulary*, which is Involvement Load Hypothesis as an operationalizable construct. Following these skills, three out of fourteen are on *teaching approaches and methods*, namely; whether methods are dead for Turkish EFL teachers, a reading course instructor questioning her questions, and whether Turkish EFL Instructors are *Lost in Translation*. Two out of fourteen focus on testing and assessment with the focus on the inter-rater reliability of two alternative analytical grading systems at a Turkish state university, and why and how performance-based assessment should be conducted at a Turkish state university. Finally, two of them relating to CPD cover peer observation as a means of CPD and CPD with three-way observation.

As the document analysis points out, we identified a wide spectrum of themes studied qualitatively or quantitatively through collaborative research throughout a 16-year period.

Research diaries

As mentioned above, six open-ended items formed the basis of the data in diaries. Thus, we will present the results with reference to each item.

The beginning of collaborative research

With regard to the start of our collaborative research journey, we both referred to our first presentation carried out together as a requirement of the MA in TEFL program we attended in 2002.

P 1:	Coincidentally...Back in 2002, during our MA studies, specifically. Well, collaborative group work was an important part of the program. But it all started with a presentation we carried out together the same year. We liked the adrenalin and the learning and sharing opportunities we have through collaborative research, and we carried on supporting each other when we returned to our institution and, later, when we started teaching at different schools... (Participant 1, hereafter P1).
P 2:	I have known her for a long time, but it was at Bilkent MATEFL that I truly knew her. We started to support each other there, and we started this long journey in 2002 when we had our first presentation at an international conference in Istanbul. Since then we have been together! Despite having been working at different universities for a long time... (Participant 2, hereafter P2).

As the excerpts above demonstrate, once we saw the benefits of working together, collaboration and collaborative research became a part of our practice for a long period of time. If pre- or in-service teachers are given the opportunity of conducting collaborative research even once, it is possible that they can make it a part of their personal or continuous professional development throughout their careers.

The advantages of collaborative research in terms of CPD

There are four important advantages of collaborative research for us. Collaborative researchers can follow the recent trends in the field and learn about various ELT issues due to each participant's differing research interests, share the workload depending on each participant's strengths, lessen the effects of burn-out and, last but not least, increase their ownership of the profession and the workplace. The first advantage of collaborative research, we perceived, is following recent trends in the field and learning about ELT issues relevant to our differing research interests:

P 1:	Because we have different research interests but the same enthusiasm for learning, I have the opportunity to learn about a variety of subjects ranging from teaching and testing four skills to CPD.
P 2:	We are interested in a variety of subjects. When we carry out research on different areas of ELT, I can attend conferences and follow the recent topics in the field, which help me keep up-to-date.

Drawing on each participant's strengths to share the workload is another benefit of collaborative research for us in this study.

P 1:	While I am more into reviewing the literature, my research partner is more interested in data collection and analysis procedures. So the process contributed to not only my teaching and testing skills but also my researching skills because we complement and support each other in this respect.
P 2:	I like reading but not as much as my partner does. Similarly, while my partner is more into quantitative data analysis, I like both quantitative and qualitative data analyses. I love playing with the data. We help and teach each other a lot about our differences.

The third advantage of collaborative research for us is that it minimizes the effects of burn-out.

P 1:	In times of difficulty in my personal or professional life, our collaboration acted as a catalyst for getting over and a motive for going on. For instance, I remember taking my first PhD assignment... I was totally devastated. My research partner helped me a lot to get myself together and start the job.
P 2:	I have been teaching for 20 years, and it is impossible not to feel down from time to time. I felt it most intensely when I changed my workplace because of my spouse's business. But my partner was always there for me with new ideas for research and collaboration, which made me feel much better.

Finally, the last advantage of collaborative research for us was ownership of the profession and the workplace.

P 1:	Conducting classroom research in different institutions we work help me to feel belonging for my workplace because together we tried to find out solutions specific to our context.
P 2:	From time to time the collaborative research I conducted with my critical partner let me collaborate with my colleagues in my workplace, which increased my sense of belonging to my workplace.

As the excerpts above suggest, through collaborative research we felt we are a member of the ELT community and a member of a team in our workplaces.

The advantages of collaborative research in terms of personal development

In addition to our CPD, we both referred to the advantages of collaborative research for our personal development.

P 1:	Working together is an important source of motivation for my personal and professional life. Thanks to that coincidence that has brought us together, we have been together since then.
P 2:	We are a good team in many ways, and I know that I have a real friend. It is priceless to share the feeling of happiness and satisfaction after the excitement and adrenalin at a conference and to say ‘What is next?’ and to continue the research journey...

As the above excerpts show, collaborative research contributed not only to our CPD but also our personal development.

The challenges of the collaborative research journey expanded over a 16-year period

The challenges for both of us related to physical conditions such as residing in different cities or having busy schedules rather than to the difficulties of conducting collaborative research, as the excerpts below highlight:

P 1:	Because we live in different cities, we almost never have a chance for a face-to-face meeting during the academic year. Thanks to technology, we find different ways of keeping in touch. Our busy working schedules are another challenge; however, there is always a way when you are enthusiastic enough.
P 2:	I can say that we are a nice match. We have not had big challenges. However, sometimes it is difficult to make physical arrangements (such as when to meet, where to stay) due to living in two distant cities and our hectic lives.

As can be seen, practical issues may come up as a challenge despite not being big issues for us.

Collaboration with my critical friend means...

For both of us, *caring* and *sharing* and *collegiality* were common features of collaboration with a critical friend. *Empathy*, *sympathy*, and *life-long learning shared with a peer*, and *gaining new insights* were the other aspects of collaboration we mentioned.

P 1:	She is like an outsider whose comments I value. She helps me look at issues from a different perspective, which influences my teaching and research practices in a very positive way.
P 2:	She is a real friend whom I can truly trust and feel safe when presenting in front of a big audience, and above all, she is an inspiration to go on despite challenges...

As can be seen, affective factors seem to be as prominent as professional ones when collaboration with a critical friend is considered.

Key features of collaborative research are...

Sharing knowledge and experience, collegiality, and CPD were mentioned once again by both of us as the key features of collaborative research. We also referred to *sharing the responsibility* and *enjoying the success and sense of achievement* as the other aspects of collaborative research we valued.

P 1:	Collaborative research is a path where I can overcome the nightmare of burn-out. If I am still in this field and going into class happily and with enthusiasm, I can say that we have achieved this together with collaboration.
P 2:	When you teach for a long time with limited support for CPD, you need to find a way in order not to feel desperate or burn-out. I think we have found it through collaborative research.

As the data reveals, when teachers are given a chance to experience critical friendship and collaborative research even once, they can make these practices a part of their personal and professional lives throughout their careers.

Reflections and looking into the future

Suitable CPD opportunities can assist teachers in fighting negativity in their teaching contexts and lead to empowerment and inspiration (Bailey, Curtis, & Nunan, 2001; Murray, 2010), which is also supported by the findings of this small-scale teacher research. Taking teachers' needs into consideration is of great significance because 'a strategic approach to CPD starts with needs analysis' (Richards & Farrell, 2005, p. 17). Experienced teachers may need CPD that 'affirms the knowledge, experience, and intuitive judgment they have cultivated during their careers' (ibid., p. 1). We believe that critical friendship and collaborative research can be very fruitful in these respects, where colleagues are paired as experienced-experienced or experienced-novice depending on their own needs and expectations from the process. We also believe that such CPD activities 'designed to meet the needs and desires of experienced teachers have the potential to guide these teachers into new and challenging roles; expose them to new information in the field; and lead them into fruitful self-reflection, collaboration with colleagues, and investigations within their own classrooms' Gallup-Rodriguez & McKay (2010, p. 4), as the collaborative research journey of two experienced teachers in this study revealed.

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Instructors' and Students' Curricular Needs on an EFL Program

Yunus Emre Akbana
Kahramanmaraş Sütçü İmam University, Turkey

- ▶ Main focus
- ▶ Background
- ▶ Research methodology
- ▶ Findings and discussion
- ▶ Reflections and looking into the future
- ▶ References
- ▶ Acknowledgements

Main focus

In this chapter, I will address several key issues in relation to both instructors' and students' needs in a modular system-driven EFL Prep-Program. I investigated instructors' professional and students' learning needs with an additional focus on evaluating the basic components of the program. The main purpose of this study is to outline to what extent the EFL Prep-Program met the stakeholders' needs. To achieve this, I utilized both quantitative and qualitative research methods, and attempted to bring alternative ways to balance their needs through participants' recommendations as insiders. I conducted this initial action research project to develop better understanding of the context in which I work, explore the specific needs in the program, and foster my continuous professional development as a teacher-researcher.

Background

Typical EFL prep-programs in Turkey pursue a Progressive System (PS) or Modular System (MS). In both systems, an intensive EFL education is provided over a whole year. PS differs from MS in that it moves forward with the starting point of a placement exam applied at the beginning of a program, whilst MS moves forward or behind in the light of module exit exam reports (Erarslan, 2019). The features of both systems are displayed in Table 1 below.

■ **Table 1.** Comparison of Progressive System and Modular System

Progressive System (PS)	<i>Brief Explanation</i>	Modular System (MS)	<i>Brief Explanation</i>
Traditional	<i>The curriculum is followed in line with only the coursebook requirements and guidance.</i>	Common European Framework of References (CEFR) Based	<i>The curriculum is followed in light of the CEFR which offers clear learning and teaching objectives with related descriptors. Module exit exams are informed by CEFR language levels.</i>
Linear	<i>No failure at the end of any language level attainment. Final exam-oriented process.</i>	Non-linear	<i>Students may fail if they cannot succeed in a whole language level. Module exit exam-oriented process.</i>
No flexibility	<i>The curriculum does not offer any major changes in the syllabus.</i>	Flexible	<i>The curriculum may well offer any changes in the syllabus only affecting a module not a whole year as in PS.</i>
Same Class	<i>Students complete the program with same classmates.</i>	Different Classes and Students	<i>Students complete the program with different classes at each level and interact with a larger population.</i>
Same Teacher(s)	<i>Teachers assigned for a class complete the program.</i>	Different Teacher(s)	<i>At each module, students change classes and so do the teachers.</i>

Table 1 illustrates that MS is more flexible in many ways in that it follows a CEFR based curriculum and is non-linear, with teachers serving a variety of student populations. The setting of this study was Kahramanmaraş Sütçü İmam University, and in the 2015-1016 academic year PS, which had been employed to that date, was replaced with MS. As Akbana and Kalaycı (2018) found, the instructors favoured MS in that it decreases their burnout level, affords opportunity for sharing teaching ideas, and helps them become solution makers. MS also raised awareness of the need for a professional development unit. These changes indicated the path for building an institutional culture, which is still being established. The MS administered in the current context still remains a matter of concern, with regard to the extent the program meets both the instructors' and learners' needs. Relying on Kırkgöz's (2009) suggestion that EFL teachers should take initiatives and responsibilities in the implementation of institutional decisions and policies, this study seeks answers to the following research questions:

- What are EFL instructors' and students' needs in a modular system driven EFL prep-program?
- How do EFL instructors and students bring alternative ways to address their needs?

Research methodology

This study employs a descriptive research design. It follows an initial action research design since it attempts to describe a phenomenon in our context: the program (Brown & Rodgers, 2002). It employs the features of a typical action research design, suggesting a plan for combining action and reflection to improve practice (Burns, 2010). Within the action research paradigm, this study fits with the term *participatory* (Fraenkel & Wallen, 2006) since it utilizes the ideas of all stakeholders in a setting (Stufflebeam & Webster, 1983).

The research setting, an EFL Prep-Program at a state university, adopts a modular system over 28 class-hours a week with a communicative approach following the course-book series *Pioneer* (Mitchell & Malkogianni, 2015), from A1 to B1+ (according to the CEFR). In this research setting, I followed the basic four steps of action research that Burns (2010, p. 8) and Fraenkel and Wallen (2006, p. 570) suggest including:

(1) Planning: Identifying the research question or the problem

The main problem in this study is related to the choice of the system employed in the EFL Prep-Program. As stated earlier, the institution followed PS and later shifted to MS. However, nobody in the setting evaluated MS. Therefore, I decided to investigate the extent to which MS affords the needs of the stakeholders.

(2) Action: Gathering the necessary data

To understand the participants' perceived needs, I and a group of collaborators comprised of instructors and students in the research setting, developed a short survey on the components of the program, identifying the problematic issues mostly debated in the meetings and classes. I delivered the survey to the participants through Google Forms and obtained their consent with this instrument as well. In addition, I interviewed both the instructors and the students to gather qualitative data. Participants for the interviews were selected under the procedure of a deviant sampling method (Teddlie & Yu, 2007) which suggests including both up and down (extreme) sides of a parameter. The parameter was the average scores of the students, and teaching experience of the instructors. Therefore, 4 (2 with 20 years; 2 with 7 years of teaching experience) out of 10 volunteer instructors were selected. Similarly, 10 (5 from A2; 5 from B1) out of 28 volunteer students were selected.

(3) Observation: Analyzing and interpreting the data

Seventy-one students' and 12 instructors' views towards the program were investigated through quantitative and qualitative data collection tools. The quantitative data were gathered using a Google Survey tool for two very similar surveys. These surveys, one for investigating instructors' professional and academic needs, and another for understanding students' learning needs, were executed in March 2018. The quantitative data were exposed to descriptive statistical tests through SPSS (version 20 for Mac). Subsequently, regarding the qualitative data, semi-structured interviews for both groups were conducted in April 2018.

Regarding the ethical issues, the participants' consents were received, and all the interviews were transcribed from voice recordings following a method of labelling the participants with codes (*II* = Instructor 1; *SI* = Student 1) to ensure anonymity for a basic content analysis.

(4) Reflection: Developing an action plan

Bearing in mind Johnson's (2008) suggestion to share the results with colleagues, other participants and at professional conferences, the results were shared with the instructors and volunteer students at separate meetings and their further views were sought. I also presented this study at IATEFL ReSIG 2018 İstanbul Conference to disseminate the findings and get feedback. Finally, an action plan was developed for further work with the confirmation of the school administration. The action plan is provided in the conclusion section since this study still remains as an initial action research project of the institution.

Findings and discussion

RQ1. What are EFL instructors and students' needs in a modular system driven EFL prep-program?

To answer this question, I utilized three sections of the needs analysis that dealt with instructors' professional and students' learning needs, providing both parties' views on the program components. In the first section, I asked instructors to rate their professional needs for support, and students to rate their learning needs to improve specific language skills and language systems: namely, grammar, vocabulary and pronunciation. Figure 1 presents the results below. Apart from these needs, I asked both groups of stakeholders to express their needs for any change in the program components by favouring or disfavouring the Textbook, Speaking Exam Practices, Weekend Worksheets (WEW), Lab-Studies and Story Quizzes. The related findings are shown in Figure 2 below. I also triangulated the results with the qualitative data findings of the interviews with the excerpts below the figures and tables.

The participants were invited to rank the scale from 1 representing "highest need" to 5 representing "No need"

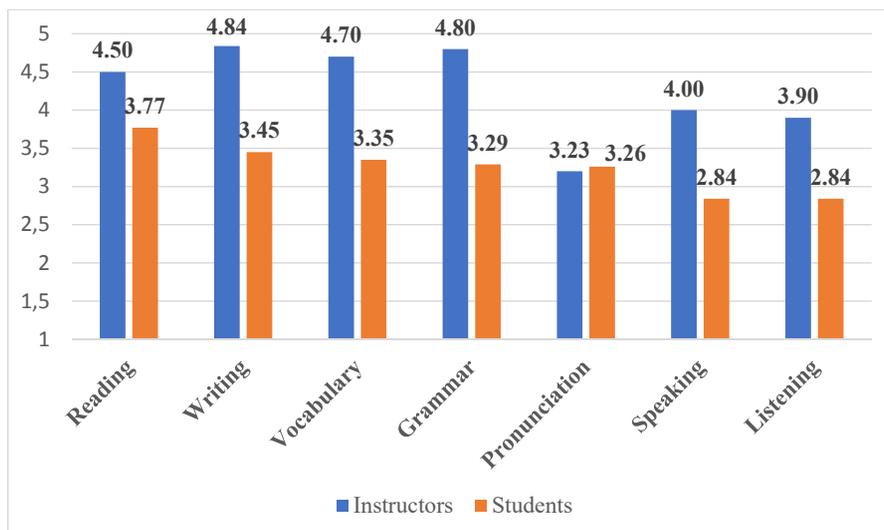
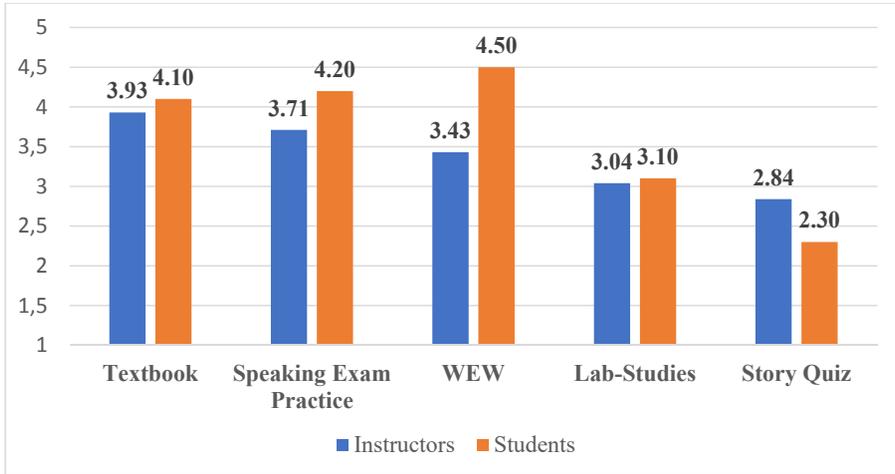


Figure 1. *Instructors' professional needs and students learning needs*

Figure 1 reveals that instructors might not expect any professional support for teaching Writing ($m = 4.84$), Grammar ($m = 4.80$), and Reading ($m = 4.50$). The students indicated similar needs in the same order except that vocabulary was ranked higher than grammar. Another interesting finding was that pronunciation was seen to be one of the highest for instructors. That is a fairly widespread finding since many language teachers are less sure about teaching pronunciation.

In addition, to dig into any need for change on the program components, I asked participants to identify which program components need to be changed. The related results are illustrated in Figure 2 below.



Note: WEW = Weekend Worksheets

Figure 2. Need for change in program components.

Figure 2 reveals that both instructors ($m = 3.93$) favoured the Textbook. Though students implied no change in WEW ($m = 4.50$) for their learning, both parties rated the rest in a descending overlapping order; Speaking Exam Practice, Lab-Studies and Story Quizzes. Although WEW seems to represent clichés of traditional ways of English language teaching over worksheets designed to improve syntactical accuracy, students noted the most positive attitude to them. On the other hand, the highest rates of need for any change were Lab-Studies and Story Quiz. These two items demand students build more autonomous learning pathways. In this regard, in the interviews, students argued that the design of both items should be re-designed and revised to appeal to their interest. Two students’ comments are included below to illustrate the responses.

S 9:	In lab-studies, we only sit in front of the computers, do the exercises on the software very quickly and then surf on the net. I would rather get involved with more enjoyable exercises.
S 3:	For the story-quiz exam, we have to read a story book and then get assessed on it. I don’t like reading story books, and a compulsory exam on it. So, I wish it would be optional not compulsory.

When I asked the teachers about that issue, they touched upon the importance of the institutional library. They further reflected on their level of guiding the students to the library.

I 3:	We established a small library in our school for our students to do self-studies, but they don't visit it enough despite our guidance and encouragement.
S 7:	I think we don't like studying in the library, it may be due to the location of it.
S 5:	Once I visited the library to take a book out of which I was told to write a summary. That was the first and the last!

Therefore, the results suggest that the library should be more inviting for students, and accordingly, instructors should guide students more often by emphasizing the importance of reading and doing research in the library. Voluntary instructors may also be role-models for the students by spending time in the lab.

RQ2. How do EFL instructors and students bring alternative ways to address their needs?

Regarding the second research question, I conducted interviews with both parties. I asked about students' wants and instructors' expectations of the program they are part of. They voiced their opinions on how to introduce alternative ways for their wishes to be realized, or simply put, their needs to be met.

■ **Table 2:** Participants' Voices from the Interviews

Students' Wants	Instructors' Expectations
Instructors to be tolerant on HW	WEW Revision
Textbook (appealing topics, rarer grammar illustrations)	Textbook change (Heavy GR but not relating the skills, content not appealing)
Extra Listening (1), Grammar (2), Vocabulary (3)	Quality of Prep-Program
More engaging activities	In-/Out-of Curricular activities
Speaking (in-class)	In-service training / Professional Development Center
Light pacing	Reaching learning outcomes
Right to choose their own instructors	

Table 2 presents a variety of issues which could be related to the previous evidence shown up to here. Firstly, students wanted instructors to be more tolerant in assigning homework. Accordingly, instructors expected a revision of the WEW materials to raise students' interest in those materials, which were found the most useful materials (see Figure 2). Secondly, students saw themselves as least proficient in the Listening skill (see Figure 1), and accordingly, they reported on their need for extra Listening materials. On the other hand, instructors referred to an improvement in the quality of the program. Regarding the quality issue, students also called for activities which

would develop their independent learning, as evidenced in story book exam excerpts (see S3's comment), and this complied with their *want* for more engaging activities in Table 2. In line with this, instructors reported on their need for a variety of in-/out-of-curricular activities. In this regard, students wanted more speaking activities to be held in class, and instructors expected the institution to contribute to their professional development with in-service training, for example, on how to teach speaking better. Furthermore, students wanted light pacing, and accordingly, the instructors expected flexibility in reaching the learning outcomes more comfortably. In addition, students also wanted to choose their own teachers in each module; however, no instructor touched upon this topic though we enquired about it in the interviews with them.

Reflections and looking into the future

Burns (1999) suggests that action research equips practitioners with building collaboration, increasing self-awareness and understanding of the curriculum and of institutional change. Within the scope of this study, I attempted to assist participants to help them collaborate with each other and reflect on their teaching and students' learning endeavors in the program. This research has influenced my own teaching in three dimensions:

- (i) for my own students "I felt the need to assign tasks which require more independent and autonomous learning";
- (ii) in my collaboration with colleagues "I believe that I triggered their minds on building collaboration since some asked me to initiate in-class observation sessions";
- (iii) in institutional Continuous Professional Development (CPD); with my colleagues, "I decided on ensuring in-service training sessions which would contribute to our own CPD".

Since action research is cyclical, this study may well maintain the cycle of planning, acting, observing and reflecting by making a future plan with the amendments required in revising the program to emphasise motivating both the instructors and students. This study has emphasized the necessity of a bottom-up approach for providing support for the program and getting the learners engaged in more independent learning pathways. To achieve this plan and address both parties' needs in the research setting of this study, we shall act by firstly setting up a CPD unit and providing in-service teaching seminars in line with the instructors' and learners' own needs.

Personally, I will get more involved in elaborating on the participants' detailed needs and do further research on this as a teacher-researcher. In the meantime, this study may hopefully act as an example regarding the sort of support that empowers language teachers and that could help them develop the necessary skills to engage both in research and their learning about their teaching and their learners throughout their

own CPD process. This study remains as an initial action research project, since we need to take further initiatives to act, with well-designed in-service teaching seminars, and to observe the effects in time, and accordingly, follow the cyclical nature of action research.

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Lessons Learned from an Innovative Flipped Teaching Experience: Prospective Teachers' and a Teacher Educator's Perspectives

Işıl Günseli Kaçar

Middle East Technical University, Ankara, Turkey

- ▶ Main focus
- ▶ Background
- ▶ Research methodology
- ▶ Participants
- ▶ Data Collection procedures
- ▶ Flipped Lesson implementation
- ▶ Findings and discussion
- ▶ Reflections and looking into the future
- ▶ References

Main focus

In the 21st century education, it is crucial to enhance English as a Second Language (ESL) /English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learners' digital literacy skills and improve their critical thinking, problem-solving, and collaborative skills through experiential learning opportunities.

Raising autonomous learners equipped with well-developed self-regulatory skills and a high level of internal motivation to learn English is an important goal in contemporary education. However, it is relatively hard to attain this goal through traditional classroom instruction. It is also hard to prepare ESL/EFL teachers who could establish such an interactive, motivating and collaborative learning environment. In fact, there is a compelling need for 21st ESL/EFL century teachers to incorporate technology-mediated classroom practices into face-to-face instruction within a socio-constructive framework to address linguistically and culturally diverse learner communities. Hence, the current study is an attempt to explore the insights prospective Turkish EFL teachers in an urban K-12 state school have in the preparation, implementation and assessment of a technology-mediated flipped lesson in the fall semester of the academic year 2017 and 2018.

Background

As the 21st century education is characterized by technology-driven collaborative endeavours, the integration of technology-enhanced classroom practices into mainstream face-to-face English classes in secondary and tertiary educational settings in a collegial manner is crucial. In order to bridge the long-standing theory and practice gap in the field of English language teaching, it is necessary to grant prospective teachers learning opportunities in such programs to improve their pedagogical content knowledge through classroom observation and ample practice opportunities to put their pedagogical knowledge into practice.

Prospective EFL teachers are expected to enhance their digital and pedagogical competencies through their engagement in professional development activities in novice teacher education programs. However, these programs often provide them with very limited experiential learning opportunities to develop these competencies. Most foreign language education departments in Turkey are no exception. Prospective teachers are provided with very limited opportunities for experiential learning to improve their digital and pedagogical skills outside class. Consequently, prospective teachers in the Turkish context are mostly underprepared for their future teaching role and fail

to develop the digital and pedagogical competencies, as required by the Ministry of National Education (see [Celen & Akcan, 2017](#); [Rakıcioğlu-Söylemez & Akayoğlu, 2015](#)). In accordance with the previous research literature on technology-mediated instruction from a socio-constructivist perspective, flipped learning, which offers learners a blended (i.e., face-to-face and online) learning environment, could be used as an appropriate instructional strategy in this respect ([Strayer, 2012](#)).

Technology-enhanced learning environments are found to offer students better and unique learning opportunities ([Chun & Plass, 2000](#)). Via flipped instruction, teachers can present rich learning experiences to students in a more engaging and motivating classroom atmosphere ([Seljan, Banek, Špiranec, & Lasić-Lazić, 2006](#)). Flipped classrooms are considered to “improve learning experiences and capture the attention of millennial students” ([Roehl, Reddy, & Shannon, 2013, p. 49](#)).

As a student-centred instructional model, the flipped approach is grounded in the constructivist theory of learning ([Strayer, 2012](#)), promoting active learner engagement in knowledge construction ([Hsieh, Wu, & Marek, 2017](#); [Jungić, Kaur, Mulholland, & Xin, 2015](#)), interactivity, student motivation and satisfaction with their learning ([Clark, 2015](#); [Muir & Geiger, 2015](#)). While fostering learners’ reflective inquiry processes ([Krajcik, Blumenfeld, Marx, & Soloway, 2000](#)), flipped instruction provides opportunities for differentiated instruction to address diverse learner profiles with varying interests and proficiency levels ([Herreid & Schiller, 2013](#)). In the flipped classroom, learners “work through problems, advance concepts, and engage in collaborative learning” ([Tucker, 2012, p. 82](#)). Such collaborative activities are effective in supporting students’ higher level of understanding ([Yang & Wu, 2012](#)). Apart from these features, flipped instruction enables self-paced learning and fostering learner autonomy ([Lai & Hwang, 2016](#)).

Considering the lack of experiential and professional learning opportunities for prospective EFL teachers in novice teacher education programs in Turkey, as a teacher educator, I decided to conduct a case study on the insights the Turkish senior prospective EFL teachers enrolled in the School Experience course gained into flipped teaching experience at an urban state K-12 school in Ankara, Turkey, in the spring semester of the academic year 2017 and 2018. This case study mainly aimed to address two research questions:

1. What are the insights of Turkish EFL prospective teachers regarding the challenges and benefits of flipped teaching experience in terms of preparation, implementation and assessment?
2. What are the insights of Turkish pre-service teacher educators regarding the challenges and benefits of the preparation of pre-service teachers for the flipped teaching experience?

Research methodology

The Research Design

The current study adopted a qualitative case study design. Case studies enable an in-depth investigation of a phenomenon in a particular learning environment (see Yin, 2009). The study aimed to address the in-depth insights of Turkish prospective EFL teachers regarding the benefits and challenges of the flipped teaching experience in an urban state high school, and those of the EFL teacher educator into her own benefits and challenges of the prospective EFL teachers' preparation for the flipped teaching experience.

Participants

Participants were 12 senior Turkish prospective teachers of English in the Department of Foreign Language Education in an English-medium urban state university in Ankara, and an experienced EFL teacher educator, also the instructor of the practicum course and a researcher at the same university. The prospective teachers were enrolled in the School Experience course in the undergraduate program in the fall semester of the academic year 2017 and 2018. They all had an advanced level proficiency in English, within an age range between 21 and 24. They did not have any teaching experience prior to their involvement in the study. The EFL teacher educator in the study held a Ph.D. degree in ELT and had extensive teaching experience as an English instructor. She had taught the ELT methodology and practicum courses at the department for about 9 years.

Data collection procedures

Flipped Learning Training Program

Before I, as the teacher educator, researcher and the classroom teacher, conducted this case study, I joined the 2018 Electronic Village Sessions (EVO) on flipped instruction in January 2018 for five weeks. Through the sessions, I was informed of the theoretical and practical aspects of flipped instruction. They helped me form a sound basis on how to integrate flipped instruction into my own teaching context at university as the course instructor and researcher.

Taking the EVO sessions as a model, I designed a 14-hour training program with different phases of flipped instruction for my senior pre-service teachers. While the

theoretical sessions were integrated into the School Experience course sessions at university, the hands-on sessions were conducted outside class hours in the computer laboratory of the department. The following table (Table 1) displays the different components of the training program in the study:

■ **Table 1.** Flipped teaching training program in the study

Week	Duration	Component	Content and Procedures
1. March 15, 2018	2 hours	Theoretical input	<p>a) The theoretical framework underlying flipped instruction.</p> <p>b) The key concepts associated with flipped learning: socio-constructivism, zone of proximal development, scaffolding, personalization, differentiated instruction, and collaborative learning</p> <p>c) Four pillars of flipped instruction: flexible environment, intentional content, learning culture, professional educator.</p>
1. March, 15, 2018	2 hours	Theoretical input	<p>Stages of Bloom's revised taxonomy: remembering, understanding, applying, analyzing, evaluating, creating</p> <p>Remembering and understanding stages: related to the lower order thinking skills</p> <p>Applying, analyzing, evaluating, creating: related to higher order thinking skills.</p>
2. March 22, 2018	2 hours	Hands-on practice	<p>The flipped lesson plan format:</p> <p>outside-class activities: linked to knowledge and comprehension stages</p> <p>in-class activities: linked to application, analysis, evaluation and creating</p> <p>Peer and group evaluation of pre-prepared flipped lesson plans posted on EVO Flipped learning course website</p> <p>Flipped lesson plan evaluation in pair and in groups as well as by the course instructor</p>

2. March 22, 2018	2 hours	Theoretical input	Introduction to before-class flipped activities Discussion on the applicability of different before-class flipped activities
3. March 29, 2018	2 hours	Hands-on practice	Hands-on practice on before-class flipped learning activities. Web 2.0 tools, websites, and interactive video preparation tools such as Ed-puzzle, Powtoon and Ted-Ed. Pre-service teachers' preparation of sample interactive videos
3. March 29, 2018	2 hours	Theoretical input	In-class flip activities and relevant Web 2.0 tools to be used with such activities Face-to-face individual and collaborative in-class activities: concept map formation, jigsaw reading, debates, interviews, role plays, and poster preparation for different learner profiles
4. April 6, 2018	2 hours	Hands-on practice	A discussion session on the effectiveness of in-class flip activities for different learner profiles The challenges to be faced during the implementation and how to cope with these challenges.
5. April 6, 2018	2 hours	Theoretical input	Formative assessment in flipped instruction and online flipped lesson formative assessment tools: Mindmeister, Padlet, mentimeter, Socrates, Kahoot, Quizlet, Voicethread, Canva, and Google forms.
5. April, 6, 2018 2 hours Hands-on practice Evaluation of the formative assessment tools used in sample flipped lessons in the EVO Flipped Learning course. Hands-on practice on the preparation of sample assessment tools for the prospective teachers' own lesson plans.			

As the teacher educator, researcher and course instructor, I assumed a variety of roles while preparing my pre-service teachers for the flipped teaching experience: the input provider, and organizer during the training program to the facilitator; a guide, and a coach during the implementation, and the feedback provider during the assessment phase.

Flipped lesson implementation

Out of three compulsory teaching task requirements in the practicum course, one teaching task was to be prepared and implemented in a flipped fashion. Having received feedback from one another and the university supervisor on their flipped lesson plans during the class sessions, the participants implemented them at the practicum school. Each classroom implementation lasted for 50 minutes. They were engaged in co-teaching during the flipped lesson. I, as the teacher educator, university supervisor and the course instructor, observed the pre-service teachers' flipped lessons at the practicum school and took field notes related to their teaching performance. After the implementation stage, the pre-service teachers asked the students at the practicum school to evaluate the flipped lessons on a variety of parameters using a Google form with 5 Likert-scale items and several open-ended questions. The participants also evaluated their teaching performance and discuss the strengths and weaknesses of the flipped lesson they conducted with their peers in the course session at university as well as with the course instructor in the form of post-conferences. However, the student evaluation at the practicum school is beyond the scope of this study.

Semi-structured interviews

45-minute semi-structured interviews in English were held with pre-service teachers after the study to explore their insights into the flipped teaching experience at the practicum school, including their views concerning the benefits and challenges of the teaching experience. As the course instructor and researcher, I transcribed and analyzed the data from the semi-structured interviews and field notes using content analysis. A faculty member at the same department as the teacher researcher's, experienced in qualitative data analysis, was also involved in the data analysis. The inter-rater reliability figure was 95%. They discussed the emergent themes when they failed to achieve congruence and reached a common agreement on the themes in the end. In order to raise the reliability, member checking was also applied to the qualitative data from the interviews.

Findings and discussion

The findings revealed that participant EFL pre-service teachers reported gaining valuable insights into flipped instruction. They remarked that flipped lessons were more engaging and appealing for the K-12 students (Clark, 2015; Muir & Geiger, 2015).

Although they seemed to have a neutral attitude towards flipped instruction at the beginning of the study, the prospective teachers tended to develop a positive attitude towards flipped teaching in general.

Regarding the benefits of flipped teaching, the pre-service teachers thought that they could promote learner engagement as flipped lessons involve more interaction, practice, production and collaboration opportunities for students, and reflective student inquiry (Krajcik et al., 2000; Song & Kapur, 2017; Tucker, 2012).

They added that flipped lessons promoted more efficient and effective means of learning for students in general (Enfield, 2013; Roehl, et al., 2013). They reported that they improved their digital skills as a result of flipped teaching experience. They all reported linking digital technology with pedagogy while designing a flipped lesson, which is consistent with Garcia-Sanchez & Santos-Espina (2017). This is also in line with the teaching competences required for English teachers by the Turkish Ministry of National Education (Celen & Akcan, 2017; Rakicioğlu-Söylemez & Akayoğlu, 2015).

They indicated that they were quite content with combining instructional dynamics with digital literacy skills in “a more participatory student-centered” classroom “with a variety of interactive and collaborative activities” (Garcia-Sanchez & Santos-Espina, 2017, p. 169), paving the way for the development of critical thinking skills and learner autonomy (Lai & Hwang, 2016; Yang & Wu, 2012). The active learning opportunities in the flipped lesson are in line with the previous field-related literature (Hsieh, et al., 2017; Jungić, et al., 2015). They also reported enjoying the sense of professional empowerment they gained through the flipped teaching experience. The pre-service teachers reported planning to do more flipped lessons in the future. They indicated their enthusiasm about the technology integration into their own classes when they start teaching. They labelled flipped learning a game changer.

On the other hand, the pre-service teachers also indicated certain challenges concerning their flipped teaching experience at the practicum school. These challenges could be listed as follows: Lack of student engagement in flipped classes at K-12 school (Bristol, 2014), prospective teachers’ lack of digital competence, issues with the flipped classroom preparation, delivery, monitoring and checking students’ progress and formative assessment issues and sustaining prospective teachers’ motivation for flipped teaching. In fact, the findings are in line with Baçal (2017), who pointed out that the effectiveness of the flipped learning model lies with the teacher. They managed to overcome some of their challenges by cooperating with the mentor teachers at the practicum school. They created a Whatsapp group in class and sent reminders to the high school students about watching the videos before class. They also collabo-

rated with the mentor teachers in this regard. The pre-service teachers also solved the flipped lesson plan preparation- and implementation-related issues through the peer and university supervisor's feedback. They also managed to solve the assessment-related issues by integrating into class a variety of formative assessment tools such as Kahoot, Socrative, Quizlet and Mentimeter, or Padlet.

As a teacher educator, I also gained some valuable insights regarding the preparation of pre-service teachers for a technology-enhanced way of teaching the flipped instruction. I saw that they need continuous guidance throughout the flipped lesson preparation, implementation, and assessment process. I became aware that they need to be motivated to face difficulties throughout the flipped teaching experience. In fact, sustaining the pre-service teachers' motivation throughout the study was a big challenge for me. To handle this challenge, I gave feedback to their flipped lesson plans. I also provided guidance and scaffolding for them whenever they had difficulty connecting different parts of the flipped lesson to one another and provided some suggestions for the activity preparation and the selection of the appropriate Web 2.0 tools. I also provided them with some videos of effective flipped classroom practices based on differentiated instruction principles. We discussed the strengths and weaknesses of these flipped lessons together. Raising the pre-service teachers' awareness towards the possible challenges during the implementation stage and how to handle them was also challenging for me as a course instructor. In the course sessions at university, they brainstormed about the potential challenges and the possible solutions to them in groups and as a whole class. Thanks to these sessions, I understood that as a teacher educator, I should make the pre-service teachers aware of the potential difficulties during the implementation stage and provide them with opportunities for reflection on the flipped lesson, helping them become more autonomous teachers. I gathered that the teacher educator should be in close collaboration with pre-service teachers throughout the flipped teaching process to maximize their professional gains and eliminate their challenges, making the learning experience enjoyable and effective. I also saw that the duration of the training period should be arranged to allow the pre-service teachers to comprehend the conceptual basis of flipped learning and to have hands-on practice with various Web 2.0 tools.

Reflections and looking into the future

Inspired by the motivating and favourable views of my EFL pre-service teachers regarding flipped teaching experience, I started coordinating a longitudinal research study on the impact of flipped instruction on the EFL pre-service teachers' professional development and on the academic achievement and the engagement levels of K-12

students in EFL lessons in diverse teaching contexts with a group of international partners as an Erasmus project.

I would recommend EFL teachers who would like to flip their classrooms to consider the following suggestions, which are in accordance with Başal (2017). They should be familiar with the learning styles of their students and possess a certain level of digital competence to be able to use the basic technological tools in class. They should also receive training on flipped instruction before implementing it in their classes. Apart from this, they should also be familiar with the Web 2.0 tools and to choose the appropriate ones to incorporate into the flipped lessons. It is also advisable for the teachers to integrate a learning management system, e.g., Google classroom or EDMODO, into their foreign language classrooms and to do careful planning in detail regarding the design, implementation and assessment of in-class and outside class flipped lesson activities.

Future directions are geared towards the investigation of the flipped teaching impact with different learner and prospective teacher profiles from different perspectives. Future researchers might also consider developing a flipped instruction kit/manual for classroom practitioners who have adopted flipped instruction as a teaching strategy. In my future teaching as a teacher educator, I am planning to attach more importance to the guidance for prospective teachers throughout their flipped teaching experience, to the duration and the content of the training program, providing ample opportunities for hands-on practice regarding the design of interactive videos and other flipped lesson materials and the use of Web 2.0 tools. I will also work with the pre-service teachers on the development of effective formative assessment tools to measure student learning through flipped instruction.

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Section 4

Supporting learners and learning

17. What If We Involve Students in Syllabus Design in an Elective Academic Translation Skills Course? - **Sezer Alper Zereyalp & Cemile Buğra**
18. Making Alterations to Curricula with Formative Feedback - **Sibel Uluköy & Didem Büyükiskender**
19. Helping EFL Students Overcome their Limitations through Doing their own Action Research - **Neslihan Gündoğdu**
20. Enhancing Higher Order Thinking Skills through Scaffolding Strategies in an EFL Context - **Cemile Buğra & Olha Ievenko Kunt**
21. The Use of the Synectics Model as a Prewriting Technique in a Tertiary Level Writing Course - **Nalan Bayraktar Balkır & Ece Zehir Topkaya**
22. Students' Perceptions of the Impact of Source-based Writing Assessment on Students' Writing Proficiency in a Turkish EAP Context - **Aslı Lidice Göktürk Sağlam & Ayla Yalçın Duman**
23. Vocabulary Teaching: From Rote Learning to Meaningful Learning - **Berna Torlaklı**
24. Sociocultural Theory-driven Google Drive Use - **Seher Balbay**
25. Screen Capture Technology: A New Way to Give Feedback! - **Ayşegül Sallı**

What If We Involve Students in Syllabus Design in an Elective Academic Translation Skills Course?

*Sezer Alper Zereyalp & Cemile Buğra
Çukurova University, Adana, Turkey*

- ▶ Main focus
- ▶ Background
- ▶ Research questions
- ▶ Research methods
- ▶ Our intervention
- ▶ Findings and discussion
- ▶ Reflections and looking into the future
- ▶ References
- ▶ Appendices

Main focus

Designing an educational syllabus is usually conceived as something which is not in the scope of students. In most cases, they are excluded from this process although they are the target group of all educational designs. This joint study emerged from our belief that involving students in syllabus design would contribute to their understanding and appreciation of the course content. Inviting students to contribute actively in syllabus design and development might both enhance the syllabus and motivate students as well as help them ‘gain a sense of ownership in their own educational journey’ (Davie & Galloway, 1996). Each year various elective courses are given by the lecturers at our university. Before the beginning of the term lecturers determine the content and process of the course and design a corresponding syllabus, which is followed throughout the year. Although these elective courses are chosen by the students from different departments such as engineering, business administration, and economics, students’ specific needs and their expectations from the course often seem to be ignored. With this in mind, we aimed to explore and consider their expectations and needs in a student-led syllabus in which we made changes throughout the year depending on their reflections and feedback on its implementation as well as student-generated or suggested course materials. The primary aim of this study was to explore how developing a student-inclusive syllabus influences the teaching and learning process.

Background

The approach to student-inclusive syllabus design we have initiated in our context is in line with growing attention to encouraging students to become more active participants, co-producers and co-designers of their own learning process (Collis & Moonen, 2005; Davis & Sumara, 2002; McCulloch, 2009) and more engaged in the process of learning (Carini et al., 2006). Students’ being able to communicate their perceptions, and to demand and get instructional change is argued to be one of the most important potential factors in ensuring achievement (Konings, et al., 2010). In his study, Thompson (2009) also noted that allowing learners to provide feedback on the course syllabus is very important since it gives them a sense of recognition and appreciation. Fostering inclusivity in the syllabus design process is related to the notion of “constructive alignment” (Biggs, 2003), a key principle to ensure the best possible learning. This implies students, examiners, and curriculum developers need to work together to develop the curriculum and strengthen the relationship between learning activities and learning objectives (Biggs & Tagg, 2011).

Research questions

In relation to the broad objective of our research, which includes involving students actively to the curricular process, we developed a number of questions to guide our research:

1. How can we involve our students in our syllabus design so that they can be more active learners?
2. Why don't we let our students become the co-designers of the syllabus? How can we do it?
3. Why don't we involve our students in the assessment process as the co-designers of the syllabus? And how?

Research methods

Informal spoken interviews (informal discussions) were used as research methods for this study since they allowed for in-depth analysis of the research puzzle and they let the researchers and the participants elaborate on the issue from many perspectives during the whole process. First of all, we invited our students into informal discussions as they feel free to discuss everything about the course in a friendly atmosphere. After that we gave them written interviews to let them write their personal ideas thoroughly and create a more inclusive environment in case they may have forgotten to say anything about an issue during the informal discussions. Finally, students were also given an end of year evaluation survey where they could reflect on the whole experience. Throughout the research, they reflected on their expectations and needs, strengths and weaknesses, choosing their own material, and preparing exam questions. After all the interventions, we wanted them to reflect on their personal experiences individually through reflection sheets in class or through e-mail.

Our intervention

Introduction

We, as two instructors, started our research at the beginning of the second term in the 2017-2018 academic year. We were teaching a one-term elective course which was being run for the first time; this course aimed at equipping 18 third/fourth grade engineering students with the academic translation skills that they need for their profes-

sional development. Rather than designing a teacher-centred syllabus, where course content and materials are pre-determined and implemented by the teacher, we preferred to involve our students in the decision-making process as active participants who would be agents shaping the content and their own learning materials.

How did we involve students in the course material selection process?

At the beginning of the term, we gave a presentation about the content and the goals of the course as this was our first meeting with this group of students. An introductory presentation about translation was delivered to make them familiar with the concept of translation. During the first week, we had informal interviews with the students, and we realized that the students were not at the same levels. Even though this course was targeted at pre-intermediate level students, some of the students opting to take the course were below the level and in need of some structural instruction. For that reason, during the following two weeks, we felt the need to revise some language structures and elicit students' self-reports about their weaknesses to prepare for them translation drills that might address their expectations. In the fourth week, we gave a written interview to the students basically asking why they chose this course and what their expectations from the course were. And then we analysed our students' goals and expectations about the course so as to give them active roles in syllabus design. After the introductory weeks, we had a discussion with students on how to decide on our course materials and students were asked to find their own materials. They were asked to choose three articles they would like to study in the course. These materials were filed and shared with all the students. Articles from students were added to "Google Drive" so that all students could access all articles chosen. After that, as students asked for some guidelines stating that they were not familiar with academic articles and academic language, we examined a sample article from the file we created together by focusing on the major features. Following that, students were asked to make a top ten of the articles based on the criteria discussed in class as to what makes good material. And then, they were asked to evaluate and determine the names and order of the materials they wanted to work on week by week, after a discussion of the suitability of the materials. Students' top ten articles were analysed and the most preferred ten articles were added to the course syllabus. Meanwhile, we created an online vocabulary database and started adding all the words we covered in our classes. Since we wanted to involve our students in the process more actively as the co-designers of course materials, we went one step further, by assigning them to find alternative final exam questions as a part of our efforts to involve students in our syllabus design and assessment. We included 50 % of the exam questions proposed by students in the final exam. Our weekly student-led syllabus can be seen below in Table 1. Meanwhile,

we evaluated the impact of our interventions with our data collection tools after each implementation.

■ **Table 1:** Weekly Student-led Syllabus

WEEKLY STUDENT-LED SYLLABUS		
WEEKS	IMPLEMENTATIONS	DETAILS AND EXPLANATIONS
WEEK 1	Introduction to the course (Informal interview)	Presentation about the concept of “Translation”
WEEK 2	“Parts of Speech” and “Passive Voice” (Informal interview)	Based on students’ weaknesses, these structures were revised. Finding the subject of complex sentences.
WEEK 3	Revision of “Noun Clauses” and “Relative Clauses” through texts. An online vocabulary data base was introduced.	We felt “Noun Clauses” and “Relative clauses” need to be revised before starting translating texts as they are essential parts of almost all academic texts. Students were given access code for the online platform. New vocabulary was added to the database regularly until the end of the term.
WEEK 4	Needs Analysis (Written Interview). Translation of Simple Sentences Through a sample article	A written interview and a discussion on how to choose translation materials (articles) for the course were applied. Students were asked to choose three articles they would like to study in the course. Articles from students were added to “Google Drive” so that all students can access to all articles chosen.
WEEK 5	An article from students was chosen and covered in class.	Basic criteria for choosing this article for the course were explained. Students were asked to make a top ten of the articles. Students’ top ten articles were analysed and most preferred ten articles were added to the course syllabus.
WEEK 6-7	Two most preferred articles were studied.	General outline of an academic article were presented and students were given a link about frequently used phrases in different parts of the articles.
WEEK 8	Mid-Term Exam	
WEEK 9-13	Four most preferred articles were studied.	Students were asked to prepare sample final exam questions.
WEEK 14	Last article of the term was studied.	
WEEK 15-16	FINAL EXAM	Ten exam questions, half of which were proposed by students, were asked.

Findings and discussion

Based on the qualitative data gathered from the students, we analysed the data first individually and then compared them together. Afterwards, we categorized the themes and present them below with some direct quotes from the students.

1. Results of the Written Interview

We intended to do needs analysis and learn our students' expectations from the course through a written interview which was given to all students choosing this elective course ([Appendix 1](#)).

Students' self-reported reasons for taking the course are as follows:

- ✓ Improving Translation Skills
- ✓ Being able to read academic articles
- ✓ Becoming familiar with academic language
- ✓ Recognizing the structure of the target language
- ✓ Having a chance to identify weaknesses

There are some motivational factors why students selected this course:

S 1:	To refresh my existing English skills, to learn new technical vocabulary, to be able to understand articles in my field of study.
S 2:	Thanks to this course, I will remember lots of vocabulary and update my knowledge about English Language and I will start to learn how to read an article.
S 3:	It is all about having new experiences and learning something new.
S 11:	If I learn more about academic language and translation skills, it will be easier to identify my weaknesses while reading the articles.

As can be seen from students' comments, they selected this course with different expectations and all these motivated us to take action to be able to meet their needs.

2. Results of Reflection Sheets

We gave a reflection sheet to our students to be able to understand their thoughts about choosing their own materials ([Appendix 2](#)). Reasons include:

- ✓ Motivating
- ✓ Interesting
- ✓ Opportunity to communicate
- ✓ Useful

Students' thoughts about choosing their own materials instead of a pre-determined course material are as follows:

S 6:	Choosing our own course material motivated us and lessons were more interesting. I learned a lot from other students as well since they all found materials from different fields of study.
S 7:	It gives us an opportunity to search and how to find scientific articles. Also we can share our interests with each other.
S 13:	It is interesting to choose our own material because we haven't experienced something like this before.

Students' reflections clearly show that our implementation increased their interest in the course content.

3. Results of Learning Logs

We applied learning logs after we got our students to prepare some possible exam questions. Key reported benefits can be seen below.

✓ Helps us see our weaknesses
✓ Motivates us to study
✓ Raises interest
✓ Students know what to expect
✓ We already learn a lot when we prepare questions

Students' thoughts were presented below:

S 12:	I can focus and learn more. We need to revise things while trying to prepare exam questions
S 14:	I believe that even the most uninterested students have an idea on the course content.
S 16:	It encourages students to study by helping them to put themselves in teachers' shoes.

We understand from students' comments that preparing alternative exam questions increased students' involvement in the process as active co-designers of the course content and assessment.

4. Results of end-of-year Evaluation

Students were given an evaluation sheet about the implementations at the end of the year. By looking at the data we gathered we can easily say that most of the students chose the course to improve their translation skills and to be able to read academic articles in English. Students stated that choosing their own material increased their

motivation and it was interesting and useful in that it provided them with an opportunity to communicate. When asked, almost all of the students stated that the course met their expectations. They chose “preparing possible exam questions” and “finding articles to be covered in classes” as favourite interventions. For us, the most important gain from involving students in syllabus design and assessment was that their motivation was always high and we hardly lost any students; this was helped by their sense of belonging as they were always active planners of the course. There are some highlights expressed by the students in the following.

STUDENTS' REFLECTIONS



Reflections and looking into the future

It is important to note that our class consisted of senior or third grade students from various engineering faculties, most of whom were quite aware of their responsibilities and who appreciated the importance of foreign language competence for their future career. Consequently, they were very collaborative and ready to cooperate in all stages of the course and the study.

What we tried to do was not only teach them how to translate but also to make them familiar with academic language and academic texts. We felt that most students took the task of preparing the alternative questions for the final exam seriously. At least, they tried to put themselves in the teacher's shoes. They were not only very eager to cooperate but also very honest when they reflected on this experience. As practitioner researchers, once again we have realized that taking students' voices into consideration contributes to the syllabus a lot; this is in terms of creating healthy communication with the students and being able to meet their needs and expectations. However, it is important to note that we had only two hours per week (in a one term elective course). We did our best to involve our students in the process in a limited timeframe; however, it was a challenging process as we had to meet the students' needs while trying to engage them in designing our syllabus and assessment. It should also be noted that this was both our and the students' first experience in such a collaboration

in designing a syllabus. What we learned from this experience is that at least one year is needed to successfully design and conduct such a course with students as it is important to know more about students' backgrounds, needs and expectations.

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Appendices

Appendix 1

Written Interview

- 1- Why did you decide to take this course? Please explain.
- 2- What is your motivation to attend this class? Please explain.
- 3- What are your expectations from this course? Please explain.
- 4- What skills do you think you will gain at the end of this course? Please give examples.
- 5- How can I help you in this process as a teacher? Please explain.

Appendix 2

Reflection Sheet

1. How do you feel about not using a pre-determined coursebook for this class?

Positive:

Negative:

2. What do you think about choosing your own articles to be covered in class?

Positive:

Negative:

3. What are the advantages and disadvantages of using materials chosen by you and your classmates?

Advantages:

Disadvantages:

4. What were your criteria for choosing your articles? Please specify.

E.g. Content/ Language/ Style/ Simplicity/ Topic knowledge/ Your ideas

5. Do you have any suggestions or comments to make the program more effective?
What changes do you think can be implemented?

Appendix 3

End of Year Evaluation

- 1- Do you think this course met your expectations?

- 2- In what area do you feel you made the biggest improvement?
- 3- What motivated you while taking this course?
- 4- What was the most challenging part of this course for you?
- 5- If you had chance to change something about the course what would you change?
- 6- What is the favourite part of the course for you and why?
- 7- What is something that was hard for you at the start of the year but easy now?
- 8- Which of our implementations for this course do you think were the most useful ones?
 - Finding your articles to be covered in class.
 - Choosing and ordering the articles to be covered in class
 - Preparing possible exam questions
- 9- If you compare you before taking this course and you after taking this course, what can you write in the table below?

Before Taking This Course	After Taking This Course

Making Alterations to Curricula with Formative Feedback

Sibel Uluköy and Didem Büyükiskender
Modern Eğitim Fen (MEF) Schools, Istanbul, Turkey

- ▶ Main focus
- ▶ Background
- ▶ Methodology
- ▶ Research
- ▶ Data collection procedure
- ▶ Findings and discussion
- ▶ Reflections and looking into the future
- ▶ References

Main focus

This joint action research study aimed at searching for different ways to involve learners in redesigning the EFL curriculum in our 8th grade classes at MEF Secondary School. We had been planning to overhaul the curricula for several reasons. Foremost among these was the fact that learners sit a national exam at the end of 8th grade for admission to high school and this had had a negative impact on learner motivation in past years. We decided to carry out an action research project to explore how learner input could be used while redesigning the 8th grade curriculum.

Dewey (as cited in Verster, n.d.) highlights that “action research can make you a student of teaching”. In line with this, as believers in lifelong learning, we are convinced that we should never cease to learn, and action research is a great tool for continuous development for educators. Good teachers see themselves as students and look for different ways to expand upon their existing knowledge.

In a K-12 setting, teachers have a tendency to rely on anecdotal data rather than research methodologies whilst designing and reshaping lesson content. In our classes, we often hold class discussions as to what the learners thought of the lesson content, but collating written data is mostly neglected.

We believe that reading about research that has been conducted in different educational settings for different purposes enriches our professional life. In this study, by collecting and analyzing data from the learners and using the data to reflect on our program and teaching approaches, we could also come to a better understanding of the needs of our students in the program in our school.

Background

Stephen Corey at Teachers College, Columbia University was one of the pioneers of action research in the field of education. He believed the scientific method would help educators bring about change as, in this way, educators would be involved in research processes as well as practice in the classroom. Corey stated that there was a need for teachers and researchers to collaborate (as cited in Ferrance, 2000). Over time, the definition of action research has expanded; it is now considered as a tool for professional development and educational change. It has become a common practice in most teacher education programs today.

We have seen for many years that there is a common belief among in-service teachers that research can only be tackled by academic researchers, and teachers are not responsible for reading about research to broaden their knowledge on ever-changing educational issues. As Özdeniz (1996) summarizes, in-service teachers first need to be

aware of where they are in their teaching career and where they want to go. However, if they are trying to reflect on their teaching for the first time, in other words, if this process is a new concept for them, they should begin by reflecting on their own classroom practice and that of their colleagues by doing peer observations. In this way, they can gain better insight into the beliefs and theories behind the materials they use, which will entail research about relevant literature.

Richards (1990) points out that a needs analysis is one of the fundamental elements of curriculum development processes in language teaching. Through a needs analysis, an educator collects a considerable amount of data including a wide range of input into the content, design, and implementation of a language program by involving learners in the planning process. When we decided to revise our curriculum in our 8th grade we wanted to discover our learners' needs and get their insights into the current lesson content. In the Turkish K-12 context, program objectives for all subjects are specified by the Ministry of Education, and learners are expected to achieve them. In other words, both the learners and the teachers have to work on the given curriculum. Having said that, though, private schools in Turkey form their own tailor-made curriculum for English lessons. While conducting our action research, we aimed at using learner input regarding their perceived needs to revise our curriculum.

We also focused on fostering learner autonomy. Autonomy is defined by Holec (1981) as “the ability to take charge of one’s learning” (p. 3). In this study, the learners reflected independently in focus groups on their preferred learning strategies. The concepts of reflection and autonomy have unfortunately been neglected in our school since, in our Turkish context, learners are mostly not aware of their own learning processes and individual learning styles.

Research methodology

Setting and participants

This action research took place in a school setting with two classes of 8th grade learners over a period of six months in MEF Secondary School, a private educational institution in İstanbul. This setting was chosen as we wanted to collect and analyse student data about our program, and we wanted our teenage students to voice their thoughts before they graduated. We felt that their input would be invaluable and that it would shed light on the strengths and weaknesses of our program.

Research questions

We focused on the following questions in our research:

- 1) Why are most of our 8th grade students not showing interest in materials we want them to be engaged in?
- 2) How can we encourage more learner participation in English classes?

Data collection Procedure

We used various data collection tools to seek answers to the research questions. As Mills (2000) discusses, the researcher determines what data will be collected and how it will help him or her understand and solve the research questions. In our research, as quantitative tools, we made use of data from semi-structured letters (Appendix A), reflection journals (Appendix B), and a 3-2-1 reflection tool (Appendix C). We also used qualitative data collection techniques to examine the learners' independent reflections on lesson content in focus group interviews and whole class discussions in order to obtain a better understanding of our learners' needs and preferences by interacting face-to-face with them. Towards the end of the academic year, the learners in the focus group study were asked to share their views in a video-recorded session, and they were guided with the following semi-scripted questions:

- How did you feel about the action research process?
- Do you think that your teacher took into consideration your suggestions when redesigning the 8th grade curriculum?
- Do you still feel that your teacher should/could have done more to enrich the curriculum?
- How do you think taking part in this action research has helped you?

The video-recorded session was an essential part of the data collection process because we felt that the students as well as the researchers needed to review and reflect on the extent of student involvement in redesigning the curriculum. We also wanted to have additional digital data to confirm our findings. At the end of the academic year, lastly, we distributed the Likert scale questionnaire to the students (Appendix D).

As pointed out by Efron and Ravid (2013), "although action research is conducted by practitioners in their own practice, it is still considered research and should be monitored and conducted by some ethical guidelines" (p. 74). Similarly, Mertler (as cited in Efron & Ravid, 2013) advises that "Ethical consideration of your students and your colleagues should be key elements of action research study", and Stringer (as cited in Efron & Ravid, 2013) added that "teacher researchers should protect the interests and well-being of all the study's participants" (p. 74). In line with this, before we started our study, we held a class discussion with the learners asking for their consent, assuring them that their privacy and anonymity would be respected and protected throughout the process. Later, however, while reading about ethical issues in the literature, we came to realize that we should have prepared an "Informed Consent" form and sent it to the parents to formally ask for their permission to allow for their child's participation in the action research project.

Findings and discussion

Our research emerged from a mutual concern about how to redesign our 8th grade curriculum with learner input to develop more effective lessons. Our ultimate goal was to involve learners in redesigning the curriculum and raise learner awareness towards our lesson content. Findings from the various data collection tools used indicated that learners preferred a different lesson shape. The detailed findings of the study are presented below.

Research Question 1

Why are most of our 8th grade students not showing interest in materials we want them to be engaged in?

Data gathered from the feedback in the letters was quantified and revealed that we should integrate more technology on a regular basis into our lesson content.

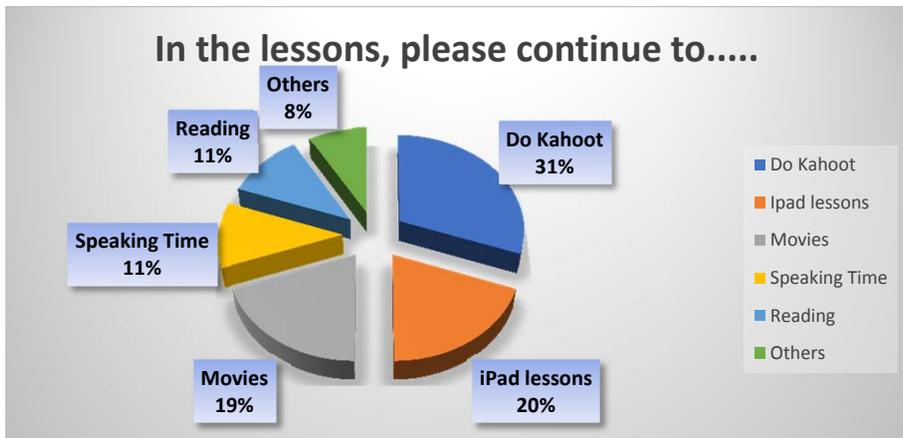


Figure 1: Learners' opinions about current lesson content.

As shown in Figure 1, for the prompt “In the lessons, please continue to-----”, 51% of learners wanted us to continue to include in the curriculum ‘Kahoot’ games (an online interactive game), and to embed task types that they could do on their iPads. In addition to these, 19% of the learners also indicated that the lessons should continue to include movies.

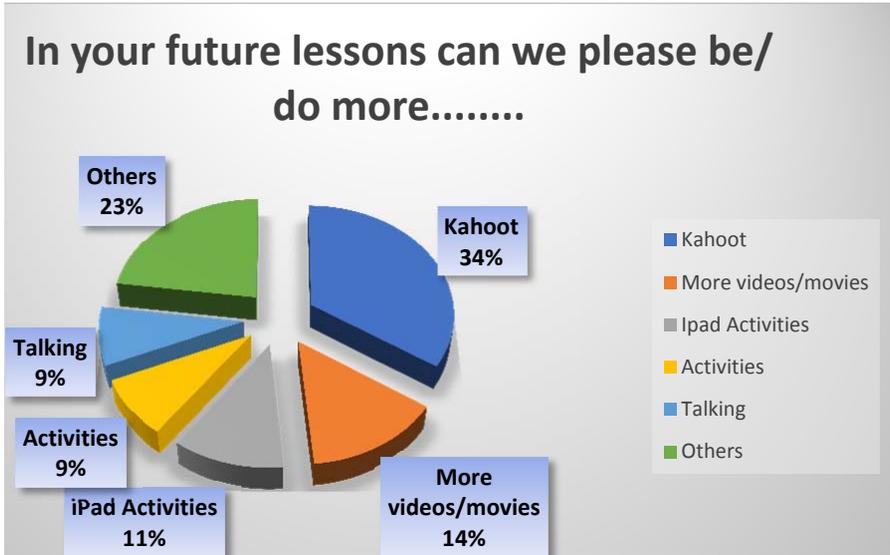


Figure 2: Learners’ suggestions for future lesson content.

The data in Figure 2, with the prompt “In your future lessons can we please be/do more-----?” once more highlighted the fact that 45% of learners wished to be engaged in more technology integrated lessons. Interestingly, only 14% of the learners suggested that more movies should be included in future lessons.

Research Question 2

How can we encourage more learner participation in English classes?

Qualitative data were gathered from focus group and whole class discussion to examine this research question. Eighteen students from 8A were selected to further discuss the details of the data found previously. The discussion that was held with the learners focused on asking the learners to elaborate on their reasons for preferring a different lesson shape. Some illustrative quotes from learners are as follows:

- “People are competitive so in a Kahoot game, you compete, and this boosts learning”.
- “Kahoot competitions are very useful”.
- “Students don’t like reading but they like reading online”.
- “The school needs to set up a system to make maximum use of technology in class: i.e. there should be a ‘Bring your own device’ policy.”
- “For iPad lessons, we can read some articles from Achieve3000”.

In short, learners were convinced that more technology embedded task types in the program would increase their participation in English classes.

Reflections and looking into the future

We have seen that research processes foster a culture of learning and development in the school environment. In a K-12 setting, it is highly important to create an environment where teachers will feel the need for research. It is also essential that they have mentors to guide them on a regular basis. In our context, we believe that the action research carried out in our English program started to build a growth-oriented mindset in our department. We exchanged information with all the teaching staff in the department about each phase of the action research. This made everyone rethink and re-evaluate their teaching approaches, and eventually teachers started thinking about challenging classroom practices to do research on, such as reading aloud from novels in class, teacher questioning techniques on texts studied in class, and teacher feedback on essays.

In informal discussions we held with the academics from MEF University, Faculty of Education, ELT Department, we had been asked what type of professional development our teachers would need. We shared that it would be great if teachers could have some training on how to conduct action research. Followed by this informal discussion, it was announced that the Faculty of Education was going to open a certificate program on conducting action research. The certificate program captured the attention of a good number of teachers from different disciplines, and they were enrolled in the program.

Whilst carrying out the action research, learners' feedback was invaluable, and kept us motivated throughout. We tried to address the needs that the students had stated in the initial surveys and focus groups. Throughout the research, we realized that there should have been a larger sample with more learner participation. For instance, for the Likert scale questionnaire, we could not collect enough data since the learners were preparing for the national exam, and they did not come to school in the last weeks of the academic year.

During this action research project, we further confirmed our belief about the importance of listening to learners' voices with regard to redesigning the curriculum. In our focus group and whole class discussions the learners stated that it was time to incorporate more technology into the curriculum. In addition to that, although they enjoyed the novels in the program chosen by the teachers, they felt there could be more authentic content on up-to-date topics. They suggested that the school should adopt a new educational practice of including student input into curriculum design. We took these recommendations to management. In meetings together with teaching staff from other departments, it was decided that MEF Schools would give more opportunities to learners to influence curriculum design. Additionally, it was confirmed that within the framework of the core curriculum specified by the Ministry of Education, further reflection on classroom teaching approaches and lesson content would be encouraged.

In line with this, the administration agreed that as a result of our findings, it would be necessary to use different data collection tools to reflect on learner feedback on a regular basis, and that this would be given priority in the future.

During this academic year, we are aiming at inspiring and involving more teachers in conducting action research in our department. As claimed by Mills (2000) “action research creates opportunities for all involved to improve the lives of children and learn about the craft of teaching” (p. 11).

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Appendix A

Letter format

Dear Ms/ Mr-----,

Here is my feedback on your lessons so far.

In the lessons, please continue to -----.

I find this/ these very useful and/ or enjoyable.

However, if possible, please stop-----.

I don't find these things very useful/ enjoyable.

In your future lessons, can you please be/ do more-----.

Thanks,

Student name

Appendix B**Reflection Journal**

*My favourite part of today's lesson was----- because -----

*One thing that helped me learn in class today was-----

*If I were the teacher for this class, I would -----

*One thing I'll remember about today's lesson is-----

*Additional notes: -----

Appendix C**Reflection tool**

Dear Students,

Please reflect on your learning in English lessons using 3-2-1 reflection tool.

*3 things I learned in English classes.

*2 things I found interesting in English classes.

* 1 question I still have from English classes.

Appendix D

Dear Students

As we approach the end of the year, I'd like to get some feedback from you on my teaching approach and on our work together. I'd appreciate it if you could take some time to complete the questionnaire. You don't have to mention your name unless you would like to.

1. In general how would you rate our lessons in terms of the following criteria?

	I strongly agree.	I agree.	I strongly disagree	I disagree.
Creative				
Motivating /Enjoyable				
Variety of learning opportunities				

2. How satisfied are you with the following aspects of our lesson?

	I strongly agree.	I agree.	I strongly disagree.	I disagree.
We have fun.				
We use technology in our lessons.				
The teacher makes the class and the material interesting.				
We participate in class debates where the teacher encourages us to say what we think.				
We read for pleasure by choosing books based on our interest and level of English.				
I feel like the content of this class connects to my life and is meaningful to me.				
We watch theme-related videos and short movies that make the lesson engaging for us.				

Helping EFL Students Overcome their Limitations through Doing their own Action Research

Neslihan Gündoğdu
Çukurova University, Adana, Turkey

- ▶ Main focus
- ▶ Background
- ▶ Research methodology
- ▶ Findings and discussions
- ▶ My Reflections and looking into the future
- ▶ References

Main focus

I have been doing action research as an EFL instructor for the past three years, since I was introduced to it by my mentor. My aim, this time, is to help students do their own action research in order to take responsibility to overcome their weaknesses in the four skills while learning English. This case study explores the journey of two EFL students doing their own action research.

The need to do this research emerged while I was teaching general English to A2 level undergraduate students studying English at the preparatory school of English, Çukurova University. After teaching this class for a month in the first block (8 weeks), I started to realize that each student had a different weakness in terms of developing their four skills or grammar. For example, one student had a problem improving his/her grammar and another had a problem with listening comprehension. The underlying reason behind these obstacles could possibly be not attending classes regularly, or not doing revisions or class work on time. Not being able to keep up with the pace of the class sessions due to their level of English and interest in the lesson could also be a reason. Bearing all this in mind, I gave all the students in the class a self-reflection sheet to identify their strengths and weaknesses both as a student and as a language learner. With this reflection sheet I tried to understand what kind of students they were from a general perspective and whether they were aware of their strengths and weaknesses from a specific perspective. Written reflections revealed that most students were aware of their strengths and weaknesses. In a class discussion about their problematic language skills, I asked students if they would carry out their own action research to overcome their weaknesses. Five students agreed to participate in the research, and I acted as a mentor during the process. The following research questions guided the study:

1. What kind of implementations did my students do to overcome their weaknesses?
2. What would the possible outcomes be of students doing their own action research?

Background

Much research has been carried out to contribute to effective teaching in the world of ELT. One of the “broad movements that has been going on in education for sometime is action research” (Burns, 2010, p. 3). As Burns (2010) states, it is “a valuable way to extend our teaching skills and gain more understanding of ourselves as teachers, our classrooms and our students” (p. 1). Action research is a reflective methodology which aims to solve a particular teaching-learning obstacle identified by teachers in

a classroom environment (Burns, 2010; Kasula, 2015). It is comprised of a series of stages, which are “planning, acting, observing and reflecting” (Stewart, 2013, p. 137). In the planning stage, issues or problems that occur in the class are identified and then a plan of action is designed to conduct the research. In the acting stage the plan is put into practice with some interventions over a period of time. In the observation stage, which is also the data collection phase, the effects of the interventions are observed systematically and documented by teachers. In the reflecting stage, outcomes of the research are evaluated and shared to describe the effects of the research (Burns, 2010).

While the aim is to get teachers involved in action research, “it’s also a valuable technique that can be taught to students within the classroom” (McGraw-Hill Education, 2017, p. 2). We can infer from what McGraw-Hill Education states: EFL students can be engaged in their own action research if they are trained by their teachers. They can be taught the principles, steps and goals of action research to use inside and outside of their classroom environment. In addition, understanding the research process will help students develop analytical skills: “To make thinking beings, we must encourage explanation, exploration, generalization, and case accumulation” (Schank, 1995, p. 4). Students will go through this process while doing the action research, which we thought can have an impact on students’ personal development. First of all, learners can promote their autonomy, as the three basic pedagogical principles are learner involvement, learner reflection, and appropriate use of language (Najeeb, 2013). Secondly, students can develop a sense of responsibility, as they will be in charge of their own learning by making decisions during the learning process. They do not have anybody to blame or praise but themselves. Last, they can learn to be organized and efficient as careful planning is needed while carrying out the research.

Research methodology

Based on the problems reported by my students and my observations, I carried out a case study to help students do their own action research. I simplified action research steps for the students, as McGraw-Hill Education (2017, p. 3) suggests. The stages are: “deciding on a topic, creating questions about the topic and projecting answers, collecting data and evaluating the results, looking at the questions and answers again and deciding if changes need to be made, and identifying what was learned from the process and what steps need to be taken moving forward”. Data collection tools were learning logs and student journals. Students wrote their reflections throughout the research process and data were collected from students’ reflections (see Appendix A) and informal interviews.

Settings

The academic term in my institution consists of four blocks and each block lasts 8 weeks. Pre-intermediate level (A2) students receive 26 hours of instruction a week. Twenty hours were allocated for course book study and 6 hours for grammar. Teaching the course book and grammar were shared among the teachers and my responsibility was to teach the course book 2 hours a week. I taught this class during the first block but unfortunately, I could not teach the same class during the second block as I was assigned to teach a different class. However, this did not affect the research process as students worked independently.

The research started in the fifth week of the first block and continued until the end of the second block of the academic term. Starting from the second block, students did not follow a course book. Instead the skills book was used for 20 hours a week, 10 hours for listening and speaking and 10 hours for reading and writing. Six hours was set aside for grammar teaching.

Participants

This case study started with five participants, three females and two males, but unfortunately two male and one female student withdrew from the study as they did not do the activities regularly. I continued the case study with the two female students (names are pseudonyms, Zehra and Aden). They were from different departments and backgrounds. In this study Zehra focused on improving her listening skills as she had difficulty in doing the listening exercises in her course books. Zehra was a repeat student as she did not pass the English proficiency test the previous year and she had the right to repeat the same course for a year. However, it was Aden's first year in the course. She wanted to work on improving her grammar as she struggled to construct grammatically correct sentences. Through our informal interviews, she reported that she had trained her ear by watching English films, documentaries, YouTube videos and by listening to English songs in her free time in previous years. Therefore, doing the listening activities was not a problem for her.

My implementations

I did a number of implementations in the first and second week before students started conducting their own research. First, after the students identified their problems and decided which language skill to work on, I gave them a short presentation about action research, its purpose and its steps. Then I shared my experiences about the previous studies that I had conducted and the reflections of the students who had taken part in

these studies. After that I asked students to think about their research questions, how they might implement their research and what data collection tools they would use. I allowed them a week to think about these questions and arranged a day to meet the following week.

When I met the students in the second week, they were excited to share ideas about how to conduct their study. Both Zehra and Aden did some research by talking to other teachers, other successful language learners, and some repeat students about their problems and made a note of their solutions. They also did some reading on the internet. After that they designed their own study plan.

In order to track what the students would be doing, I arranged meetings with the students every two weeks until the end of the research. During these meetings they reported to me what they had done for their development and I answered their questions if they had any. They also handed in their learning logs. At the end of the research I held an informal interview with each student, which lasted approximately 20 minutes. Based on this interview, I constructed an open-ended questionnaire (see [Appendices B and C](#)). The purpose of the questionnaire was to reinforce what the students said in the interview and to give them an opportunity to answer the questions more fully.

Students' implementations

Zehra's weakness was not being able to do listening exercises, such as listening for gist, details and note-taking. She planned to do extra studying for an hour three times a week. As for Aden, her obstacle was not being able to construct grammatically correct sentences. Their implementations are given in Table 1.

■ Table 1: <i>The students' implementations</i>	
Zehra's activities	Aden's activities
Doing activities on voscreen (a website which helps students improve their English language skills on your own through short video clips.	Attending class sessions regularly
Doing listening activities from esl-lab. (www.esl-lab.com)	Doing regular revisions
Reading story books with CDs	Doing assignments on time
Watching videos and films on YouTube	Reading story books and making a note of the sentences or phrases or words that she liked in the book and trying to use them while writing a paragraph
Listening to TED talks on her mobile phone.	Watching films with a subtitle and using some of the phrases in her sentences.

Findings and discussions

The reflections of the students were gathered from their learning logs, journals, informal interviews and the open-ended questionnaire given at the end of the process. Data was analyzed by interpreting the students' reflections by focusing on the content and searching for emerging themes.

Zehra's development was fruitful in terms of listening skills and personal development. She stated that a month after she started her activities she began to realize that she was getting better at doing the listening exercises both in her course book and in the listening activities that she did as an extra outside the class. Doing well in her listening quiz and in the listening section of the first achievement exam motivated her to continue to do this research. Her listening speaking skills teacher had observed her development and reflected on it. She reported that she gained a great deal of confidence. She was able to identify the words, phrases and sentences at her level. She could even hear the words that she had not heard before. She discovered that she is both an audio-visual and a visual learner. With regard to her personal development, she learned to study regularly with a plan in her mind. She became aware of the fact that she could use the cycles of action research in her real life. With this method she could stay on her own feet rather than depend on someone else to solve her own problems.

Aden also benefitted from this research process in terms of the progress in her grammar and personal development. She reported that her efforts to improve her grammar started to pay off, which encouraged her to keep studying. Her improvement was clearly seen in her sentences when she wrote paragraphs in an assignment and her teachers were happy to see her progress. She also performed well in her grammar, noticeable when writing quizzes and in the grammar and writing section of her first achievement exam. Watching English films and videos from YouTube helped her become familiar with daily language. She tried to take part in speaking activities as much as she could. All the efforts she made helped her gain confidence. As for her personal development, she stated that she developed a sense of responsibility by being part of a research project, studying regularly and taking the initiative to find her own way to contribute to her development. She realized that gaining action research skills is something that people needs to apply in any field in their life.

My reflections and looking into the future

Based on the students' reflections, I come to the conclusion that encouraging these two students to carry out their own action research to overcome their limitations had

a positive impact both on their language development and personal growth. It seems that they acted like autonomous learners, in other words, “taking the responsibility for learning” (Egel, 2009, p. 2023). These two students took responsibility from the beginning of the research to the end. Having students do action research at schools can be assigned as a class project for students to promote autonomy. Another outcome was that both students became aware of their own learning styles. Hearing and seeing the language at the same time while watching films and videos with English subtitles reinforced their language development. Most important of all, this research helped these two students gain a lifelong skill which could be applied to other fields whenever they encounter a problem.

This research also had an impact on me both as a teacher and a researcher. As a teacher, I came to realize that I’d been trying to spoon feed the students by shouldering all the responsibility to teach English. As Najeeb (2013) states, “no learning takes place unless the learner is in charge” (p. 1239). From now on, I will try to use materials to promote autonomous learning. I will share the findings of this research with my institution and suggest that action research should be assigned as a classroom project. As a teacher researcher, I have learned that the more you do research, the better your teaching becomes and other teachers will benefit from the results of your research too. My contribution to the literature may be a drop in the ocean but it’s still a part of the whole. In and out of the class, my mind is always busy reflecting on what students did in the class as a learner and what I did as a teacher. This will lead to developing other research topics in the future.

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Appendix A: Self-reflection sheet

My strengths as a student	My weaknesses as a student
My strengths as a language learner	My weaknesses as a language learner

Appendix B: Questionnaire constructed based on the informal interview with Zehra

- a. To determine your method of your work who did you get information from and what sources did you use?
- b. What kind of listening activities have you done so far? Please explain with examples.
- c. What were the topics of the listening activities you chose and how did you choose them?
- d. How often did you study and how much time did you spare for the activities?
- e. What kind of improvements have been made in your listening skills thanks to action research? How did you evaluate this improvement?
- f. Did this study help you to notice your other weaknesses in language learning?
- g. Did you notice any change in you in terms of your contribution to class participation?
- h. What did this process teach you?

Appendix C: Questionnaire constructed based on the informal interview with Aden

- a. To determine your method of your work who did you get information from and what sources did you use?
- b. What kind of grammar activities have you done so far? Please explain with examples.
- c. What were the topics of the grammar activities you chose and how did you choose them?

- d. How often did you study and how much time did you spare for the activities?
- e. What kind of improvements have been made in your grammar skills thanks to action research? How did you evaluate this improvement?
- f. Did this study help you to notice your other weaknesses in language learning?
- g. Did you notice any change in you in terms of your contribution to class participation?
- h. What did this process teach you?

Enhancing Higher Order Thinking Skills through Scaffolding Strategies in an EFL Context

*Cemile Buğra & Olha Ievenko Kunt
Çukurova University, Adana, Turkey*

- ▶ Main focus
- ▶ Background
- ▶ Research methodology
- ▶ Findings and discussion
- ▶ Reflections and looking into the future
- ▶ References
- ▶ Narrative research frame

Main focus

Our need to do this joint research is based on a common problem which occurs in our classes. Our research started at the beginning of the second term in the 2017-2018 academic year. Through discussions we realized that our students had difficulties in developing questioning skills and doing online research for the projects assigned at the end of each unit in our coursebook. Depending on our students' needs, we wanted to take action to solve our puzzle by engaging our students in the process more actively. Our interventions included different narrative research frames and also some activities such as hot seating, and six thinking hats, for enhancing HOTS (Higher Order Thinking Skills) through scaffolding while learning English in a foundation program at a university.

Background

For Geertsen (2003), higher order thinking is a systematic way of using existing knowledge or searching for new information by benefitting from various degrees of abstraction. Linn (2000) suggests that critical thinking involves a variety of skills such as identifying sources of information, analyzing credibility, reflecting on prior knowledge, and drawing conclusions based in critical thinking skills. While doing research for the assigned presentations, students need guidance to do it in an organized way. For this reason, as practitioners we benefitted from scaffolding strategies. In this study, scaffolding consisted of guiding questions, prompts, and cues embedded in research frames, some of which we adapted based on the needs of the course. Learners use Bloom's taxonomy (Krathwohl, 2002) through their own experiences, reflections, reasoning, or communication with the help of the activities we carried out in the classroom. The ultimate aim of this study was to make scaffolding more effective in the classroom. Oliveira (2009) asserts that the use of a framework of questions generates more articulate student responses to questions and promotes higher-level student thinking. Therefore, each implementation provided opportunities for us to guide student learning, offer students different types of practices, and provide students with different aspects of online research as part of unit projects. The following were our research questions:

1. Why do our students have difficulties while searching online and preparing presentations for the unit projects?
2. How can we encourage and help our students develop higher order thinking skills (HOTS) to deal with the challenges they meet?
3. In what way can scaffolding techniques help students to solve their problems?

Research methodology

This joint study was conducted by two of us with the involvement of 42 students who were pre-intermediate level at that time. We conducted informal talks and written interviews to identify and understand the problems occurring in our classes. Based on the interviews, we understood that our students had problems with issues related to research and presentation skills while learning the language. They stated that they could not find the information and organize it for the presentation in the class. They said that they could not support their ideas from different points of view. Also, they asserted that they did not have any ideas about research techniques.

Furthermore, we observed that our students had difficulty in developing questioning skills, researching online for the unit projects, categorizing the information they found and presenting their research to the class from different perspectives. Last, they tended to focus only on their own ideas and ignored others. They were not aware of the fact that there were different levels of knowledge and varying perspectives on an issue. In our research, we also benefitted from reflective teacher journals, observations, and an evaluation survey (see [Appendix 4](#)) at the end of the course. We analyzed our data based on content analysis.

Based on our data, we analyzed all the units in our book and designed a six-week outline to be implemented in the classes in a way that would serve our purposes, as shown in Table 1.

■ **Table 1:** Aims and descriptions of the implementations

Unit Themes in the Book	Implementations/Activities	Aims	Description of the Implementations/Activities
Job Interviews	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developing and searching questions • Follow up: Hot Seating 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Being able to ask questions • Developing questioning skills 	<p>Students write interview questions and compare with their friends. They search on the internet and they add different questions to theirs.</p> <p>When they are ready, one student sits in the middle of the classroom and the others ask him/her questions.</p>
Problems and Solutions about Tourism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Using a narrative research frame (see Appendix 1) • Follow up: Pair presentation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Searching a topic from different sources • Presenting the solutions for the problems 	<p>Students focus on one problem and they define it according to the guideline given in the research frame. Then they propose different solutions to that specific problem. After that they search the effectiveness of the solutions they have found. At the end, they present it to the class.</p>

<p>Marriage Issues</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Six Thinking Hats • Follow up: Group Presentation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developing new insights • Critical thinking skills 	<p>Six Thinking Hats was designed by Edward de Bono. Each colourful hat represents a different perspective. Students choose their colour and they form groups. All the groups have equal members. They research the topic according to the viewpoint of the colour of their hat. Then they present their views as a group.</p>
<p>Sleeping Problems</p>	<p>DRAPES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research frame (see Appendix 2) D - Definition R - Rhetorical question A - Analogies/analyses P - Personal experiences E - Examples S - Statistics • Follow up: Individual presentation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organizing and categorizing the information for presentation • Approaching the topic from different angles 	<p>Students focus on a problem and they research it by following the steps of DRAPES. If they cannot complete the steps of the research frame, they can get help from their friends or the teacher. However, all the students complete the frame before presenting it to the class.</p>
<p>Problems of Animals/ Mandatory Volunteering</p>	<p>Think-Pair-Share (see Appendix 3)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Follow up: Post discussion 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sharing ideas and understanding differences • Critical thinking skills 	<p>This is a pair work activity. Students choose a discussion question and they discuss it by writing their own and their partner's ideas on the outline. Then they change their partners and choose another question for discussion. This is repeated. At the end of the activity, a post discussion is conducted for further evaluation.</p>
<p>Homework Issues</p>	<p>Know - Want - Learned - Evidence (K-W-L-E) Chart (Graphic Organizer)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Follow up: Group discussion 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organizing and categorizing the information for presentation • Comparing and contrasting 	<p>Students complete the chart with what they know and they search for what they want to learn and for what they do not know. Then they share and discuss all the things they note down. They compare their ideas and findings with their friends.</p>

Findings and discussion

We encouraged our students to implement the process that we described in Table 1. We believed that those guided tasks and activities would help our students develop their questioning skills and higher order thinking skills (HOTS) to deal with the challenges they met while doing online research and organizing the information they found. In addition, we further reflected on the first implementation from their own perspectives as follows:

R 1:	This activity was really good for developing various questions. And it was also like a real life experience.
R 2:	This activity became a real ice-breaker for my class as the Ss did not know each other; they were very shy and hesitant.

As the second implementation, which was a narrative research frame, the practitioners focused on students' problem-solving skills. However, they still had some difficulties while introducing an unusual task to the students. Their reflections are presented in the following:

R 1:	At the beginning, my students could not figure out the research frame. However, as much as they did research online and communicate with their peers, they could complete the task. They learned new terms, concepts and information about the topic they searched. Some of my students benefitted from the categorized information while doing writing.
R 2:	Narrative research frame had a frightening effect on my Ss at first. However, I noticed that this was the first time when the Ss spoke to each other in English and took common decisions as a team what to write in the narrative frame. Moreover, there was a feeling of the competition. The narrative frames were the fruits of the labour of each team and my students gave me their frames with a certain pride of their team work.

As the students had difficulty in the previous task, we wanted to make use of an activity which was more practical within a group. These are our reflections:

R 1:	They were supposed to write their opinions about the topic they discussed in the class. All of my students wrote very well about the topic from different perspectives. It was an enjoyable and active lesson.
R 2:	To my surprise, this time I saw the curiosity in my Ss' eyes and volunteering intention to do research and present this topic to the class. I think it was a successful and creative implementation. It was the first time to feel the satisfaction by their effort and I noticed that they were pleased by their preparation and by their performance too.

Next, a different version of the narrative frame was applied in the class to scaffold the process. And this time, it went better than the previous one. We commented on it as follows:

R 1:	DRAPES helped students to organize and categorize the information. While doing the presentation, they did not have much difficulty as they followed the order of the frame. They were more confident in front of the class as they were well-prepared beforehand.
R 2:	This activity was applied as a task and frame to complete to get ready for a Speaking Quiz. My students felt more self-confident about their presentation skills.

After that, a note taking activity was implemented during peer discussions. Based on our experiences, we shared our reflections:

R 1:	Taking notes was a bit demanding for them, but later they got used to it. Ss realized that their friends had more different ideas and perspectives about the issues. As they recorded all the answers, they could take active roles in the post discussion. And each question was deeply analyzed from many various aspects.
R 2:	I was very happy to hear and notice that my Ss became more conscious, more focused during this implementation. Plus, everyone in the class understood that being egocentric is not good for communication.

And finally another frame was carried out in one of the classes. One of us made this comment:

R 1:	My students benefitted from this graphic organizer a lot. As they got used to these kinds of frames, they could complete it easily.
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These activities reinforced students' learning as they were concrete materials rather than abstract concepts. We tried to promote students' thinking through the prompts and questions in our activities by encouraging them to improve their problem-solving skills. Students' reflections on these implementations are as follows:

S 1:	Thanks to these activities, we managed to do research online, generate ideas, and present them to the audience.
S 2:	We learned to do research step by step owing to the research frames.
S 3:	We improved ourselves, gained self-confidence, searching and presenting skills.
S 4:	All of the tasks were really useful and these should be practiced in the next years.
S 5:	Sharing ideas through these activities developed our research skills.
S 6:	These kinds of techniques will be beneficial for our future careers and professional life.

All things considered, the evaluation of the whole process shows that these implementations helped both us as the teachers and the students. Final evaluations on the implementations are as follows:

R 1:	Our all implementations worked really well in my classroom. However, my favourites were Six Thinking Hats, DRAPES, Think-Pare-Share, K-W-L-E Chart. I benefited from all of them perfectly. But if I wanted to change something, I would use the second implementation at the end as it seems challenging for the students.
R 2:	Hot seating was my favourite. Six thinking hats worked best in my class. I think more creative exercises and activities such as Six Thinking Hats should be implemented in our classes to teach higher order thinking skills. Moreover, Think-Pair-Share activity was one of my and my students' favourite as well.

Reflections and looking into the future

We developed new insights into our teaching experience in terms of improving our questioning skills while creating opportunities to help our students become critical thinkers through enhancing their higher order thinking skills with the help of scaffolding strategies. By doing this study, we not only gave ourselves the opportunity to realize our own potential to improve as teachers but also helped our students to discover their own capacity to develop. This exploratory process contributed to our enlightenment as it broadened our visions and perceptions about teaching and learning.

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APPENDIX 1: Narrative Research Frame

Choose one problem about tourism related to the issues below and propose a solution by giving the source based on your research. Then discuss with your partner and prepare a presentation about it.

Environmental	Economical	Social/Health	Moral/Ethical	Political	Cultural
Identify a problem. Who is responsible for it?			Who is affected? Where? When? How? Why?		
Propose a solution. Why did you choose this solution? Are there any other alternatives? Why not others?			Where/how did you find the solutions? Specify the sources.		

APPENDIX 2

D-R-A-P-E-S (Jill Spencer) Research Frame

This is a useful strategy to focus in developing a presentation.

D – Definition Define the problem or the topic.	
R – Rhetorical question Ask a question to the audience about your presentation.	
A – Analogy/Analyses Analyze the details from different aspects (cause/effect, advantage/disadvantage, comparison/contrast, etc.)	
P – Personal experience Talk about your personal knowledge, observation, stories, habits, etc.	
E – Examples Give examples from real life, films, songs, documentaries, etc.	
S – Statistics Research on the internet and find scientific information about the topic.	

APPENDIX 3

Think-Pair-Share

Think or write about the question. Share or listen. Then switch roles. One person talks, the other listens. Be ready to share both of your ideas.

<p>Tell what you think. I think that _____ because _____ One reason why I feel this way is _____</p>	<p>Listen and respond to your partner. My idea is similar to yours. I also think that _____ My idea is different from yours. I think _____ Will you explain that again?</p>	<p>Share with the group. _____ raised a good point. He/she said that _____ _____ pointed out that _____ We agreed that _____, because _____ One important idea we discussed is _____</p>
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Questions or Prompts	What I thought	What my partner thought	What we will share

APPENDIX 4: End of Year Evaluation Survey

Dear Students,

We have tried different activities/implementations since the beginning of the second term to be able to help you. This is the order of the activities/implementations. Now, try to remember each of them and answer the questions that follow.

- A. Developing and Searching Questions/Hot Seating (Job interviews)
- B. Using a Narrative Research Frame (Problems and solutions about tourism)
- C. Six Thinking Hats (Marriage issues)
- D. D-R-A-P-E-S Research Frame (Sleeping problems)
- E. Think-Pair-Share (Problems of animals)
- F. K-W-L-E Chart (Homework issues)
 - 1) Can you order the activities according to the degrees of importance to you? Which ones are your favourite?
 - 2) What activities do you find the most useful? Why/Why not?

- 3) What benefits can you tell us in terms of practising these kinds of activities/ implementations?
- 4) If you evaluate yourself before and after the second term, what can you say about your personal development? Did you improve your research and presentation skills? Why/Why not?
- 5) What suggestions do you have for developing research and presentation skills? What suggestions do you have for our future classes?
- 6) Would you like to add any comments? If you have any ideas, you can share without hesitation.

The Use of the Synectics Model as a Prewriting Technique in a Tertiary Level Writing Course

*Nalan Bayraktar Balkır and Ece Zehir Topkaya,
Çanakkale Onsekiz Mart University, Çanakkale, Turkey*

- ▶ Main focus
- ▶ Background
- ▶ Research methodology
- ▶ Findings and discussion
- ▶ Reflections and looking into the future
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Main focus

The main purpose of this chapter is to report on a qualitative research study that investigated the feasibility of the Synectics Model (SM) as an alternative prewriting technique in a tertiary level EFL writing course. Being aware of the importance of the prewriting stage in the writing process, it aimed to find out whether a novel instructional model such as the SM could be used as a prewriting technique and be added to the repertoire of existing prewriting techniques evident in the research literature on L2 writing. The results of the study indicated that the SM was feasible to implement and perceived to be effective in promoting creative thinking, vocabulary, writing skills, attitudes, and motivation, which supports the use of the SM with a variety of age groups and proficiency levels, in various courses. The only observed drawback of the technique was its time-consuming nature, which could be solved through making several timing adaptations. This chapter presents brief information about the background of the study and the research methodology, as well as the main findings and some reflections on the future use of the model.

Background

It is obvious that writing is an equally essential part of communication since an individual might be able to convey a variety of messages or ideas to readers through writing. Therefore, a systematic approach to the teaching of writing is essential to support the development of learners' writing skills in the field of second or foreign language education (FLE). From the process approach to teaching writing, producing a written text is a cyclical process which includes an interrelated set of stages: "drafting, structuring, reviewing, focusing, generating ideas, and evaluation" (White & Arndt, 1991, p. 5). In this circle of the writing process, idea generation usually takes place in the prewriting stage where a range of techniques can be employed to generate ideas that will be developed in the process of composing a written text. This stage could be seen as an opportunity to motivate students to write by providing them various ways to gather information as well (Seow, 2002). Although there are some commonly used prewriting techniques in L2 writing instruction such as freewriting, listing, clustering, brainstorming, creative drama, pair or group discussion, etc., this study aimed to develop some innovation by using the SM in a tertiary level L2 writing class and to explore its feasibility as an alternative prewriting technique.

Being basically designed for improving problem-solving skills and idea generation capacity, synectics is defined as "joining together of different and apparently irrel-

evant elements” by its creator, Gordon (1961, p. 3). In an educational context, synectics refers to “an instructional model aiming to stimulate learners’ problem-solving and creative thinking skills by making sense of new information through specifically designed techniques” (Bayraktar Balkır & Zehir Topkaya, 2017, p. 330). Connection-making is an essential element in the synectics process since its use enhances learners’ understanding and learning of new information by focusing on similarities and differences. It is achieved through systematic use of metaphor building, which mainly includes three types of analogies (i.e., simile, personification, and oxymoron) (Estes, Mintz & Gunter, 2010). A review of research reveals that the SM has been found to be effective for academic achievement, creative thinking capacity, attitudes, motivation, writing skills in a variety of curricular areas, including foreign language education. Since the use of the model appears to be promising in providing a number of educational gains, it is worth being increasingly implemented in different EFL contexts to facilitate the L2 learning process.

Research methodology

The study was carried out with 20 (18 female and 2 male) intermediate level EFL students in an academic writing course at a state university in the north west of Turkey. A qualitative research approach was taken, and the data were collected via semi-structured interviews and the instructor’s diary. The intervention programme consisted of a seven-week long SM instructional programme which included six sessions lasting 50 minutes each. In the SM sessions, the main activity involved seven steps in which all the participants worked collaboratively to build three types of metaphor on a specific concept: a direct analogy (simile), a personal analogy (personification), and a symbolic analogy (oxymoron or compressed conflict) (Estes et al., 2010). These steps are as follows:

1.	Describe the topic	Definition
2.	Create direct analogies	Similar
3.	Describe personal analogies	Feels like
4.	Identify compressed conflicts	Opposite
5.	Create a new direct analogy	Similar
6.	Reexamine the original topic	Synthesis
7.	Write a paragraph about the original topic	

Following each SM session, the participants were asked to write a definition paragraph using the ideas that emerged during the activity. A definition paragraph is a rhetorical mode that requires writers to define or explain an abstract term like freedom

or justice (Oshima & Hogue, 2007). In the course of the study, the instructor kept a diary which included reflections on positive and negative aspects, and other issues that arose before, during, and after the sessions. In addition, semi-structured interviews were held in order to gain insights into the participants' experiences and perceptions of the SM programme. The researchers informed the participants about the aim, date, and duration of the interviews and asked them if they would be willing to take part in them. As a result, nine participants volunteered to be interviewed. All of them were female students. The data collected through the instructor's diary and the interviews were analyzed through inductive content analysis. Finally, recurring themes were identified and grouped under broader categories.

Findings and discussion

The analysis of the instructor's diary revealed the following categories in relation to both positive and negative aspects (see Table 1).

▣ **Table 1:** *Aspects related to the synectics programme from the instructor's perspective*

Positive aspects	Frequency	Negative aspects	Frequency
Active student involvement	4 responses	Time-consuming	3 responses
Creative idea generation	3 responses	Complicated	2 responses
Increase in confidence	3 responses		
Enjoyment	2 responses		

As can be seen in Table 1, the instructor had mostly positive observations about the implementation of the programme with respect to student engagement in the lesson and creative idea generation. Furthermore, she observed that the participants seemed to enjoy the sessions. Although the instructor evaluated the activity as being a little complicated for the participants at the beginning of the programme, she added that they gained more confidence and became more comfortable using the technique over time. As one of the negative or challenging aspects, the instructor found the sessions to be quite time-consuming.

When the interview scripts were analysed through inductive content analysis, the emerging categories were classified into two, depending on whether they reflected positive or negative issues. Each category was further divided into related themes (see Table 2).

■ **Table 2:** Positive aspects about the synectics programme from the participants' perspective

Categories	Frequency	Themes
Creative thinking	15 responses	Being able to think more creatively Wealth of ideas
Value of synectics	15 responses	Useful Fun Different
Learning vocabulary	11 responses	Learning new vocabulary items Retention of new vocabulary items
Improvement of writing skills	10 responses	Contribution to paragraph writing Comfort in writing
Enhancement of lesson quality	9 responses	Active students Smooth running of the lesson
Interaction with peers	8 responses	Effectiveness of group work Rapport with peers
Attitudes to writing/writing course	6 responses	Positive attitude to writing Higher motivation
Synectics and curriculum	6 responses	Frequency of synectics sessions The use of SM in other curricular areas
Expansion of perspective	4 responses	Broadening one's horizon Being able to think from different angles
Writer's block and writing anxiety	3 responses	Decrease in writer's block Decrease in writing anxiety

These findings showed that the participants also had mainly positive perceptions with regard to their experiences in the SM programme. It was perceived to be effective in promoting creative thinking, vocabulary learning, writing skills, interaction with peers, and attitudes to writing and the writing course. It was also perceived to lead to a decrease in writer's block and writing anxiety. In addition, they found the technique useful, fun, and different, and added that there was an increase in the lesson quality throughout the programme. It was also suggested that the frequency of synectics sessions could be increased and applied in other curricular areas with different age groups or proficiency levels. Last but not least, the participants reported that the programme led to an expansion of perspective in that they were able to think from different angles.

In terms of the negative perceptions about the programme, two categories emerged as a result of the analysis as shown in Table 3.

■ **Table 3:** Negative aspects about the synectics programme from the participants' perspective

Categories	Frequency	Themes
1. Length of the session	6 responses	Time-consuming
2. Effort	2 responses	Tiring

As these findings indicate, only two issues emerged from the analysis. The length of the synectics sessions was reported to be too time-consuming in six responses. Possibly stemming from this, two participants evaluated the sessions as tiring.

In general, these results indicate that the synectics programme was found to be feasible in L2 writing in the prewriting stage and perceived to be effective by the participants and the instructor. The most prominent feature of the SM appears to be its potential to develop creativity or creative thinking, which has also been shown in several studies in different curricular areas (e.g., Aiamya & Haghanib, 2012; Fatemipour & Kordnaej, 2014; Pany, 2008). Furthermore, it was also found to promote student involvement or class participation (e.g., Burks, 2005; Kleiner, 1991), positive teacher and student attitudes (Keyes, 2006), and vocabulary learning (Erişti & Polat, 2017). In addition to these features, the implementation of the model enhances peer or group interaction while the participants try to build different kinds of metaphors and work collaboratively. In sum, the use of synectics as an instructional model has potential to result in various educational gains as indicated by this study and other studies mentioned above.

On the other hand, this research experience and other studies (e.g., Burks, 2005) have revealed that the implementation of the SM might be constrained by the time factor. The fact that a synectics session consists of seven steps that includes a considerable amount of pair or group discussion to form different types of analogies followed by a writing task necessitates the use of a great deal of class time. This might create tiredness or boredom on the part of the participants, which needs to be tackled by some adaptations related to timing and student groupings (see the next section).

Reflections and looking into the future

This study aimed to find out whether the SM could be used as an idea generation technique in the prewriting stage. The findings show that the implementation of the model was relatively effective. This suggests that the SM could be added to the repertoire of prewriting techniques and might be used as an alternative technique for idea generation in tertiary level L2 writing courses. Moreover, considering the outcomes of the study, it could be recommended that the SM be used in other skills courses and vocabulary teaching programmes. It could also be used with different age groups or levels in L2 learning settings.

With respect to the drawbacks of the SM, some adaptations could be made in order to deal with its time-consuming and complicated nature. For example, the instructor might set time limits for each successive stage for the students to produce ideas. In addition, depending on the size of the class, the number of groups could be decreased so that less time is required for getting feedback from each group. Alternatively, the writing task could be assigned as homework. Also, the use of the technique might be alternated with other prewriting techniques at times to prevent tiredness and boredom on the part of the students. Furthermore, instructors who might think of implementing the SM as part of their instruction need to be patient while practising it since it may require a great deal of time to produce effective outcomes. Finally, because its implementation was observed to be a bit complicated both on the part of instructor and students, it is suggested that systematic piloting be conducted before the start of a course or a research study.

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Students' Perceptions of the Impact of Source-based Writing Assessment on Students' Writing Proficiency in a Turkish EAP Context

*Aslı Lidice Göktürk Sağlam & Ayla Yalçın Duman
Özyegin University, İstanbul, Turkey*

- ▶ Main focus
- ▶ Background
- ▶ Research methodology
- ▶ Findings and discussion
- ▶ Reflections and looking into the future
- ▶ References

Main focus

Research has frequently pointed out that academic tasks are mostly based on using external resources and integrating reading-writing skills (Hale, et al., 1996; Rosenfeld, Leung & Oltman, 2001). As English instructors at a Turkish university teaching EAP, we prefer reading-to-writing tasks (which entail use of reading sources to write) to assess our students' academic writing skills more effectively. Since academic studies rely on integration of two or more skills, as well as non-linguistic cognitive skills, this type of assessment is regarded as authentic and valid despite its challenging nature (Grabe & Zhang, 2013). Although we strongly believe in the merits of integrated writing assessment, as teacher researchers, we wanted to explore the perceptions of our students, who come from a test-oriented culture, towards this integrated writing assessment. In the classroom some of our students complain about the difficulty of source-based writing tasks and stress that they have not been exposed to such tasks in their prior learning. Thus, we wanted to capture students' ideas about its effect on their academic English writing skills, and to examine if there is a relationship between the writing proficiency of students and their source use. This led us to form three research questions for our action research:

1. How do students perceive the impact of integrated writing tasks on their writing performance?
2. How do the students make use of textual borrowing (source use) in their writing?
3. Is there a relationship between reported proficiency level and source use?

Background

Recently, integrated writing tasks have become common for assessing English for Academic Purposes (EAP) rather than testing these skills separately. Integrated tasks often provide test-takers with one or more reading and/or listening text(s) which serve as source material presenting ideas for a writing task. Many arguments have been proposed for integrating skills through the use of source-based writing assessment. One of the main justifications is based on the authenticity argument since source-based writing reflects the construct of academic writing. As a part of their academic studies, students often read, discuss, and reflect critically on a topic before they write on it (Weigle, 2004). Integrating reading, listening, and writing is becoming widespread to assess EAP, since academic writing is rarely done in isolation, and students often read and discuss and think critically before they write on a given topic (Weigle, 2004). Another justification for the use of integrated writing tasks is that they provide support for content. Since source-based writing entails synthesis of information from

reading and/or listening sources, external sources are commonly used for content in academic writing (Gebriel, 2009; Leki & Carson, 1997; Plakans, 2009a). According to Weigle (2004), source texts provide ideas and minimize the impact of requiring topic familiarity, creativity, and life experiences. Therefore, students, regardless of their background, have equal opportunities to compose their writing by using the given reading sources. In addition, Leki and Carson (1997) suggest that source texts provide test-takers with rhetorical structures to model vocabulary and grammar. Lastly, such tasks improve the validity of assessment and lead to more appropriate placement into academic courses (Plakans, 2009b). Some research has also shown that there is a close link between the proficiency level of students and their source use (Cumming, et al., 2005; Gebriel & Plakans, 2009; Plakans & Gebriel, 2012). This rationale for integrated writing tasks supports its use as a reliable and valid means to assess writing.

Research methodology

This research was conducted within an Undergraduate 101 English course at our institution. The course aims to provide students with academic and language skills for their interdisciplinary undergraduate studies. For this course we meet our freshman students from various departments for four contact hours a week over an academic semester of 16 weeks. Course materials entailed abridged academic texts about different aspects of sustainability and business ethics. Upon reading and discussing the course materials in class, our students took an open book exam in which they were allowed to use information from readings in their writing. The students were asked to write an argumentative essay of about 750 words in response to a writing prompt related to the main topics of the course (sustainability and business ethics) by referring to the texts covered in class. They were required to use one paraphrase at minimum and three direct quotations at maximum.

We conducted our research with 61 freshmen students from various departments taking the 101 Undergraduate English course. Our students volunteered to fill-out both the online process questionnaire and the pen and paper reflection questionnaire in class. They were recruited based on convenience sampling. Participants reported their English proficiency level as medium, high and advanced.

Data collection and analysis procedures

We wanted to gather both quantitative and qualitative data from the students. Therefore, first we adapted a questionnaire from Gebriel and Plakans (2009). There were 26 Likert scale items and three open-ended questions. It had six thematic categories to survey students' perceptions of the integration process: academic citation, writing

process, reading process, general reading to writing process, text use for idea generation, and support for language and organization. The questionnaire was administered online on the Google Forum platform.

We analysed the questionnaire data quantitatively with descriptive statistics on SPSS to explore how students reported proficiency levels related to test-takers' use and the reading-to-writing process. Frequency counts and percentages are used to examine student perceptions of the integrated writing assessment.

In our study, as a second phase, we gave the students a post-writing reflection with six open-ended questions (see Appendix 1) along with the integrated writing assessment task that included teacher's feedback on their exam performance. We gave students their essays back with extensive feedback and asked them to complete the post writing reflection questionnaire where they had to reflect on their exam performance.

We analyzed data from the reflection questionnaire qualitatively. Both researchers read and coded the student responses to the open-ended questions individually. Then, we focused on the association between the determined codes, and consequently identified the emerging themes (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2007). There was a high agreement rate of 92% between our independent coding and we resolved the disagreements in further discussions.

Within the scope of this classroom-based research we decided to report the findings partially by focusing on relevant questionnaire items which asked about students' citing preferences and their opinion of the impact of using reading sources on their writing performance in the exam.

Findings and discussion

The process questionnaire showed students' positive perception towards the effectiveness of integrated writing assessment and provided insights into the impact of their proficiency level (see Table 1) on their task achievement. The reflection questionnaire elicited further and more detailed student responses regarding the integrated writing assessment task. We tried to group the results under recurring themes and found common threads, described in the sections below.

■ **Table 1:** Reported proficiency levels (online questionnaire)

Proficiency Level	n	%
Medium	23	37.7
High	31	50.8
Advanced	7	11.5

We checked the reliability of our questionnaire and the Cronbach's alpha yielded a high reliability ($\alpha = .87$). Data analysis revealed that the majority of the students considered their English language competency as high (50.8%) and advanced (11.5%).

Students' perception of the impact of the integrated writing assessment task on their English writing performance was surveyed in item 6. Their perception was highly positive as seen in Table 2 below.

■ **Table 2:** Frequency of student perception towards general reading-to-write process

Item	Strongly Disagree 1	2	3	Strongly Agree 4
6. Readings helped me to write better.	5	13	15	28

Forty-three students (75%) concurred that using external reading sources contributed to improvement of their writing skill, whereas 18 of them (29.5%) disagreed with this statement. All levels agreed that reading sources helped them to write better, with similar means across levels: at medium level ($M=3$) and high level ($M=3.13$), and advanced level ($M=3.14$).

Items 3, 12, 13 and 17 surveyed writers' use of sources to generate ideas. Confirming prior studies of source-based writing, writers at all levels considered external reading texts as resources for ideas. As Table 3 shows, writers responded mostly positively.

■ **Table 3:** Frequency of writers' responses to items regarding source texts used for idea generation

Item	Strongly Disagree 1	2	3	Strongly Agree 4
3. I have formed my own opinions on sustainability.	3	12	31	15
12. I looked back at the readings often while I was writing.	6	10	25	20
13. The readings helped me choose an opinion on the issue.	5	7	28	21
17. I used examples and ideas from the readings to support my argument in my essay.	4	9	23	25

Most writers across levels (medium, high, advanced) agreed that readings helped them as a repository for ideas because they returned to the texts to mine ideas as they composed their response (item 12), and used ideas from the readings to support their argument in their essay (item 17).

Two items gathered writers’ perceptions of using external readings to model grammar (item 20) and vocabulary (item 19). Table 4 shows that 46% of the writers disagreed that they used vocabulary and 51% disagreed that they used grammar structures from sources.

Table 4. Frequency of writers’ responses to items regarding source texts used for modelling language

Item	Strongly Disagree 1	2	3	Strongly Agree 4
19. I used vocabulary from the readings	6	22	17	16
20. The readings helped me use accurate and complex grammar structures.	13	18	20	10

When we analysed these items across different levels we observed that advanced level students expressed less positive perceptions (M=2.6, Median=2) in comparison to high (M=2.7, Median=3) and medium (M=2.8, Median=3) levels. We inferred that students with lower proficiency may use vocabulary from sources more in their writing as an academic survival skill than higher level writers.

Writers’ responses across levels indicate that advanced and high level writers held slightly higher positive perceptions of using sources as vocabulary support than medium level (for item 20, Medium Level M= 2.2, SD= 0.93, Median=2; High level M=2.6, SD=0, Median=3; and Advanced Level M=2.6, SD=1.5, Median=3) although not to the point of concurring that texts helped them with their language skills.

One item elicited student perceptions regarding using external reading sources to model organization. Table 5 depicts positive student perceptions.

Table 5. Frequency of writers’ responses to items regarding using sources to model organization

Item	Strongly Disagree 1	2	3	Strongly Agree 4
18. I used the readings to help organize my essay.	7	12	26	16

65.5% of the writers agreed with item 18 and expressed positive perceptions across all levels (Medium level M=2,6, High level M=3.0, and Advanced M=2.8).

Writers' response to questionnaire items and their essays were used to examine their source use. Two questionnaire items (21 and 25) queried writers' perceived use of source-based information. Table 6 shows that most writers agreed that they had learned how to use reading sources and were able to use correct APA citation in their written performances.

■ **Table 6.** Writers' responses to items regarding knowledge of academic citation in the integrated writing assessment task

Item	Strongly Disagree			Strongly Agree
	1	2	3	4
21. I used correct APA citation in my writing	4	8	25	24
25. I have learned how to use reading sources in my writing in this class.	3	14	16	28

Students with higher proficiency levels indicated more positive response to item 21 (Medium level $M=2.7$, Median=3, $SD=0.81$, High level $M=3.3$, Median=4, $SD=0.90$, and Advanced level $M=3.6$, Median=4, $SD=0.53$). Similarly, high and advanced level writers agreed strongly (Median=4) in comparison to lower proficiency writers (Median=3) regarding item 25. Consequently, higher proficiency writers tended to hold more positive perceptions in their ability to integrate ideas from sources appropriately into their writing.

Post-writing reflection questionnaire

To analyze students' reflections on what affected their source use, citing preference and the impact of such tasks on their writing proficiency, we focused on specific questions.

1. *When you used information from reading sources (articles), did you use direct quotation, paraphrase, or summary? What factors affected your choice?*

The frequency analysis on SPSS revealed that 89% of the respondents reported using direct quotations while 80% used paraphrasing to support their ideas and support their points in a more reliable way. The test takers were more inclined to use direct quotations: "I used direct quotation because the sentences were catchier and the ideas were clear".

Test takers intended to use paraphrasing more when they wanted to divert from the idea stated in the source: "The point that I wanted to show to the reader affected my

choice. When I wanted to make little changes in the sentence, I used paraphrasing. If not, used direct quotation". In addition, some test-takers suggested that they utilized paraphrasing as a means for expanding and explaining their own ideas. It was also reported that paraphrasing is used less because of grammatical and lexical difficulty students experienced in re-writing ideas taken from sources.

2. How did using reading sources affect your writing performance in the exam?

Analysis of open coding revealed that students believed using textual borrowing helped them to generate ideas, support their opinions, get higher grades in the exam, and improve their academic writing skill in L2. These results are in line with the findings of the process questionnaire. All the participants stated that reading sources contributed positively to their writing performance in the exam. One student reported:

Using reading sources was incredibly helpful to me since the sources offer a wide range of supporting ideas at hand. The articles served as a basis for the development of a main idea in my head, and additionally, as a pool of support for that argument. Having the articles also gives the student a degree of comfort because s/he doesn't have the risk of forgetting what s/he has memorized.

While confirming the positive contribution of source-based writing, two students thought that time was limited and they felt the necessity to change the sentences from the readings in order not to be accused of plagiarism and this was challenging.

Reflections and looking into the future

After this experience, we have learnt that despite their test-oriented background, our Turkish EAP students hold positive perceptions of source-based writing assessment. Most students believe that they are going to encounter similar tasks in their future academic studies. This raised our awareness of the positive washback of integrated writing assessment for our students. We also observed that paraphrasing, without doubt, is a more challenging skill for our students. Consequently, we felt the necessity to take action regarding giving more input and guidance on selecting, integrating and citing information from external sources. Some students expressed their difficulty in finding texts to back up their opinions. This gave us insight into material development since some students may need more input to support their opinion. Finally, this classroom-based research implied that proficiency impacts students' performance in the integrated writing task and motivated us to reconsider our instructional design in terms of methodology, material development, as well as testing and assessment.

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Appendix 1

Reflection Questionnaire

1. Which articles did you cite in your essay to support your ideas? Why?
2. When you used information from reading sources (articles) did you use direct quotation, paraphrase or summary? What factors affected your choice?

3. When you used information from reading sources (articles) did you use them appropriately? (Does it fit into the context/your flow of ideas/arguments?) Why? / Why not? Please explain.
4. Are you happy with the articles that you chose to support your ideas? Why? / Why not?
5. Which part of the essay was difficult for you to write? Why is that so?
6. How did using reading sources (articles on sustainability) affect your writing performance in the writing exam?

Vocabulary Teaching: From Rote Learning to Meaningful Learning

Berna Torlaklı
Çukurova University, Adana, Turkey

- ▶ Main focus
- ▶ Background
- ▶ Research methodology
- ▶ Findings and discussion
- ▶ Reflections and looking into the future
- ▶ References

Main focus

This study aims to optimize meaningful learning by letting students make sense of new vocabulary. It aims to enable my students to be fully engaged in the learning process as well as to make learning active, constructive and long lasting. This study was conducted at the School of Foreign Languages of Çukurova University with 20 undergraduates receiving 26 hours of English a week. At the beginning of the second term in the 2017-2018 academic year, according to my observation in class as an instructor of a reading and writing course, I realised that my students had problems in recalling newly learned vocabulary. Also, they indicated that they could not use the vocabulary they learnt in the lesson. These problems led me to conduct this study.

To investigate the problem, I used a written interview and a vocabulary quiz and found out that a majority of my students either did not know how to study vocabulary or did not come up with any other way apart from listing new words. To help my students overcome these problems, I thought implementing new ways could help them realise that there may be more effective ways to learn vocabulary other than listing. So I applied various implementations such as, making them prepare a vocabulary quiz, silent movie and summary, pronunciation activity followed by peer check and a quiz, and pre and post writings integrated with a check of vocabulary in use in CEFR level through EVP (English Vocabulary Profile), and evaluated these techniques.

Background

Teaching vocabulary is mostly problematic in language learning since many teachers do not feel confident about best practice in vocabulary teaching and sometimes do not know where to begin to form an instructional emphasis on vocabulary learning (Berne & Blachowicz, 2008). Most learners practice rote learning strategies, such as memorization and repetition, in the vocabulary learning process. However, they may lose focus, have difficulties in understanding a subject, not be able to connect previous knowledge to new information, and not be encouraged to use social skills. On the other hand, meaningful learning strategies are active, constructive and long lasting as the learners are fully engaged in the learning process. Nation (2001) claims that vocabulary knowledge and language use are complementary, as knowledge of vocabulary supports language use and this in turn might lead to an improvement in vocabulary knowledge.

Research questions

- 1) How can I help my students learn and retain vocabulary better?
- 2) What kind of implementations or interventions can be helpful for my students to improve their vocabulary use?

Research methodology

This study was conducted with 20 preparatory school students at B1-B2 level studying at the School of Foreign Languages, Çukurova University. I decided to use an action research approach because I was planning to work on a challenge I experienced in my classroom and improve my instruction to this end. The action research started in the middle of the second term in the reading and writing class, which was allocated six hours a week. I collected some interview data through written questions. The questions for the interview can be found in the Appendix. For the assessment of learning I used my students' pre-test and post-tests vocabulary scores. But, before starting all my implementations, methods to learn vocabulary apart from listing such as keeping a vocabulary journal (word definition, word derivation, synonyms, antonyms, producing a sentence including the target word), mapping, categorizing, listing, translating, pronouncing, and so on, were revised in class.

Table 1: My implementation of the research practice

Weeks	The implementation	Aims	Activity
W 1	Text Inspector (see Appendix)	To show my students the importance of vocabulary in their writings	Students wrote the 1st draft before covering the unit. The target vocabulary in the unit was instructed. Then they wrote the 2nd draft. Finally, they checked the difference between the drafts via http://www.englishprofile.org/wordlists/text-inspector to see how many words they have used from each level of CEFR in each draft.
W 2	Recording a story	To help my students realize that learning vocabulary is more meaningful when linked with pronunciation.	Students wrote a story using the target vocabulary from the unit and recorded the story on their mobile phones. They brought the mobile phones to the class with a pair of headphones. Then, they checked if their peers' pronunciation and use was correct or wrong.
W 3	Student-Made Vocabulary Quiz	To enable my students to use the new vocabulary meaningfully	Students prepared quizzes and took the one I prepared, blending their work.
W 4	Mispronounced Song	To clarify the connection between vocabulary and pronunciation	Students listened to the song 'Yes Today' and realized the mispronunciation of some words, and replaced them with the correct ones via http://hancockmcdonald.com/materials/wrong-lyrics-1
W 5	Silent Movie and Summary Writing	To help my students use the newly learnt vocabulary meaningfully	Students watched a silent movie and then wrote a summary of it using the given words related to the movie and the theme of the unit.

Following the research implementations on the given topics in Table 1, I provided opportunities for my students to reflect on the activities as shown in Table 2. In addition, I also reflected on the process of their engagement in these research activities.

■ **Table 2:** Reflections

Topics	My students' reflections	My reflections
Text Inspector	<p>Student A: It was a wonderful experience. Learning my words' level was interesting.</p> <p>Student B: It is an effective website to see which level you are at when writing. It's useful to improve writing.</p>	<p>It was the first time that I was using this activity in my classes. It reached my expectations as my students found it beneficial.</p>
Recording a story	<p>Student A: I think the activity is very effective for us because many words we learned in the lesson became easier to remember. At the same time, we learned their correct pronunciation and usage.</p> <p>Student B: This activity is very important for pronunciation. And it was a revision as it involved the same vocabulary as the unit.</p> <p>Student C: It was an unusual activity we haven't done before. It was good in general. I found opportunities to catch my own mistakes e.g. pronunciation, grammar. Now, these words will stay in my mind easily.</p> <p>Student D: I think this activity is very helpful for vocabulary and pronunciation because we learn meanings of new words but in a few days or weeks later we forget them. With this activity we learn these words with their meanings and pronunciation.</p>	<p>It was my first experience to adapt technology to my class. I realized that students find the activities connected to technology more effective and enjoyable, so they learn better with these kinds of activities.</p> <p>This activity led me to combine pronunciation and vocabulary teaching in my syllabus more than before as it created awareness regarding the relationship between pronunciation and vocabulary learning.</p>
Student-Made Vocabulary Quiz	<p>Student A: It was a very effective activity. We can learn adjectives, adverbs, nouns, verbs, etc., i.e. different forms of the words.</p> <p>Student B: It was a helpful and creative work. If it is done regularly, it might be good.</p> <p>Student C: This is a very difficult exam. Next time, you prepare it please.</p>	<p>It was one of the best activities that I have implemented so far. It was a good experience to see that my students are able to create unscrambling, matching, filling the blanks types of questions for the quiz.</p>
Mispronounced Song	<p>Student A: It was a bit difficult to understand. From now on, I will listen to the songs, the news, and my teachers more carefully.</p>	<p>Students found the activity easy at the beginning as '<i>it was just a song</i>'. But they had some difficulties in identifying the words. It was a good <i>lesson</i> for them.</p>
Silent Movie and Summary Writing	<p>Student A: I was very careful while using the words; I needed to remember their meanings correctly to summarize the film.</p>	<p>Remembering the scene and the topic in the silent movie and remembering the meanings of the target vocabulary to write a summary was a bit challenging for my students at first, but it was a meaningful activity.</p>

Findings and discussion

According to the written interview, 12 out of 17 students stated that they had problems about vocabulary learning (see [Appendix](#)). Their common problems were forgetting the words and getting confused about them.

Based on the students' answers to the questions in the written interview, it was found that my students use various strategies to learn vocabulary including:

- Guessing the meaning from the context
- Writing vocabulary on pieces of paper and putting them on the walls
- Writing sentences using the words
- Taking notes
- Underlining the unknown words in a text
- Writing the words more than five times

And among their suggestions to improve vocabulary learning are:

Suggestions for themselves	Suggestions for teachers
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We shouldn't learn unnecessary words • We should use the words more • We should use the words in speaking • We should read books 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teachers should give vocabulary lists • Teachers should do tests

Results of the tests

Twelve students took the pre-test including vocabulary from the unit; the average success rate was 25%. Nine students took the post-test including vocabulary from target units; the average success rate was 75.50%. These findings revealed that the new activities implemented helped students improve their awareness in different ways to study vocabulary better and improve their achievements in the tests.

In conclusion, I realised that as an instructor I needed to change my vocabulary teaching skills and encourage my students to use new methods. In the past, I usually used to leave my students by themselves in terms of studying vocabulary. Their methods were very traditional, and in their writings it was clear that they were struggling to use the new words, which perhaps implies that real learning was not achieved successfully. They were in need of meaningful activities which were integrated with pronunciation, listening, and being in charge of their own learning so that they could recall the new

vocabulary items. When I started to apply new ways of vocabulary learning, my students became more interested and started writing better paragraphs and essays. After guiding students to overcome difficulties in learning, seeing them succeed was the best result of this study. Further research could focus on a variation of the activity 'Record Your Story and Peer Pronunciation Check' to facilitate the connection between pronunciation and vocabulary.

Reflections and looking into the future

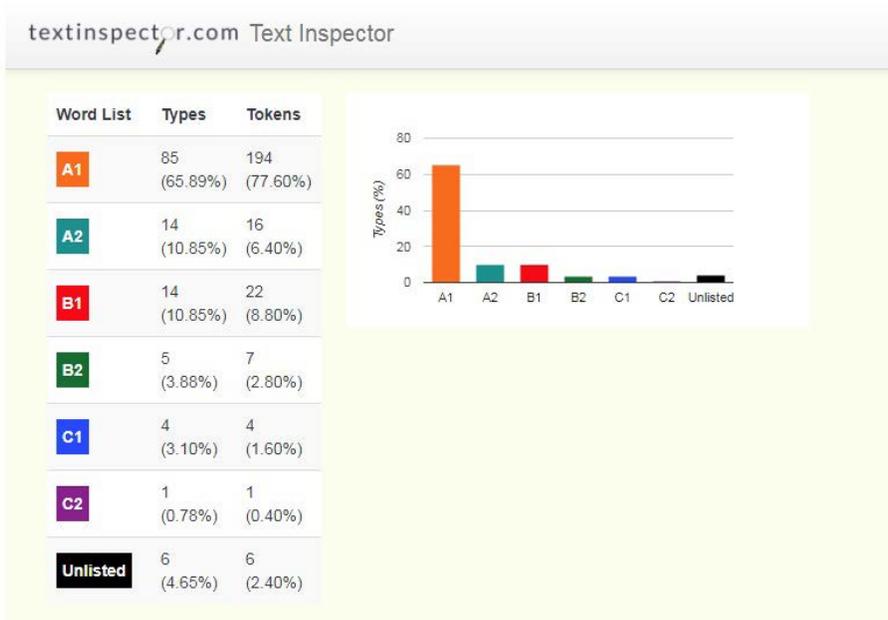
There have been lots of studies conducted on vocabulary learning. However, while carrying out this research, I could not find a study which could answer my questions directly and help me solve the puzzles in my context. To my surprise, I explored a lot through this research in contrast to what I expected. As is the nature of action research, I was always on the move and ready to make any necessary changes throughout the research. I integrated some new implementations for the first time and I felt the satisfaction of a teacher depending on my experiences and explorations in my class. When all things are considered, I have realized that doing this research in one of my classrooms not only contributed to my teaching effectively but also to my considerable personal growth. I do feel more satisfied now, both as an instructor and an individual, as I managed to help my students improve themselves. While searching for solutions to the problems occurring in my classroom, I found lots of beneficial sources of data to improve my classes. I improved my skills in adapting my syllabus based on my students' specific needs. The activity *recording your story and checking peer pronunciation* emerged from my students' needs when I observed in class that they had problems in pronunciation. So, I adapted this activity to my syllabus. From now on, I intend to meet the expectations of my students more, to be able to help them better and to broaden my perspectives in teaching as well.

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Appendix

1. Text Inspector



2. Written Interview

- 1) Do you have any problems about vocabulary learning?
- 2) What strategies do you use to learn vocabulary? Please give examples.
- 3) Does knowing the meaning of all the words in a text affect your understanding the text? Why/why not?
- 4) What are your suggestions for teaching how to learn vocabulary?

3. For further information about EVP one can visit:

<http://vocabularypreview.englishprofile.org/staticfiles/about.html>

Sociocultural Theory-driven Google Drive Use

Seher Balbay

Middle East Technical University, Ankara, Turkey

- ▶ Main focus
- ▶ Background
- ▶ Research methodology
- ▶ Findings and discussion
- ▶ Reflections and looking into future
- ▶ References

Main focus

The relationship between researchers and practitioners has not always been a dialogic one in the field of second language acquisition. Hence, theories may end up being perceived as futile if they do not assist the practice of teaching. This research aims to put Vygotskian Sociocultural Theory (SCT) into practice using a practical online tool, namely Google Drive, by adapting it to the language classroom. The aim of this study is to explore the use of Google Drive. Google Drive is not only an online memory tool, but it also enables multiple users to work on the same documents at the same time or at different times. In the present study, it allowed the researcher and the participants of the study, her students, to interact with their peers on an online platform. The literature is laden with research on the contribution of online interaction to students' regulation of their learning. Yet, the present study is different from previous studies on Web 2.0 tools used in language classrooms since it was conducted on the contribution of Google Drive, specifically as a 'mediation tool' in a language class. This small scale exploratory interventionist action research aims to explore the following research question:

What are students' perceptions on the use of Google Drive as a mediation tool to scaffold learning in an Academic Oral Presentation Skills Course?

Background

SCT emphasizes the importance of society and interaction with society as a major medium in learning. The underlying belief of SCT is that learning is social rather than individual in nature, that is, the human learning process is a mediated process developed through artefacts which are activities and concepts that serve to mediate the learning. Hence, the instructional settings that provide the learner with social and material environments during the learning process bear importance, according to SCT.

With the ability to learn through interaction, we adapt to our context using certain tools that are culturally determined. Language and even gestures are considered to be tools according to SCT. SCT assumes that through the use of these artifacts, students are expected to regulate their own learning, which means monitoring and controlling their learning process. This process is called the mediation process, which makes use of tools to help think and learn. This theoretical background can help the teachers today understand the use of online tools to support teaching and learning activities. Today, file sharing systems that lend themselves to be edited collaboratively can serve as tools in the mediation process. A major construct in SCT is the zone of proximal development (ZPD). The ZPD is the imaginary distance that an individual can reach with the assistance of the tools provided or with the assistance of the peers or the guide. The assistance that the learner receives via interaction is called 'scaffolding' in

SCT. If eventually the students can gain control over their learning, making use of the mediational goals, they will be self-regulating their learning.

One other major construct of SCT is 'inner speech'. Lantolf and Thorne (2006) call the use of language as a medium of thinking and also as a medium of thinking about thinking (metacognition) 'private speech'. As we grow up our private speech becomes our inner speech since we do not voice our process of thinking out loud as adults. Vygotsky claimed that social relations turn into mental functions if they are internalized. The inter-psychological plane will turn into an intra-psychological plane. During this process, self-regulatory learning strategies of voluntary attention, logical memory, formation of concepts and development of volition will be used (Vygotsky, 1981, p. 163).

Another construct of teaching through a sociocultural theory approach is constantly giving students feedback throughout the course, arranging the amount of feedback according to the students' performance, just as much for learning as to scaffold the student to reach their zone of proximal development (ZPD). In SCT, assessment and learning are intricately intertwined, that is, the motive for assessment is to decide on the appropriate scaffolding required during the process of learning. This assistive process is called Dynamic Assessment (DA). DA de-emphasizes the product, and emphasizes a process of ongoing learning, in which instructors create opportunities for development. Corrective feedback from other students and the instructor is important. The role of the teacher is to facilitate learning through scaffolding, where teaching is integrated in assessment. In DA, the quantity and the quality of the mediation needed is adjusted as the student's performance changes. The responses the students give to mediation may become more frequent, and the quality of the responses improves. Studies that investigate the effects of Dynamic Assessment usually take the following steps during teaching to modify the degree of scaffolding. First, the teacher guides the students through the expected task, then the next phase provides a lessened degree of scaffolding. The objective is that eventually the students reach and acquire the capacity to engage in unguided learning. The aim of assessment is to scaffold students' learning to help them reach their ZPD and to evaluate the capacity they have reached after the interventions. This enables participants to see the 'latent capacity' (Kozulin & Gindis, 2007, p. 356).

SCT suggests the use of facilitative tools in the learning process. As mentioned, a key aspect of this study was the use of the Web 2.0 tool, Google Drive. Google Drive tools are one of the most widely popular and most user-friendly Web 2.0 tools. There are many other Web 2.0 tools that have been used in language classes. Web 2.0 tools are different from the online tools of the 1990s in that their core quality, interactivity, is to provide contextual conditions that influence learning and teaching, making learner participation and creativity a focus (Greenhow, Robelia & Hughes, 2009). Educational scholarship aims at developing insights into the transformation education is going through in the light of the research on the integration of online technology,

since today's students already use information and communication technologies to support their learning outside the classroom (Bennet, Bishop, Dalgarno, Waycott & Kennedy, 2012). Therefore, pedagogical implications related to these technologies have attracted the attention of many contemporary researchers.

Web 2.0 tools have been widely used for motivational reasons in language classrooms since they create a sense of community (Ushioda, 2005). Chartland in his 2012 study where he focuses on the output created by social networking also concludes that the interactivity that Web 2.0 tools provides raised students' potential to generate meaningful output and stimulated their interest in language learning.

Overall, the use of Web 2.0 tools has a positive impact on learning in interactive settings that are supported by SCT. Especially in higher education where students already have smart phones, laptops and internet access, Web 2.0 tools have been reported to support learning (Hew & Cheung, 2013), collaborative learning being the most beneficial outcome (Chou & Chen, 2008).

Having reviewed the fundamentals of SCT and the benefits of using Web 2.0 tools in language teaching, how Google Drive tools, which make online interaction possible to scaffold students to perform better in their (ZPD), were used in the intervention of the present research will be described next. This study investigates the perceptions of students of the Google Drive tools. It considers Google Drive as an 'object tool' used in interaction. This object tool is also a platform which enables scaffolding by peers and the more knowledgeable other. The study refers to the use of private speech through a journal task which asked students to make use of their peers' and instructor's feedback when they were conducting a stimulated recall process by watching their oral presentations and reflecting on their performance. The objectives of this task are rooted in the fact that reflection via inner speech on 'scaffolded' performances contributes to regulation in learning. In a setting where scaffolding was made available via the use of Google, the present study did not aim to find out the progression in student performance. Its aim was to investigate the students' perceptions of the efficiency of the tools used in their self-regulated learning development process. Previous research on Web 2.0 tools used in education is becoming more common every day, but unlike this research, most studies do not always relate the practical use of Web 2.0 tools to the educational theory behind the reason for using them.

Research methodology

This research is a small scale exploratory action research study conducted through the use of semi-structured interviews with 44 participants about their perceptions on the contribution of Google Drive as a mediation tool which makes both object, peer and other mediation possible.

The participants were students studying in different programs at Middle East Technical University, from second, third and fourth years with a diverse age range of 21-28. They were taking the required Oral Presentation Skills Course, offered by the freshman English department. All the students had free access to fast internet (“[Campus Backbone Network METU-NET | Computer Center](#)”, n.d.).

Throughout one academic semester of 14 weeks, students were asked to use the following tools for the tasks that were designed to help co-construct knowledge on Google Drive. They encompassed Google Docs, Google Sheets and Google Slides. These tools were used for mediation by the other participants.

- Three formal oral presentations are among the performance tasks required in the Academic Oral Presentation Skills course. Google Slides was used both for corrective feedback from the instructor and from peers, since learners are active agents in each other’s development in SCT. The amount of feedback was less in the second and the third presentation outlines since in Dynamic Assessment the amount of scaffolding required for students to reach their ZPD is adapted to the needs of the students at the time of production.

The screenshot below ([Figure 1](#)) exemplifies the use of Google Slides, where feedback by a peer and the more knowledgeable is given.

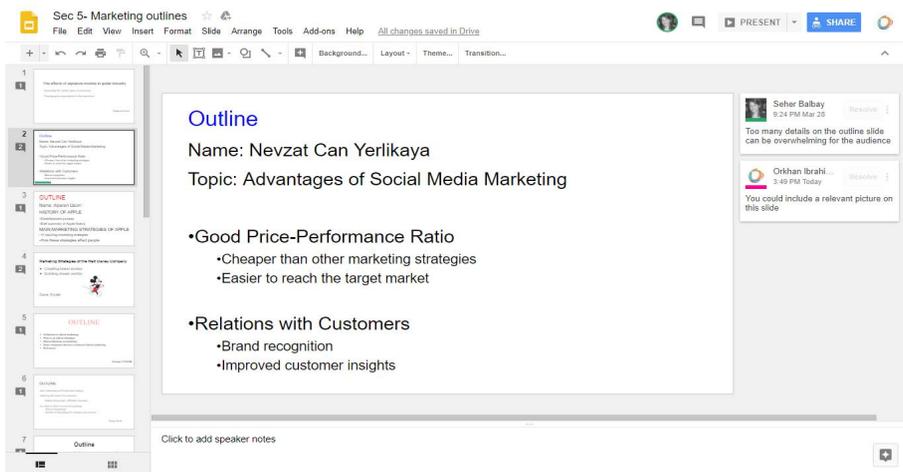


Figure 1: Example of the use of Google Slides

Google Docs was used to collect student reports on the inner talk reflecting on their development in presentation skills. Students gave each other peer feedback via notes based on the prompts of the rubrics provided and shared their feedback on Google Drive. Later each student wrote a journal entry and shared it as a document.

Some students submitted their journals before others, which helped those who had difficulty to develop task familiarity by reading their friends’ work. In SCT, imitation

is a mediation that takes place during internalization. This task can be considered a ‘pushed output task’ in which students were provided with mediation by their peers (Swain in Lantolf, 2006, p. 68).

Figure 2 exemplifies the use of Google Docs in collecting and sharing a task designed to report students’ inner talk and display their ‘internalization’ process. Google Docs was also used when repeating vocabulary that was covered in class. Each student used a different color throughout the semester to add their comments on the shared word file on Google Drive. Similarly, when going over what was covered during class, students made comments on a shared document on Google Drive. All activities using the tool mediation of Google Drive made peer and instructor mediation possible, and made assessment process oriented. After the teachers’ comments on the documents, students went back and edited their contributions to the shared files. Since feedback was interventionist during the evaluation process it was considered to be Dynamic Assessment.

Google Sheets was used for formative assessment, for tracking students’ long-term performance in scaffolding tasks with a grid. Figure 2 is a screenshot from the grid which contains all the tasks students completed throughout the semester. After each task, feedback both from peers and the instructor was provided.

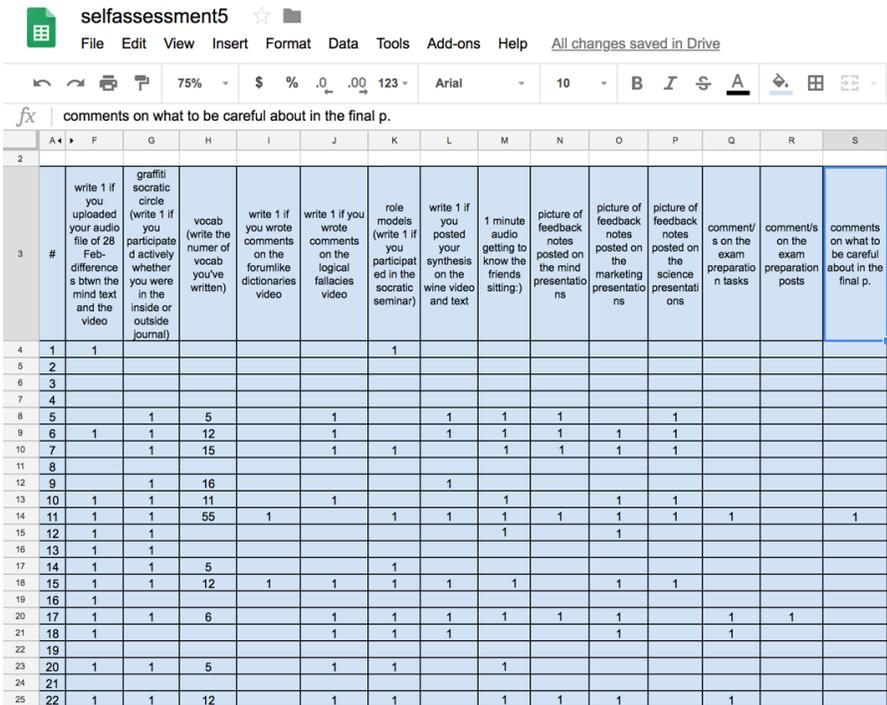


Figure 2. The use of Google Sheets for Dynamic Assessment:

The research tool used was the semi-structured group interviews with all of the students who participated in the study on their observations of the mediation strategies used. The interviews were recorded and for the qualitative thematic analysis the recurring themes were identified by two raters for inter-rater reliability. Later, the results were interpreted and discussed by the instructor of the course, who is one of the researchers, and another experienced instructor familiar with the setting of the research and the intervention. Prior to the interviews, key concepts of SCT were explained and exemplified to the students. When necessary, the key terms such as ‘scaffolding’ or ‘mediation’, or ‘tools’ were replaced with words more familiar to students, such as ‘help, assistance, support or ‘Web 2.0 tools’, or ‘interaction’. The interviews enquired about the following:

- Did you benefit from the use of Google Drive to regulate your learning?
- Did the Google Drive tools make you a more autonomous learner?
- Did you have any difficulties related to the use of Drive for the tasks assigned?

The next section discusses the findings of the study which provided an important opportunity to advance the understanding of sociocultural theory in a modern course and task design which engaged students in the active use of the Google Drive tools for scaffolding, task familiarization, self-observation and assessment.

Findings and discussion

Students found the use of the online tool made both peer and instructor scaffolding possible, non-threatening and supportive of their learning. One student stated that he would never have provided honest feedback to his friend if he had had to give it by talking to him rather than writing on Google Slides. However, there were some students who said that the course was designed laboriously, and that having to catch up with the new online tasks put some constraints on them. A few students complained about the fact that they had to manage their phone memory storage to make up space for the Google Drive tools. Most students claimed that the expectations of the self-assessment tasks were too demanding and required them to be alert all the time. Some students complained about technical problems. They said that not all young adult students are tech-savvy and motivated to discover online tools even when they facilitate learning and collaboration.

Another recurring theme that emerged was that students sometimes disagreed with the peer feedback, and did not like to discuss their disagreement on slides or on comments on Google Documents because of their heavy workload during the semester. One student even found some feedback offensive; however, in the focus group he later agreed that the language used appeared to be rude because it was too much to-the-point and short. Otherwise, during the interviews the participants generally agreed that ‘co-

constructing knowledge' was both entertaining and enlightening. Almost all students stated that the tools used taught them outside class too. There were some students who found the 'inner talk' task beneficial, but they commented that, had it been designed to expect a report of their reflections in L1, they would have done a more thorough analysis of their development. Yet, most students stated that the 'modelling' made possible by their peers who submitted their journals earlier than others had helped the students who needed task familiarity. One student thought that the collection method on the Google Drive folder was 'like an opportunity for them to cheat', but the students in general agreed that a personal reflection does not allow for mere repetition of others' content: 'I did not know how to start, and how personal I could write before I checked my friends' assignments' said, one of the students.

Most students reported that they benefitted from the Dynamic Assessment tasks because they were not based on product but on process, and mostly the effort they put into their own learning. One student claimed that because the tasks were collected and shared on an open access platform, sometimes resonating with each other's voices had helped them internalize the language or the structures to be used. Students thought that the use of the online tool was an 'egalitarian practice' since the tasks were given feedback both by their peers and by the more knowledgeable other. Another recurring comment was about the fairness of grading. Students said that they could not beg for an inflation in their grades, because all they were expected to do was to complete the tasks assigned, checking the feedback for the previous task.

Some students suggested that instead of receiving feedback online they would rather have mentoring meetings with their instructor. This was because in written language appropriating the feedback was not always possible, since there were some misunderstandings because of the L2 used or because of the absence of intonation in written language. In general, there was a consensus that the SCT driven drive use was a revolutionary approach towards both learning and assessment.

Reflections and looking into future

In retrospect this exploratory research provided me with an insight into my students' perspective on the use of the collaborative online tool. Without having inquired into their experience, I would have thought that the Drive was the perfect means to actualize SCT in a language classroom. Apparently, although the SCT led me to design tasks in which students scaffolded each other, I had put too much emphasis on a non-traditional method that my students were not used to. While the number of tasks assigned were too many, according to some students, some others appreciated the self-regulation techniques provided by the tasks in a non-threatening environment, the Google Drive. Hence, I could identify the strengths of the use of collaborative online tools thanks to my students' honesty and the pointed comments on their observations. My

belief about the importance of collaboration in language learning environments was enhanced through the interviews conducted.

In the future, I would like to use similar assignments with Dynamic Assessment in mind. However, because of the constant stress caused by having to complete many tasks, I will consider limiting the number of tasks to be completed at the beginning of the semester. In conclusion, I believe I have benefitted from this critical enquiry to a great extent by interpreting the data I collected.

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Screen Capture Technology: A New Way to Give Feedback!

Ayşegül Sallı
Eastern Mediterranean University, Northern Cyprus

- ▶ Abstract
- ▶ Background
- ▶ Procedures
- ▶ Data collection
- ▶ Findings and discussion
- ▶ Reflections and looking into the future
- ▶ References

Abstract

Quality of feedback to students' essays has great importance in helping them enhance the content and language of their written work. To provide more detailed feedback, screen capture technology (SCT) as an innovative way can be used. SCT enables teachers to record the screen of the computer including writing on the screen, highlighting mistakes, opening new documents and voice. Then, the video can be saved and sent to student. To this purpose, a group of language learners were provided video feedback using the SC technology in the fall semester of 2017-2018 academic year. 18 language learners at B1 level participated in the study. They received 5 sets of written feedback and 8 sets of video feedback on their essays. A survey that includes open-ended questions was given to them at the end of the semester to gather their perceptions of voice feedback. The results show that they were in favour of video feedback as they believed it was more motivating and personal.

Background

Feedback is broadly perceived as one of the vital aspects of the language learning process due to the fact that it functions as a mechanism that encourages students to improve their learning. Feedback has played an important role especially in process writing where students write their first drafts and receive comments from their teachers on their work to further improve the piece of writing. Hyland and Hyland (2006) emphasize the importance of feedback "in process-based classrooms, where it forms a key element of the students' growing control over composing skills" (p. 83). Hattie & Timperley (2007) defined feedback as information to diminish the difference between the work done by the students now and what they are expected to have as end product. Some essential features of feedback was highlighted by Nicol (2008) for it to be effective and received by the students. Nicol stated that "students must be able to decode it, internalize it and use it to make judgments about their work" (p.9). The research literature has shown that whether feedback helps students to improve their writing skills is still unclear. Similarly, teachers are not satisfied that feedback they have given is fully received and used by their students for the betterment of their written work. Previous studies on delivery of feedback also reveal that students can make use of suggested corrections to a limited extent (Ferris, 1997). Some other studies have reported that students cannot benefit from feedback as it is unclear, too vague, or poorly expressed (Fregeau, 1999). In a nutshell, research on feedback in the field of language teaching has not yielded conclusive results about which form is more beneficial for language learners.

Over time, changes in pedagogy have led to the changes in feedback practices over time; from teacher's written comments, to face-to-face feedback, peer feedback, and

online feedback. Recently, screencast feedback has gained value due to its flexibility and versatility. With no doubt, the affordances of technological advancements have made it possible for teachers to try out different tools that could be more beneficial for language learners. Screencast technology has been embraced by teachers and tutors due to its flexibility and affordances. For example, Séror (2012) and Stannard (2017) gave screencast feedback to their students' written work by using this technology. The results revealed that students were content with the way they were given feedback due to the fact that the screencast feedback they received was catered for individual students; i.e., it was personalized and included more details on what the students were expected to work on.

What is screencast technology and how can teachers give feedback using it?

Screencast technology is utilized by screen capture software, which allows teachers to record everything they do on the computer screen. To illustrate, in order for teachers to use this technology, first they need to download a screen capture software on their computer. Then, by using the software they can create videos by recording the voice and on-screen actions such as making notes on the document, highlighting the text or simply indicating certain parts in the document using the mouse while giving feedback. After completing the feedback video, teachers can upload it on YouTube and by simply copying the link, they can share it with students via e-mail or a VLE such as Edmodo. Teachers can also create videos for the whole class and share them with students via email or WhatsApp groups.

Some screen capture tools have are free while others need to be paid for. The free tools are Jing, Cam Studio, and Screen Cast-O-Matic. These tools can easily be downloaded and the videos produced can be saved on computers. The videos are limited from 5 minutes to 15 minutes in length. However, some other paid tools such as SnagIt and Camtasia enable longer videos with more editing options.

Research methodology

In relation to the aim of the research which was to explore the effectiveness of the screencast feedback as opposed to written feedback, the following research question was formulated:

1. How do language learners perceive the effectiveness of screencast feedback compared to written feedback?

The participants were a group of graduate students who were at B1 level (Pre-Intermediate-Intermediate) enrolled in an English Support Program. Their age ranged

between 22 and 28. The learners were from diverse background studying in various faculties such as Architecture, Engineering, and Education. They were mostly from Middle Eastern countries like Syria, Lebanon, Palestine, Iraq, Iran and Jordan.

Procedures

Regarding the procedures, the students were introduced to Edmodo at the beginning of the semester. They were enrolled into the ELTE 511.SPRING18 class and given a short training session in a lab. After the students were familiarized with Edmodo, they were informed that they would submit 5 online assignments via Edmodo, and 5 written assignments on paper. The genre of the essays were advantages and disadvantages and opinion essays on various topics. The students received screencast feedback in the form of video that included the teacher's voice and all activities she did on the computer screen while giving feedback on the assigned essays the students submitted via Edmodo. As for the written assignments on paper, they received overall feedback and error correction symbols that indicated their mistakes. In both forms, the students were asked to write a final draft based on the feedback they had received on the first draft of their essays. Below is the screenshot of Edmodo class.

How the teacher researcher used the screencast technology

The teacher researcher and the author of this article assigned online essays via Edmodo and gave screencast feedback through the same channel. For those readers who are curious about the steps to give screencast feedback, the following steps are suggested:

1. Have a screencast software downloaded on your computer. The author of this research used SnagIt.

2. Open one of your students' assignment on the screen. The author opened the essays students typed as a Microsoft word document and submitted via Edmodo.
3. Turn the screen capture software on and select the area on the computer you'd like to record. There is also a 'full screen' option.
4. Click on the 'record a video' button. The software starts recording the teacher's voice and the activities on the screen, i.e., highlighting the text, making notes on it etc.
5. After giving feedback, click on 'stop' button and upload the resulting video on YouTube by choosing 'unlisted' privacy.
6. Send the link to the students. The author sent the link to her students via Edmodo individually.

When students open the link they see the recording of the screen and hear the teacher giving them feedback. Below is a screenshot of how a student's essay looks on Edmodo when they open the link to their screencast feedback:

The screenshot shows a Microsoft Word Online interface. The title bar reads 'Advantages and Disadvantages of Watching Television_Essay 3 mer...' and 'Saved to Edmodo'. The ribbon includes FILE, HOME, INSERT, PAGE LAYOUT, REVIEW, and VIEW. A table of feedback is visible at the top of the document:

9. The conclusion summarises the main points and makes a personal comment	yes	
10. There are linking words/phrases	yes	
11. Each sentence has the following word order: Subject Verb Object	yes	

Below the table, the text reads: 'What are the advantages and disadvantages of watching television? Write your essay here.'

The student's essay text is as follows:

Most people have a television at home or in the office. But, every person's TV watching habit is different. While some people just watch TV at night, some people watch television every hour of the day. Furthermore, some people watch television for new anything learn. On the contrary some people watch television for spend time. Just like everything else, watching tv has its advantages and disadvantages.

Firstly, I'll talk about advantages of watching TV. People can learn new developments through news channels. For example, people learn withdraw watches for winter time through news channels. Besides, people can follow the policy agenda. If a new law is adopted, people learn it through news channels. Secondly, people who follow food programs learn new recipes and healthy foods. While people watching food program can take notes on a recipe and try it at own home and they can learn healthy foods for their bodies. Thirdly, some

The following link is an example screencast feedback that the teacher gave to one of her students: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LAUEUBfFwXw>

Data collection

At the end of the semester, the teacher gave information about her intention to carry out the research and then asked their consent to participate in the study. All of the

students agreed to participate in the research. Then they were given a survey on the last day of the classes. The survey included a background information section and four open-ended questions:

- What did you like about voice feedback?
- What didn't you like about it?
- What problems did you face related to voice feedback?
- Which form of feedback would you prefer? Written or voice feedback?

Findings and discussion

The findings revealed that all of the students enjoyed receiving screencast feedback on their essays. The findings were grouped in three broad categories; feedback, effects on learning, and challenges.

1. Feedback

Quality of feedback

a. Video feedback can be viewed and listened to as many times as possible

S 7:	The main reason for them to like video feedback appears to be the opportunity to listen to the teacher giving feedback on the essay as many times as they would like to. One of the students reported this as follows: "I could listen to feedback again and again to understand my mistakes to improve my writing".
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b. It is easy to remember feedback given in the form of video

Some other students found voice feedback motivating because the visual aspect made them remember the feedback later. A participant stated that they "liked video feedback because it has teacher's voice and picture. It is motivating and I could remember my teacher's suggestions while writing other essays" (Student 1). In literature there is evidence that multimodal feedback, i.e., both visual and aural, allows retention to a greater extent (Mayer, 2002). When students hear the feedback from their teacher and look at the text where the teacher indicates or highlights certain mistakes, students make connections between visual and aural information more easily.

c. Video feedback is personal

It seems that students enjoyed video feedback mostly because they received individual feedback that address only their mistakes and includes personal advice. This is reflected by the students in the following sentences:

S 15:	"I appreciate this kind of feedback because I got direct information from my teacher indicating my mistakes and giving me tips to correct them."
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S 11:	“I think video feedback is more motivating when I hear my teacher explaining the problem and when the teacher focuses on the weak points or vocabulary items (although some of them were correct) but she suggests using other words that are more appropriate or to make the meaning stronger”.
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The screencast feedback is sent to students individually. In other words, each video feedback is personal. This unique feature appears to make students feel valued as one of the students expressed their opinion in the following words:

S 9:	“I like it because the feedback is just for me. I felt valued”.
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d. Video feedback is more detailed

Most of the students appeared to be in favour of video feedback compared to written feedback as they found video feedback more detailed. In a recently conducted study in the field of teacher education, [Stannard and Mann \(2018\)](#) reported that in a five-minute video a teacher can produce more than 700 words which is impossible to produce in written feedback. Therefore, by nature spoken feedback has more details if it is carefully prepared and given to students. What is more, the nature of screencast feedback enables students to both hear the teacher and see the text along with all the highlighting and annotations being done on it. One of the participants stated that they “had some tips and advice from [the teacher] in the video feedback and [the teacher] explained what [they] needed to do in detail. Maybe [the teacher] could not explain and write them all on paper, and in this way (referring to screencast feedback) teaching was very helpful for improving writing” (Student 12).

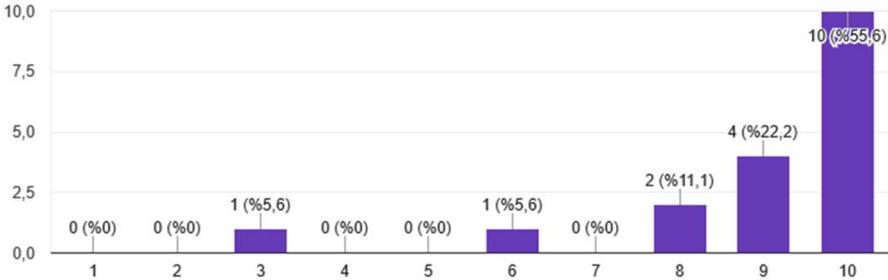
Quantity and response rate

Almost half of the class sent their essays through the VLE to receive video feedback. As it can be seen from the table below, the number of students who submitted their essays to receive video feedback increased. This may indicate that the participants appeared to be more interested in receiving video feedback from the course instructor.

Essay no	Number of students in class	Number of students receiving video feedback	%
1	18	8	45%
2	18	7	39%
3	18	4	22%
4	18	6	34%
5	18	8	45%
6	18	10	56%
7	18	11	61%
8	18	18	100%
Average response rate: 50%			

2. Effects on Learning

Out of 18 participants, 15 (83.3%) reported that they would prefer to receive video feedback. These students believed that video feedback helped them improve their essays better than written feedback. The participants rated the usefulness of video feedback on a 10 point scale. The bar chart below shows that most of the participants found this form of feedback useful.



The participants were asked to specify the areas of the essays for which the video feedback was most helpful. Most of the students reported that video feedback helped them improve their essay organization skills and focus on coherence more as the teacher gave detailed information in video feedback. One of the participants explained how useful they found video feedback in the following sentences: “I think video feedback is more motivating. When I hear my teacher explaining the problem areas and when she focuses on weak areas such as use of language and vocabulary (although it is correct) to recommend better options to help me improve my essay, I had more ideas about how to write better essays” (student 17).

In terms of mechanics of writing, the students improved accurate use of grammar and subject-verb agreements in their essays. Looking at the areas that the teacher provided feedback, she mostly focused on paragraphing and organization of students’ essays and gave them tips and examples of appropriate transition phrases, linkers and ideas to develop their essays in the final draft.

3. Challenges

Despite the fact that the students enjoyed receiving video feedback, some mentioned a number of challenges they faced throughout the semester. Only a few students mentioned some technical challenges such as not having internet connection to submit the essays and not being able to access to the link to listen to the teacher’s feedback. Two students mentioned that the voice quality of the video could be better. One student reported having a bad quality of the voice feedback they had received, which made them feel frustrated.

Reflections and looking into the future

Engaging in research on screencast feedback required me to improve my competences in the area of technological and pedagogical knowledge, and thus contributed to my professional growth. In order to give screencast feedback, first, I needed to obtain screen capture software and learn to use it efficiently in order to give feedback on my students' essays. I also learned different features of Edmodo and figured out how I could meaningfully integrate it in my lessons. Edmodo, as a central repository would be a good option as all my students' essays would be available in one place. Integrating Edmodo in my course enabled me to assign pre- and post-tasks to my lessons. Apparently, those were the baby steps to my flipped classroom experiences.

Giving screencast feedback was not easy for me at the beginning. The feedback videos to the essays I assigned first were around 10 minutes! It would take a long time to give feedback on 20 students' essays in a weekend. Then, I developed some strategies to make my videos shorter. I read the essays before recording the feedback video, so that I would know what to talk about. Then I started to highlight and made notes while reading, and pointed to these in the feedback videos. This strategy saved me time and the videos become 2 to 4 minutes long. Also, I prepared collective screencast feedback videos after reading all assigned essays to highlight common problems and give tips.

With no doubt this research process has contributed to my professional development not only for the points I mentioned above but I also had the chance to share my experiences with my other colleagues who are also eager to learn new trends and add variety to their teaching routine. The following list would be the highlights and some suggestions for readers who would be willing to implement screencast feedback in their writing courses:

- Use a good-quality webcam, headset or microphone
- Identify your focus before you start recording
- Do a test recording
- Tell learners what to expect
- Speak slowly and clearly
- Start and end with positive comments
- Choose two things for the learner to improve
- Be brief in your feedback
- Break videos into sections based on topics
- Consider giving collective feedback (more practical)

While looking into the future, I consider ways to make screencast feedback more dialogic. Mann and Walsh (2017) suggest ways to make feedback more dialogic with

some illustrations from teacher training contexts. Similar strategies may be applied such as asking students to make notes at the end of their essays to indicate on what aspect they really would like to receive feedback. In return, the teacher may end feedback by asking critical thinking questions and to respond to in the next draft or ask students to improve one or two points such as linkers or coherence.

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Edited by

Kenan Dikilitaş, Mark Wyatt, Anne Burns, Gary Barkhuizen

The volume

Teacher research can be energizing, as an accessible professional development activity for teachers, sometimes exploring puzzles with their learners; it can be motivating, inspiring, empowering and can facilitate the performing of identities. This volume is the fifth in a series of publications to have emerged from annual IATEFL Research Special Interest Group (ReSIG) conferences in Turkey; it presents the reflective accounts of teacher-researchers (both pre- and in-service) and teacher research-mentors.

The editors

Kenan Dikilitaş is Associate Professor at the University of Stavanger, Norway. His recent research areas are teacher learning and development through research and inquiry, teacher reflection in online contexts, and higher education pedagogy. His latest co-authored book, with Ali Bostancıoğlu *Inquiry and Research Skills for Language Teachers*, was published by Palgrave.

Mark Wyatt is Associate Professor of English at Khalifa University, United Arab Emirates. His research interests include language teachers' self-efficacy beliefs, teacher motivation, teacher research mentoring and practitioner research, and he has published widely in these areas. He is currently Publications Officer of the IATEFL ReSIG.

Anne Burns is Professor of TESOL at the University of New South Wales, Sydney, Australia. She is widely known for her work over the last thirty years in action research and teacher education. Her edited book with Jack Richards, *The Cambridge Guide to Learning English as a Second Language*, was published in 2018 by Cambridge University Press.

Gary Barkhuizen is Professor of Applied Linguistics at the University of Auckland, New Zealand. His teaching and research interests are in the areas of language teacher education, teacher identity, study abroad, and narrative inquiry. His latest book is *Qualitative Research Topics in Language Teacher Education* (Routledge, 2019).

