IN-SERVICE EFL TEACHER'S RESEARCH EXPERIENCES IN AN ONLINE PROFESSIONAL LEARNING COMMUNITY: A QUALITATIVE MULTIPLE CASE STUDY

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Approval of the Graduate School of Social Sciences

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ABSTRACT

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The aim of this dissertation was "to investigate the effects of conducting teacher research on in- service English teachers' views of themselves as researchers, their teacher roles and their professional development as well as to find out how participating in an online professional learning community affect in- service English teacher's research engagement practices". The professional learning community in question was designed for the purpose of this study. Necessary materials and tasks were presented on a weekly basis for the teacher-researchers (participants) in the community. The participants were guided via the materials and tasks as well as the information sharing that took place in the community into conducting teacher research in their own contexts. Additionally, two consecutive interviews which are "initial and final interview" were used, to be able to get more insights from the experiences of the teachers related to their teacher research administration. After the teachers conducted teacher research, some positive changes in the teacher as researcher identity has been observed. Additionally, their awareness related to this form of research increased. Teacher research's potential and feasibility were evaluated by teachers. At the end of the study, the teachers also had different and extended opinions related to the benefits of teacher research as a professional development tool compared to the beginning of the study. The teachers also gave serviceable insights related to the place of a support community in the

undertaking of research and the kind of features necessary for the success of this community in an online platform.

Keywords: teacher research, online communities, continuous professional development

ÖZ

MESLEK İÇİ İNGİLİZCE ÖĞRETMENLERİNİN MESLEKİ ÇEVRİMİÇİ BİR GRUPTA ARAŞTIRMA DENEYİMLERİ: NİTEL ÇOKLU VAKA İNCELEMESİ

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Bu tez çalışmasının amacı, öğretmen araştırması yapmanın çalışmakta olan İngilizce öğretmenlerinin kendilerini araştırmacı olarak görmelerine, öğretmen rollerine ve mesleki gelişimlerine etkisini araştırmayı ve çevrimiçi bir mesleki öğrenme topluluğuna katılmanın öğretmenlerin öğretmen araştırması gerçekleştirme deneyimlerine olan etkisinin de açığa çıkarılması idi. Söz konusu çevrimiçi mesleki öğrenme topluluğu tasarlanmış ve bu topluluğun katılımcılarının kendi şartlarına uygun olarak öğretmen araştırması yapabilmelerine yönelik rehberlik edecek materyaller hazırlanmıştır. İlk ve son mülakat olmak üzere iki faklı mülakat öğretmenlerin öğretmen araştırması uygulamalarındaki deneyimleri hakkında daha detaylı bilgiler edinilebilmek için kullanılmıştır. Öğretmenler araştırmalarını gerçekleştirdikten sonra, araştırmacı kimliklerinde bazı olumlu gelişmeler gözlenmiştir. Buna ek olarak öğretmenlerin bu araştırma türüne karşı farkındalıklarında artış olmuştur. Öğretmen araştırmasının potansiyeli ve uygulanabilirliği öğretmenler tarafından değerlendirilmiştir. Çalışmanın sonunda öğretmenlerin öğretmen araştırmasının yararları hakkında çalışmanın başına göre daha farklı ve genişlemiş fikirleri olmuştur. Öğretmenler ayrıca araştırma yürütmede

bir destek topluluğunun yeri ve bu topluluğun online bir ortamda başarılı olabilmesi için ne gibi özelliklere ihtiyacı olduğunu hakkında yararlı bilgiler vermiştir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: öğretmen araştırması, çevrimiçi topluluklar, sürekli hizmet içi eğitim

To all my beloved

and

To the teachers who feel teaching in their hearts

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

MONE	Ministry of National Education
TR	Teacher Research
PLC	Professional Learning Community
IDBS	Interview Data Before Study
IDAS	Interview Data After Study
RRD	Research Reflection Data
ID	Interview Data
RD	Reflection Data
EFL	English as a Foreign Language
CTD	Continued

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

The importance of continuing, contextual and democratic teacher professional development is undeniable in the success of the language education and the professional satisfaction of the teachers as well as the student well-being. More specifically it is argued that potent teacher professional development should include teacher as the active agent who should be able to evaluate praxis and systematically construct knowledge out of ongoing practical experiences. According to Darling-Hammond and McLaughlin (1995) in order for the professional development to be effective, it should include opportunities for reflection on practice in a critical manner and to form knowledge related to this practice stressing the importance of teacher inquiry.

Cochran-Smith & Lytle (1990) strengthens this plight via expressing teacher research as the only means of making teachers' voices heard about their practice. Cochran-Smith & Lytle (2009) see the practitioner research as a means to democratize the "locus of knowledge and power that determines the quality and quantity of educational opportunities afforded to children" (p.11). With the case as it is, the place of research-based teacher professional development activities gained importance in the field of English language teaching.

Additionally, in education the accountability to all stakeholders necessitates teachers to make data driven, informed decisions (Beverly, 1993). The compatibility of teacher research movement with the growing importance of using student data to inform practice and accountability issues worldwide (Campbell & Levin, 2009) bring the research activities in the classrooms to the fore.

What is more, Giroux's (2002) "teachers as intellectuals" stance in which teachers assume an important role in creating a free society and in the formation of ethical and political self and social order calls for teachers to act as researchers as well.

The teachers in this respect should be able to inquire their practices and situate themselves in relation to the broader context. Therefore over the past few decades, the undertaking of research activities and reflecting on the practice became the goal in the education which would make teachers change agents and primary individuals who are responsible for their own professional developments (Yan, 2017).

However, it has been articulated that the teachers have been chastised for their lack of knowledge or participation in research, additionally, the teachers also complain about the inaccessibility of research and the fact that their opinions and actual experiences are missing from the mainstream research (Dikilitaş, Smith, & Trotman, (2015).

1.1 Background of the Problem

Although, the gains of the teacher research are voiced at increasing rates, classroom-based research activities, is not always chosen or perceived by teachers as a very significant professional development tool. The reasons include lack of knowledge, lack of time and motivation, or failure to see the relevance of classroom research to the immediate needs of classroom (Gutierez & Kim, 2017), teacher isolation and the abstinence from asking questions for fear of being seen as ineffective (Cochran-Smith, M., & Lytle, S. L., 1992). The teachers may not be trained to carry out research in their profession during their preparation for teaching (Bartels, 2002). Additionally, teacher's doing research and reporting may seem intimidating for teachers since they may not feel competent in academic writing and they may associate the research with academia and research is not seen as the core duty of teachers (Rathert & Okan, 2015).

The teachers on the other hand could possibly take advantage of teacher research in terms of their professional development if they can become aware of what this research entails and what the underlying ideas behind it are. This research should be introduced to teachers and the teachers should be supplied with necessary training and assistance throughout their research administration to investigate the true benefits of teacher research for teacher professional development. Teacher research carries the necessary features of a successful form of teacher professional development. The features were stated as the following:

- It must engage teachers in concrete tasks of teaching, assessment, observation, and reflection that illuminate the process es of learning and development.
- It must be grounded in inquiry, reflection, and experimentation that are participant-driven.
- It must be collaborative, involving a sharing of knowledge among educators and a focus on teachers' communities of practice rather than on individual teachers.
- It must be connected to and derived from teachers' work with their students.
- It must be sustained, ongoing, intensive, and supported by modeling, coaching, and the collective solving of specific problems of practice.
- It must be connected to other aspects of school change (Darling-Hammond, & McLaughlin, 1995 p. 598).

The study was needed to shed light into the potential of teacher research as a professional development tool which is embedded into everyday practice of teachers by the experiences of teachers. It is important to understand the nature, the benefits and the conditions of sustainability of teacher research to make it a more prevalent professional development activity for teachers.

1.2. Purpose of the Study

In order to eliminate these barriers towards research engagement, it is of utmost importance to support the teachers in their research endeavors. First of all, the teachers should be given opportunities for involving in teacher research. This research type and the philosophy behind it need to be introduced to the practitioners. Their awareness on the issue should be raised by hands- on experience. It is also highly important to document the experiences of teachers in teacher research

projects to understand their thinking and learning process and in the way teacher research affect teachers to make teacher research as a more effective form of professional development.

According to Vygotsky's social constructivism theory, learning takes place as a social and collaborative activity and the meaning is created and accumulated via the interactions in the group (Schreiber & Valle, 2013). Similarly, Cochran-Smith & Lytle (1992) advocate that "teacher research is by definition a collaborative and social activity that requires opportunities for sustained and substantive intellectual exchange among colleagues" (p. 301). With the advancement in the technology and the changing ways of how we communicate and organize our lives, the group support which could be beneficial to teacher professional development and can promote teacher research activities could be accessed via online tools. This would not only eradicate time and location problems but will increase the availability of help when needed in research related issues. Therefore, this study aims to explore the effect of teacher research on teacher professional development and how an online community designed for the promotion of teacher research helps teachers' research engagement. The research questions were defined as the following:

1. What will be the impact of Teacher research participation on

a. In service EFL teachers' views of themselves as teacher researchers?
b. In service EFL teachers' views on the importance and necessity of teacher research as a professional development tool?

2. What will be the impact of Teacher research participation on in service EFL teachers' understanding of instructional roles and context?
3. What are the reflections of the teachers before during and after teacher research?
4. What is the impact of "online Professional Learning community (PLC) of teachers for teacher research" on the application of teacher research and willingness to continue to teacher research (TR) in in-service EFL teachers?

1.3. Significance of the Study

Since 1980s, teacher learning has been emphasized and conceptualized as one of the most important topics in the field of education (Cochran-Smith & Lytle, 1999). The three most notable conceptions related to teacher learning are summarized by Cochran-Smith & Lytle, (1999) as "knowledge for practice, knowledge in practice and knowledge of practice" The first refers to learning formal knowledge generated by university-based academicians and applying them in the lessons. "Knowledge in practice" accepts that the practical knowledge that the teachers need to teach is ingrained in their working contexts and in their reflection of their practice. "Knowledge of practice" assumes that the knowledge for teaching is "generated when teachers treat their own classrooms and schools as sites for intentional investigation at the same time that they treat the knowledge and theory produced by others as generative material for interrogation and interpretation" (Cochran-Smith & Lytle, 1999 p. 250).

The last conception is quite important in that in it, teachers can produce knowledge to their immediate use and are able to connect their local context to wider realities. Therefore, the idea of teacher as researcher comes into prominence for teachers to inquire their practices.

The previous studies conducted in Turkey context, have underlined the potential of teacher research as a highly effective contextualized means of professional development (Atay, 2008; Smith, 2014; Dikilitaş, Wyatt, Hanks, & Bullock, 2016; Tomakin, 2007). The positive attitudes of practitioners towards it and the intrinsic motivation of teachers to conduct teacher research were promising for it to be a common teacher development tool. It has been evaluated as an important tool to improve critical thinking; teacher awareness on the decisions in the classroom as well as teacher autonomy which is an important step in teacher empowerment. However, the main points that were mentioned to have hindered teacher research were lack of awareness and technical knowledge related to this form of research as well as the lack of support from immediate community (Karakaya, 2015),

Additionally lack of support from MONE (or lack of any form of mentoring) is also expressed (Yesilçinar & Çakir, 2018). Yesilçinar & Çakir (2018) also believe that the centralized nature of the educational system and English language teaching in Turkey will be an obstacle for teachers to transition to be the decision makers in their professions.

This study is important in that it can supply us with knowledge whether the awareness raising and the support in technical aspects of teacher research as well as motivational supports will help teachers to adopt teacher research as a viable professional development activity. Most importantly, it will enlighten us whether the support of community would enhance teacher research conduct among teachers.

The use of online community as the platform of teacher research in education is also significant. 2023 Education vision plans of Turkey aims to raise students and teachers who can actively make use of digital platforms for education, who can create digital content and make use this digital content. In line with the needs of the era, using digital platforms and materials are highlighted in the vision plans. In order to assure the use of teachers' digital platforms and content in their teaching, it is of utmost importance to give them opportunities to use these platforms in their own learning in the first place. English teachers' learning cannot be separated from their English teaching and the practices in in-service training should be in accordance with the intended developments in the language teaching. The teachers are expected to be the creators of the digital content a take active part in the development of digital skills therefore they should be trained in that line. The teacher research education in the online platform of which exploration was the topic of this dissertation meets these specifications. The teachers took active part in the online community for their in-service education by asking questions related to their teaching contexts and they took active part in the creation of the end product which is the research project that they have carried out in the study. Along with helping them to acquire research skills and a reflective stance to their classrooms, the teachers also experienced the online platform as a learning tool. Some teachers

reported that they will use the online platform for their English teaching in their won classrooms.

Furthermore, in the 2023 vision under the goal of improving teacher qualifications and competencies of teachers in foreign language education, it was specified that via the collaborations between international and higher education institutions as well as non-governmental organizations, the teachers are going to be given training in online and offline platforms. The training which is a part of this study is both in an online platform and provided by a research facilitator from a university setting. The training component and the instant feedback of the training on the application in this study may provide insights concerning the nature of online educations in in-service teacher education. The potential of on-line in-service education combined with the potential of research training in collaboration with higher education institutions may be appraised. Thus, providing a useful source for the future work in this realm.

This study provides a framework for an online training which prioritizes the teacher autonomy and inquiry-based learning. The fact that it is ongoing and connected to the everyday lives of teachers can answer some of the problems which were associated the fragmented and non-participatory nature of traditional in-service training which was provided to teachers in this dissertation has several components: the training itself, interactions in the website and the outcomes of the training. These will give us important feedback on the applicability of these types of teacher training programs which are closely connected to the specifications in the 2023 vision plans of Turkish Education for the teachers who work for MONE in Turkish context.

Stenhouse (1983) emphasized the inherent nature of teacher-based research or other teacher development activities. The focused feature was their being collaborative. He also underlined the difficulty in teachers' coming together due to time and logistical limitations. Online components which can assist collaboration or learning can be a solution to this logistical problem. This present study at hand is significant

since it includes interactions on the part of teacher researchers(participants) for the aim of providing support, and it employs a total online community design different from some other studies which include face to face meetings as well (such as Dikilitaş et al., 2016) or no online component of no interaction among participants (Yesilçinar & Çakir, 2018).

Similar to the Classroom-based Research EVO (Electronic Village Online) project (Göktürk-Sağlam & Dikilitaş 2016- continues), this study adopted a solely online design for the training of research, however it limited the participants to only one field which is English teaching. Additionally, in our study the participants were only from Turkey. What this may mean is that it could shed light upon the feasibility of a total national online system which could be administered from a base and may spread nationwide in the in-service education of Turkey. The participants of this study are teachers from varied geographical regions of Turkey. There are participants from İstanbul, Ankara, Aydın, Nevşehir, Erzurum Niğde, Şanlıurfa representing 5 geographical regions of Turkey out of 7. Since the teachers are all practitioners in the English language teaching, their shared experiences would contribute to their understanding of each other. The fact that the teachers are from Turkey and they share the same principles in their syllabus will help us evaluate the results which may contribute to the implications of English Language pre-service education in Turkey.

Additionally, this study aims for teacher interactions to foster teacher research as well as the facilitator guiding. Since the aim of the study is to be able to identify the place of an online community in conducting teacher research, it is important to see the effect of the components of the community on teachers' research engagement. The components include the colleague support, the research facilitator role as giving information related to teacher research, and support for teacher research administration and lastly the sources for teacher research. The success in the ability of sustainment of teacher research in in-service teacher professional development lies in the fact that the teachers should be able to benefit from the community

support. Therefore, the nature of the interactions and the support of the mentor in the online PLC which is designed to enhance teacher research should be described well to give us important information related to online PLCs future in schools as autonomous entities to support teacher research.

1.4 Theoretical Framework

This study adopts the social constructivism stance of looking at the reality as the theoretical framework. This view defends that the reality is constructed through the subjective meanings of the experiences. The aim of the researcher is to look at the complexity of meaning from the various participants' views of the situation (Cresswell, 1998).

In the construction of the views, the experiences of participants and the immediate surroundings as well as the broader context in which they are in is important. The earlier approaches in Second Language Teacher Education which assumes the teachers should be able to transfer the knowledge and skills that they have been trained in their pre-service teacher education has its problems in the practice. The teacher learning is best conceptualized as the constant negotiation of the meaning in which the teacher is the active agent. The other agents in this meaning negotiation included the teacher him/herself, the student, the subject matter, work setting and the context (Johnson, 2006). Therefore, in the study, the context of the schools and the cognition and understanding of the teachers are described in relation to their current experience with research.

In the design of the study, the teachers got research training in a community. Additionally, they were expected to produce a research in their own school contexts. In addition to the sociocultural turn of looking at learning, the function of this community is best understood with the understanding of communities of practice stance. Wenger (2000) explains that communities of practice are social learning

systems. In these systems people both participate to social life in it and we produce artifacts. “Through active and dynamic negotiation of meaning, practice is something that is produced over time by those who engage in it” (Wenger, E., 2000 p.2). In a parallel way, Activity Theory which was developed by Lev Vygotsky from this stance, and later improved by Engeström focuses on the interactions of the (a) subject, (b) objects, (c) tools (artifacts) (d) community, (e) rules, (f) division of labor, and (g) outcome (Mwalongo, A. I., 2016).

In this study,

- subjects are defined as the teachers who use the professional learning community
- object is the use professional learning community for the aim of promoting and assisting teacher research engagement
- tools are the assets of the professional learning community, such as material sharing discussions etc.
- community is the teachers and the supervisor in the professional learning community as a holistic unit. The teacher themselves and the teachers and the supervisor interact to attain the same goal thus constitute a community.
- rules are the guidelines to organize the community. They are the rules of using the community.
- roles constitute the duties of the people involved in the community.
- outcome refers to the promotion of teacher research engagement in the community.

In the study, the design of the online community (the rules posted in the group), the roles of the participants, and the interactions of those aspects were taken into account in analysis.

In the study which adops socal constructivism, open ended questions are preferred and the role of the researcher is recognized, by giving special attention to the

backgrounf of the researcher and how they are postioned in the study (Cresswell, 1998). Therefore these points were also organized accordignly.

Vygotsky (1987) and Arievitch (2010), also defend that research is a holistic process. “That is, we must examine not just an individual, but also the social relations and the material conditions that societies and institutions create, which in turn afford (or not) opportunities for a person’s development or the development of the system” (as cited in Fleer, M., 2016 p. 8).

To summarize, social constructivism is chosen as it allows looking at the special social setting and its members in a manageable manner and it attaches importance to the social setting in the interpretation of the phenomenon.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

In this section, related studies in the field are presented. In order to address the research concern: how collaborating in an online community affects teachers' research engagement, it is necessary to look into teacher research, and professional online communities of learning. The projects and studies which combines research and online communities of practice together also needs a specific focus in this chapter. Therefore, they will be introduced by underlying their salient and relevant components to this research study. Online communities in which teacher research is carried out is a form of professional development for teachers. This professional development is different from traditional means of in-service training which generally include short term workshops.

Wilson &Berne (1999) point out to the "scattered and serendipitous "nature of teacher learning (p.173). One-day seminar type of teacher professional development activities are examples of them. They are fragmented, and if teachers don't actively take part in them, they don't favor these activities (Wilson &Berne, 1999). These in-service training alone cannot answer the needs of teachers in our era. Daloğlu (2004) underlines that in Turkey, the common understanding of teacher professional development includes these workshop types of in-service education episodes which may be unrelated from each other. These types of training are inadequate in creating meaningful change in teachers since they are generally not ongoing or embedded in their work contexts throughout the semester or the year. The topics are not defined by the teachers themselves and the activities are not participatory. Roseler & Dentzau (2013) assert that top-down professional development practices which incorporate outside experts and mandated content "deprofessionalize" teaching. On the other hand, different from traditional in-service training, in communities of

practice the people who are the part of the practice come together and try to work on their issues in a constructive manner. The ability to move these communities to an online platform increases their effectiveness. In these online communities, the teachers can be educated about teacher-initiated inquiry. Teacher initiated inquiries have several forms and they are going to be dealt in teacher research section of this chapter.

2.1 Teacher Research

In order for an occupation to be a professional activity, some of the necessary factors are listed as its being based on a body of theoretical knowledge and research as well as the profession's members' ability to make autonomous judgments both in individual and collective level (Carr & Kemmis, 2003). According to this same view, teaching profession which is hierarchical by nature is seen as quite problematic when it comes to making autonomous decisions.

Davies (1999) also asserts that the reforms or changes in the education are generally from top down. Especially in the technical view of education, curriculum is expected to take teachers to pre-defined ends if followed effectively. The research's aim in this stance is to determine the effectiveness of the teachers or the methods that teachers choose in order to attain these specified ends.

In practical view of education, it is accepted that education is an activity constituted by actors, and it is a highly complex activity which necessitated many different decisions freeing it from highly constrained view of applying the syllabus.

However, it is the strategic view which captures the whole complexity and reality of education because it places it into a political, social and historical context (Carr & Kemmis, 2003). According to Carr & Kemmis (2003) in this stance the teacher "plans thoughtfully, acts deliberately, observes the consequences of action

systematically, and reflects critically on the situational constraints and practical potential of the strategic action being considered" (p.40). The teachers can also bring these individual endeavors into others' reach and thus help to construct critical communities of enquirers. Furthermore, in this stance the teachers' role in undertaking research becomes critical and the research is the action research which has the potential of emancipation.

Similarly, Noffke (1997) also classifies teacher research according to the motivation with which they were conducted. According to him there are three reasons why teacher research is carried out: The first one is to improve and make sense of one's practice, second one is to produce knowledge which would benefit themselves and others, and lastly to contribute to the equity of the society (as cited in Somekh & Zeichner, 2009).

In Turkey the educational system is defined as heavily centralized as well. And that even though action research concept is known since 1950, it is relatively new in radically challenging the paradigm of teacher education and in the empowerment of teachers. (Kayaoglu, 2015).

Teacher research is defined as "all forms of practitioner inquiry that involve systematic, intentional, and self-critical inquiry about one's work in K-12, higher education, or continuing education classrooms, schools, programs, and other formal educational settings" (Cochran-Smith, & Lytle, 1999 p.22). It is done on teachers' own practice by themselves. Since the teachers' professional practice is both the place and focus of their research, research and practice are closely related and "the boundaries between inquiry and practice are blurred" (Willegems et al., 2017 p. 232). Teacher research is also defined as a form of action research conducted by teachers in their working environments to improve practice (Hammersley, 1993). According to Crookes (1993) the main underlying factor of action research is that the teacher is involved in the research process.

Carter and Halsall (1998:73–74) define the key features of the teacher research as the following:

> • it is grounded in data which has been systematically collected and analyzed for a clearly defined purpose;
> • it is undertaken by teachers, though sometimes with the support of external critical friends;
> • it focuses on professional activity, usually in the workplace itself;
> • its purpose is to clarify aspects of that activity, with a view to bringing about beneficial change – ultimately, to improve student progress, achievement and development, this being precisely the purpose of school improvement itself (as cited in Borg, 2010 p. 393).

Teacher research is a form of action research but, it doesn't necessarily follow the spiraled steps in action research. Teacher research can sometimes only aim to understand the classroom lives better and document those experiences (Zeichner & Noffke, 2001).

The terms action research, teacher research and classroom research are sometimes used interchangeably (Queenan, 1988). The researcher of this thesis took the general umbrella term which included any form of inquiry that stemmed from a real-life problem of teachers and included systematic data collection to answer the research questions.

Corey (1954) states that there aren't very big methodological differences between traditional research and action (teacher) research in that in both research types, the researcher tries to answer the research question by following similar steps. However, he advocates that the main difference stems from the conditions under which the research is undertaken. In action research since the researcher cannot control situation and variables, it lacks the precision the traditional research has. On the other hand, it is more realistic compared to traditional research. Additionally, Crookes (1993) affirms that the difference of action research and any other research done by teacher is that in action research the research problem should stem from immediate or actual needs of the teachers in classrooms.

Beverly (1993) states that origin of action or teacher research is associated with Dewey and Levin's work. Levin's work involvement was outside of the field of education. He was a social psychologist who was interested in oppression and inter-group relations (Zeichner & Noffke, 2001). Stephen Corey and other researchers introduced this research type to the educational community in United States in 1940s (Beverly, 1993). Sociopolitical conditions of the time which necessitated more democratic educational practices, and Dewey's progressive ideas of education as well as the emergence of using social research for social reconstruction contributed to the development of teacher research (Zeichner & Noffke, 2001). Schon's reflective practitioner idea has also affected the teacher research movement (Cochran-Smith & Lytle, 1999).

The emergence of teacher research in England was around 1970s with the initiatives of practitioners who would like to reform curriculum and the supports of scholars such as Stenhouse (Zeichner & Noffke, 2001). Stenhouse (1979) believed that the knowledge that has been constituted as a result of research processes cannot be taught without teaching the research process that helped to attain this knowledge. Therefore, research-based teaching is what we should strive for in education. He also believed that education should be built upon the questioning stance towards information and thus should be liberating. Additionally, in research-based education, he believed that the teachers don't aim to know but look for and research, therefore they are progressive and responsive to changing needs (Stenhouse, 1979).

The Freire's ideas related to emancipation also defends that, in order for students or teachers to actualize humanization process, they need to question the authoritarian values and reality around them and the reach knowledge by reflection and action, and become transformative intellectuals by problem posing education stance (Freire, 1970). Many researchers in community-based action research in US and Canada were thought to be influenced by these ideas (Brydon-Miller, 1997).

Generally, by engaging in teacher research activities, the teachers aim to gain deeper understanding of their practice, question their beliefs, produce information; improve the classroom lives as well as with the potential of empowerment and transformation. However, the primary concern of each teacher research could be different. Noffke (1997) classifies action research into three types. They are respectively action research which prioritizes personal, action research which prioritizes professional and lastly action research which prioritizes political aspects (as cited in Griffiths, 2009). However, this being said, Noffke and Brennan (1997) also remark that each type will include the others as well (as cited in Griffiths, 2009). Crookes (1993) asserts there are two major distinctive types of action research. One is all research carried out by a teacher in their practice and which is value free. And he calls it "teacher research version of action research". The other one is critical which aims emancipation of individuals from unquestioned existing situations and it has the features of being dialogical, collaborative and reflective.

Griffiths (2009) states the analysis conducted by Furlong and Salisbury (2005) indicated that the majority of the teacher research projects in the 2000s included only technical aspects of the classroom life. For instance, the topics include how to use smart boards more effectively leaving the bigger professional- political understanding of the context and the transformation of the teacher aside. She also adds that even if the research focuses on political issues, not much research can achieve social justice to its full extent due to constraints. Although she believes that it is an obligation for all action researchers to aim for social justice at one point, the studies focusing on only technical aspects should not be underrated. There is always chance for improvement in action research and for better reflection.

Similarly Gore & Zeichner (1991) voices that the literature in action research in US indicates that the studies are mainly individualistic, ignoring the social conditions and social inequalities. However, they also stress the inseparability of critical from technical and practical and they too are aware the teachers are not alone sufficient to

change the deep structure of schools and correct the social situations in the schooling system.

2.1.1. English Language Teachers' Beliefs about Research

In line with teacher research in education, In English language teaching there has been an interest toward teacher research as well. Barkhuizen (2009) categorizes the studies on teacher research in English language teaching as follows:

- McDonough & McDonough (1990) studied the use of teacher research by English teachers.
- Nunan (1997) proposed "standards for teacher research in TESOL" (p.113)
- Allwright (1997) commented on the "quality and sustainability of teacher research" for English teachers (p.113)
- The reflective potential of teacher research for English teachers were studied by scholars such as Freeman & Richards (1996).

Understanding the conceptions related to teacher research held by teachers is of importance to take conscious steps in promoting and sustaining teacher research among English language teachers. The survey completed by 505 English teachers from 13 countries in Borg's 2009 study indicated that English language teachers associate good quality research with large samples and quantitative methods. According to the author, their research conception is closer to academic scientific notion of research. Nearly 30% of the participants reported never or rarely reading research on the grounds that it had little to offer them for their daily needs in classrooms. They are regarded as too theoretical. Davies (1999) underlines the problem that the fact that the teachers doesn't use research to inform their practice is much bigger a problem than teachers' not conducting research or their exclusion from setting the research agenda. 45, 4% of the 493 participants stated that they rarely or never conducted research. The reasons given for doing research was generally pedagogical, personal and professional and the reasons for not doing

research mostly included lack of time and technical knowledge, lack of support or the fact that other colleagues don't do research either (Borg, 2013).
Additionally, in a study conducted by Sato & Loewen (2018), it was revealed that the awareness research on the findings of the research was low. The accessibility of research was also another concern for teachers. Their awareness of indexed journals was low. The time was a problem and school support and initiatives were missing.

Drawing on the importance of school support, the research culture in schools is also important for teachers to consider teacher research as a possible professional development option in their institutions. The teacher research is encouraged and sustained if the school culture allows it and school managers can integrate research to the teachers' workload or allocate time for teachers to do research, encourage them to be a part of research project teams and support them in the process. Establish outlets where they can share and get credit for their research is also important (Borg, 2013). Borg (2013) thinks teacher research is not still a common activity among teachers.

Another study which draws findings from a research and professional activity program between the years 2005-2011 including 1730 teachers and managers of English language teaching institutions and two more teacher research projects provide us some insights related to research conceptions, reading and doing research, benefits of research and research cultures (Borg, 2013 p. 211). Borg (2013) stresses that, there are some misconceptions related to research among teachers. Similar to the findings of previous studies, some teachers have the research associations as such: the research has no relevance to the classroom. These statements of teachers regarding the irrelevance of research to the classroom supports the ideas of Stenhouse (1983) who states that in order for research to apply to education, the teacher should be part of the research community. The research produced by academia may not correspond to the teachers' concerns. These teachers who believe the research doesn't apply to their classes have negative attitudes towards research. On the other hand, there are teachers who consider reflective

practice as research. As for reading research, Borg (2013) stresses that there is little evidence that suggest reading research influences how teachers think or teach. He claims teachers read research related to their academic studies. Lack of time and accessibility to research are two of the stated reasons. The barriers to research were again lack of time, lack of necessary skills and knowledge and lack of support. Additionally, traditional teacher identity or the instructional roles which didn't support research were incompatible with conducting teacher research.

2.1.2 Benefits of Teacher Research

Teacher research has been observed to have positive effects on several aspects of teaching and teachers' ideas of self and teacher professionalism. Scholars such as Kirkwood (2006) Reis-Jorge (2005) et al. defend that by engaging teacher research activities teachers would be able to connect their practice with the theory of education. Furthermore, the teachers would make sense of the information which they have learned in a decontextualized way in their pre-service teacher education and become more reflective by examining them systematically in their practice via research engagement (Hahs-Vaughn & Yanowitz, 2009). The teachers stay up to date with the new information in their fields (Bennett, 1993 as cited in Rock, T. T., 1999). They could make informed decisions and have a better understanding of the self and the practices. Other positive gains associated with teacher research engagement include increase in teacher confidence to be able to incorporate research into practice (Kitchen & Stevens, 2008), confidence of self as a better teacher (Fien, 1998; Zeichner, 2006) and renewed enthusiasm towards teaching (Atay, 2008). Teacher research also helps teachers to become more flexible and open to new ideas (Mitchell, Reilly, & Logue, 2009) and it helps to eradicate teacher isolation in the profession (Burns, 2015; Sagor, 1992). The teachers who are more confident about themselves, who can understand themselves as teachers, their students, their context better and who can critically reflect on their situation, take part in planning and creating information which could be beneficial to the academia

and elevate the status of schools (Zeichner, 2006). It has positive effects on teacher empowerment (Farrel, 2003). It also democratizes the construction of knowledge by the people who are working in the context in which the information will be used (Burns, 2015). This information can be used by others as well. Noffke & Zeichner (1987) compile the stated benefits of teacher research as the following:

- development of professional skills and roles
- improvement in the self-worth and self confidence
- increase in classroom awareness
- disposition towards reflection
- changes in personal beliefs
- development of practical theories
- broadened views on teaching schooling and society.

The teacher research is also expected to increase the awareness and insights of teachers related to their teaching and to critically reflect on their ongoing teaching practices (Dikilitaş, 2015).

2.1.3 Sustainability of Teacher Research

Wyatt (2016) underlines that the benefits of teacher research could be attained by the teachers who engage in it in lengthy periods of time (Dikilitaş, K., Wyatt, M., Hanks, J., & Bullock, D., 2016). Allwright (1997) advocates the sustainability should be prioritized over quality (however without abandoning the quality as well), the reason is that: if the teacher research isn't sustained, the benefits will not be observed in long term and teacher research will be one-time activity. In the light of these statements, sustainability of teacher research is important in fully benefitting from this research. Edwards & Burns (2015) express that although benefits of the teacher research have been extensively studied, there is not enough studies focusing on the sustainability of teacher research. They believe motivation and intuitional

support are two important key factors in supporting sustainability. They summarize the different types of school support to sustain teacher research in the following ways:

- to promote teachers to continue using the already formed communication methods and channels constituted as a part of action research
- give support to teachers in making their research work recognized in a broader circle and contribute to the field by helping them to publish
- to provide them funds to be able to attend seminars
- to enable teachers' using action research findings to improve the education in school.

Borg (2009) also underlines the importance of "organizational, collegial, emotional, intellectual, and practical support" in sustainability of teacher research as well as in initiating it. Another proposal related to initiating and sustaining EFL teacher research is to make it a formal way of work (Borg, 2009). He states that the commonly stated hindering factors for research which are lack of time and support may be eradicated this way even though it may be at the expense of teacher autonomy. However, he advocates this approach to serve teachers a starting point in research, to introduce them to the concept and work. Dikilitaş (2016) states that motivation is a very important factor for the sustainment of teacher research. Campbell et al. (2003) see the merits of collaborative groups and network in sustaining teacher research (as cited in Kirkwood & Christie, 2006). Publication of teacher research may also be another factor which would encourage teachers to take part in teacher research and continue research. Sharing research is also important in order for teacher research to reach other professionals. Several scholars underlined the importance of sharing as it is one of the most important features which is necessary for the research to be entitled as research (Borg, 2009; Levin & Martin, 2007). Crookes (1993) explains that since the aim is to take an action at the end of the research, it should be communicated with the teachers and other interested parties. However, the form of report or where it should be shared is not strictly defined. As a matter of fact, he argues that publishing them anywhere but academic

journals could be better. The studies in academic journals are rarely made use of and the target audience of action-teacher research may be different. He adds that the reports of teacher research can be a discursive anecdotal and comparatively subjective. Sommer (2009) also suggests other print outlets such as newsletters, newspapers and different types of magazines implying that journal speak of scientists may not be reader friendly.

Drawing upon the importance of disseminating teacher research, Dikilitaş & Mumford, (2016) focus on the importance of guiding teachers in public writing. They state that although teacher research is comparably a small movement, it is increasing throughout the world all the same. Therefore, it is important to guide teachers to write their research in this movement for the writings of the teachers may be of use in other contexts and writing will also help the sustainability of teacher research. In their study 11 teachers shared their experiences of writing up their teacher research which included mentoring and cooperative peer work. The roles of the mentor in terms of research writing were providing moral and pedagogical support. Having peers to help in writing process also helped the researchers in terms of sharing research workload, improvement of language, democratic dialogue even though in some pairs the other pair complained about the lack of commitment on the part of their partner. As a conclusion the described supportive environment was found effective in aiding teachers' research writing.

2.1.4 Problems Related to Teacher Research

One of the foremost problems which was put by Cochran-Smith & Lytle (1992) was that the traditional understanding of the research in an academic sense and doubts related to teacher research put barriers for this research type to be a thriving method among teachers. Yesilçinar & Çakir (2018) affirmed that the barriers towards teacher research include the understanding of research as an activity associated with the universities and therefore seen as not being in the realm of teachers. In other

words, lack of awareness related to some core ideas of teacher research. In the circle of scholars, the problematic issues include the concerns related to the problems of rigor and the generalizability of the results. Crookes (1993) criticized language teacher research for lacking critical perspective (as cited in, Borg, 2010). However, as the course of time, the value of teacher research and its different uses has come to be appreciated. For instance, Allwright (1997) suggested that when the teachers can accommodate research into their lives and use it to make their everyday classroom life better and can answer their local needs with research, even though it doesn't meet the criteria of academy, it is a successful use of research. However, it should not be misunderstood that teacher research should be confined to only classroom activities just to improve the techniques of classroom practices. Lytle and Cochran-Smith (1990) explains that teacher research is a legitimate way of contributing to the literature of teaching and helps us to understand teaching in its context (as cited in Cochran-Smith & Lytle, 1992).

The other concerns of teacher related to teacher research include the inability to connect research and teaching due to the understanding that the research would mean less time for teaching. Negative associations related to traditional educational research such as the ideas related to its non-relevance to their immediate context (Cochran-Smith & Lytle, 1992) also cause barriers to implement teacher research.

There are also other problems and barriers for teacher research engagement. They can be summarized as "non-collaborative school culture, limitations in teachers' awareness, beliefs, skills and knowledge, limited resources, demotivators (such as lack of direction, guide appraisal etc.) economic matters, leadership attributes, political issues etc. (Borg, 2010 p. 409). In order to promote teacher research engagement, and uproot the barriers towards it, it is quite essential to externally support teachers. The external support can be in the form of providing mentorship or guidance activities or funds and other resource supplements (Hahs-Vaughn & Yanowitz, 2009). However, there is one form of support which could include all

these elements and comes to the forefront. It is the online professional learning communities and they will be referred in more detail.

2.2. Online Professional Learning Communities and Research Engagement

Guskey (1986) argues that in spite of the different varieties of professional development activities and programs their main purpose is to make changes in the beliefs, attitudes and behaviors of the teachers in some way which aims to improve student learning outcomes. He also adds that most of the professional development activities fail due to their neglect of defining the motivating factors of teachers and the process in which the professional change occurs itself. The teachers are intrinsically motivated for professional development. They aim to be more effective teachers who can help their students more. Additionally, most of the time the teachers have another aim in mind which is to discover practical solutions for their specific daily problems. As for the process of change in teachers' professional activities the professional development programs need to be integrated and embedded to the everyday responsibilities of the teachers to be effective. A more focused point by the author was that the teachers don't change their beliefs and opinions and then apply the change to their classrooms but the process is quite the reverse. The teachers would like to see the effects of the change, the improvement of their students to change their beliefs and for new development to be effective and sustainable. These steps were described in Figure 1.

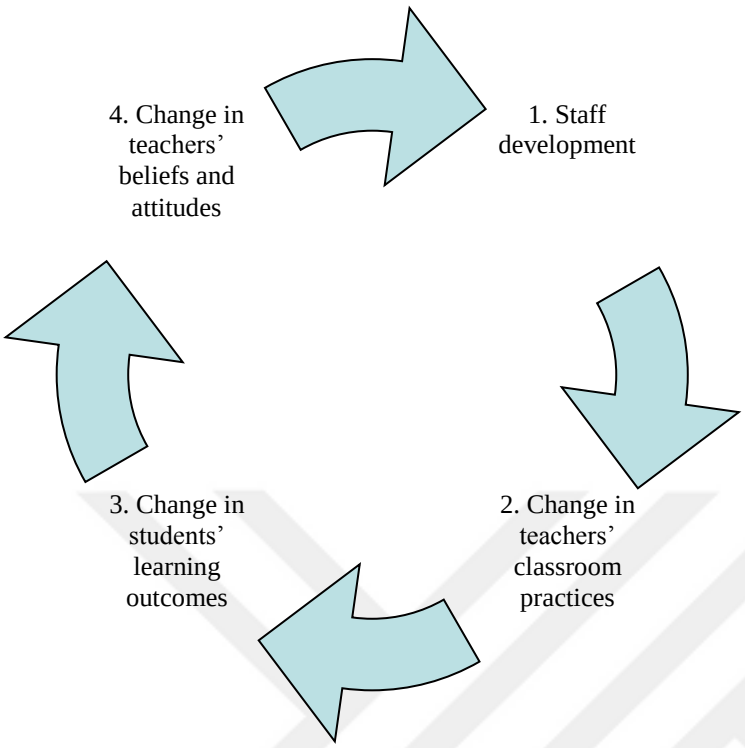


Figure 1. A Model of the Process of Teacher Change (taken from Guskey, 1986)

Guskey (1986) also underlines the conditions for teacher change. The first condition is to realize that new implementations will be extra workload on teachers in the beginning and will cause anxiety. Secondly if the change is too radically different from teachers' practice, most likely it won't occur. The teachers also need to see how their students are doing. Therefore, continual student feedback is important in applying the change. The continuous guidance is also another important point.

Svendsen (2017) argues that professional development activities also should be aligned with the social aspects of learning in order for them to be more effective. This explanation supports the ideas presented by situated learning. According to situated learning, learning is not confined to the cognition of people but it is about learning by participating in social activities in contexts where the information is likely to be used. Moreover, separating knowing and doing or not giving importance to the contexts in which the skills are learned or used is wrong (Brown, Collins & Duguid 1989). In the situated learning the emphasis is not solely on the

environment in which the learning occurs. According to this theory every learning is situated because they require negotiation of meaning with the people and restructuring our roles and identities constantly in the light of new learning (Lave &Wenger 1991). According to Lave &Wenger (1991): "… agent, activity, and the world mutually constitute each other" (p. 33).

Among other features of a good professional development activity are its being continuous and contextual. Additionally, professional development activities should be learning opportunities which are a part of ongoing school activities (such as action research) (Darling-Hammond, Bullmaster, & Cobb, 1995; Ball & Cohen 1999; Darling-Hammond & McLaughlin, 2011).

Clement & Vandenberghe (2000) focus on another aspect that is schools which balance teacher autonomy with collaborative practices assure the success of their teacher professional development activities. They also add that via constructive and professional collegiality one can question, get advice and re-create their ideas or professional conducts. The teacher development activities which allow teachers to benefit from collaborative learning without losing their autonomy and pace are described as the optimal learning opportunities. Wenger & Snyder (2000) underline that professional learning communities are promising tools in building this capacity for sustainable professional improvement, they call them "new frontiers" (p. 145).

The learning communities are relatively long term of engagement and they are integrated to the everyday lives of the teachers. These features make them good candidates for a good professional development tool which could produce long term changes and improvements in teachers' professional lives (Lock, 2006).

Wenger (2002) describes communities of practice a "groups of people who share a concern, a set of problems, or a passion, about a topic, and who deepen their knowledge and expertise in this area by interacting on an ongoing basis" (p. 4)

Conrad's (2005 p. 2) focus on *online component* of the learning communities add the following extension to the definition:

> … community simulates for online learners the comforts of home, providing a safe climate, an atmosphere of trust and respect, an invitation for intellectual exchange, and a gathering place for like-minded individuals who are sharing a journey that includes similar activities, purposes and goals.

Since communities can provide tools, ideas, and examples, there has been a growing interest in building these structures which would enable teacher to come together and grow intellectually with the help of each other. Hur & Brush (2009) et al. underline that they constitute venues for reflection, interaction and collaboration.

Although face to face communities which provide the benefits stated earlier do exist, web technologies made the communities more easily available and open (Judy Kamalodeen & Jameson-Charles, 2016). Online communities are known to have positive effects to remedy teacher isolation. They increase self-efficacy and improve teachers' theoretical knowledge (Vangrieken, Meredith, Packer, & Kyndt, 2017). Additionally in the undertakings of unfamiliar projects or first time activities, the opportunity of a supervisor help in online communities is really beneficial to the people in the community (Hou, 2015). Putnam & Borko, (2000) underlines the importance of different communities and settings for learning. Learning contexts have an important place in learning the content. Therefore, the teachers are advised explore other learning communities in which they will be learners and which are different from their classrooms. This being said, they also defend the idea that the knowledge or skills learned outside the school environment may not be easily transferred to school setting. In this point again a community of colleagues is necessary in which the teacher can reflect and get feedback. Online communities may provide the support to integrate new learned knowledge and skills to classroom. However, communities may be hard to build, maintain and integrate to the existing organizations due to their informal and spontaneous character in the initialization and the need for support in the long term (Wenger & Snyder, 2000).

The communities for teachers could be in the following combinations: “schools, schools within schools, teacher groups that meet outside the auspices of schools or school systems, projects or programs that are based on school-university collaborations, and local, regional, or national networks that provide forums for teachers to exchange ideas with colleagues from across the country”(Cochran-Smith & Lytle, 1992 p. 305). The types of online communities are also determined according to their aim of establishment and by whom they are established. According to these criteria the online communities are categorized as follows: Formal teacher communities which originate from government initiatives, member-oriented teacher communities with pre-set agenda, and formative communities whose agenda is set throughout the course of operation (Vangrieken et al., 2017).

Both the tool of teacher research and professional online communities to contribute teacher professional development has the common characteristics. They allow teachers to be the primary responsible agents for their development. They are based on the immediate concerns of the teachers. They are highly relevant to their daily practices. They are not sporadic, and they are contextual. Most importantly the integration of these two tools can support each other to reach the maximum effectiveness in teacher’s inquiry about their own practices. A professional learning community can provide teachers who would like to conduct teacher research with a support system in which they get help in the stages of teacher research in an organized and meaningful way (Sessums, 2009).

Borg (2006) specified the conditions of teacher research as awareness, motivation, knowledge and skills (resources), mentoring and recognition. These conditions could be met in a supporting community. He also underlines that one of the main barriers to research engagement is lack of collegial and institutional support in research engagement. Online communities are suitable platforms to prevent these negative effects by providing:

- “shared understanding about the value of teacher research
- encouragement from school leaders and colleagues
- opportunities for collaboration with other teacher researchers
- opportunities to discuss the research with others
- a sense of collective activity with others engaged in teacher research” (Borg, 2006 p. 26)

Using online communities for teacher in-service education is also quite in line Turkey’s 2023 education vision aims. In 2023 aims it is stated that to improve foreign language teacher qualifications: “Post-graduate programs, international certification, theme-specific certification and similar training activities will be organized through online and offline methods for all foreign language teachers” (p.70). Additionally, the importance of using digital sources as well as field specific methodologies were stressed.

2.2.1. Design of Online Learning Communities

Recently the improvements in Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) and their integration to every realm of our lives have revolutionized the methods of accessing information and getting education and e- learning supplements learning effectively (Tsiotakis & Jimoyiannis, 2016; Adams & Brindley, 2007). The developments made it possible to get and share information and continue professional learning with other colleagues and collaborators regardless of their location (Ravenscroft, Schmidt, Cook, & Bradley, 2012).

With these improvements in ICT, the professional learning communities were moved to online platforms. Professional online communities are venues in which people of the same interests and goals come together to assist each other, learn from one another and collaborate to reach their goals.

The establishment of communities is generally on the voluntary basis. However, despite all these assets, they may fail due to several reasons. According to

Ravenscroft, Schmidt, Cook, & Bradley (2012) poor understanding of the design and nature of the social media is one of the reasons for their failure. The authors assert that the design process should not only be about design and artefacts but it should also include how the artefacts of the community interacts with human activities in particular contexts. In the literature four other main reasons were pinpointed for the failure of online communities to reach their goals. They are: problems related to technology, learner readiness, school culture, and quality of professional development community (Lock, 2006).

In order to eliminate the problems of online communities and design an online community which would benefit teachers in their research inquiries one needs to know the reasons why the teachers participate in such communities. In her study Hur, J. W. (2007) identified the following six reasons for participation in learning communities: "(a) sharing emotions, (b) exploring ideas, (c) seeking advice, (d) experiencing a sense of camaraderie, (e) combating teacher isolation, and (f) utilizing the advantage of online environments" (p.74).

A community is also defined with these three aspects: "mutual engagement, a joint enterprise, and a shared repertoire" (Wenger, 1998 p.152). In order to achieve those aspects, communication in a community is of utmost importance. It is expressed by de Souza & Preece (2003) as in the essential defining factor of the online communities is not the technology itself but its sociability. The usability is an additional but important asset as well. Additionally, understanding the requirements for sociability and usability is not enough itself, the success lies in how well it is reflected and communicated to the users.

Similarly, Hord and Sommers also (2008) compiled the five common characteristics of the successful online communities. These characteristics include "(a) supportive and shared leadership, (b) shared values, vision, and goals, (c) collective learning and application, (d) shared individual practice and (e) supportive conditions (both physical and human)" (as cited in Vangrieken et al., 2017 p. 49).

Willingness to open up and share in the community are also two of the most important requirements in its being supportive. This can be managed in a community in which the interpersonal dynamics would allow it, and where members are of equal status and where trust and respect as well as collaborative atmosphere exist (Vangrieken et al., 2017). Wenger (1998) argued that since human component and community culture are not easily intervened and these features may be linked to maturity of the community (although it is possible to encourage and support communities) it is not easy to materialize it in designable units (as cited in Hur, 2007). However, although communities are self-organized entities, support for infrastructure and cultivation may be good ideas when designing successful learning community (Wenger & Snyder, 2000).

In Mitchell's (2013) study, the results indicated that the professional community had effects on the teachers practice when it was supplemented with specific instructions, and the established targets were monitored. In their study Tsiotakis & Jimoyiannis (2016) found that the majority of the teachers preferred a structured organization in the community with scheduled tasks.

A study which was conducted in Turkish context conceptualized the rural and urban teachers' use of online communities for their professional development. While the emotional support was highlighted in the rural setting, the data from urban teachers showed that the teachers gave priority to professional look, easy access, and good layout, different activities and well-defined goals. Additionally, they preferred the groups being specific to English teachers (Karakaya & Baser, 2014).

There are several guidelines compiled by Yuan & Kim (2014) to help instructors to design online communities which will serve their purposes. The guideline involves these concepts: The effort for building to be continuous and the learners and the instructors should work in building the community. Both synchronous and asynchronous technologies should be made use of. In order to prompt discussions, different techniques should be used. There should be both task oriented and social

interactions and these interactions should be encouraged. Lastly the tasks that involves and necessitates collaborative activities should be presented.

Lastly the determinants of success in an online community come in view as its sociability and usability. Sociability involves its purpose, people, and policy. Purpose looks at the quality of the interactions, people refers to the roles the participants assumed and special need of the participants. Policies are about the regulations related to uncivil behavior or the ways of ensuring trustworthiness. Usability on the other hand involves dialogue and social support, Information design, navigation and access (Preece, 2001).

2.2.2 Examples of Online Communities for Teacher Professional Development

Holmes (2013) conducted a study on eTwinning. E-twinning is an online community in which teachers can find partners to collaborate on pedagogical projects and work together (What is eTwinning? n.d.). In this study the effects of a learning event which aimed to introduce web 2.0 tools which provides collaboration for eTwinning projects were investigated. The results indicated that the learning event increased the awareness of teachers towards web 2.0 tools which can be used in their projects. However, there were some problems in the sense of community. The interactions were one to one rather than as a community on the whole. Therefore, on second cycle it was proposed to add the dimension that the teachers should carry out the tools in their teachings. This time teaching and social presence is stressed as well as cognitive presence. Social presence is explained as being there to support others and teacher presence is to be able to organize education from the initial planning to the assessment and to be able to carry it out (Yuan & Kim, 2014). The cycle was completed with different participants from the first learning event. When adding sharing personal experiences, collaboration and support among participants increased.

In Reasoner's (2017) dissertation, Edmodo, another online community for professional learning, was explored in its capacity for being a community of practice. The study aimed to unearth how teachers described their experiences in the community and how being a participant in this community affected their practice. The district used Edmodo for 4 years and the teachers got support in pacing guidelines and they also got instructional support. The themes identified in the study were its capability to bring staff from different environments together, allowing them to share resources and opinions and being an effective tool for communication. The teachers described their experience in the community as the community served as a great tool for communication which positively affected their professional development however, material sharing was not at expected level and the teachers were hesitant to share material or resources. In that aspect the community didn't help them at the desired level. The sharing of strategies, the awareness raising of teachers' on pacing the tasks for struggling learners helped teachers' practice in a positive way. The community also provided a sense of solidarity and cohesiveness to the teachers' work since they could appreciate the problems that they face is not solely their problem but other teachers also experience similar issues.

2.3 Teacher Research Projects

The teacher research projects conducted in Turkey and other countries enlighten us about the process, applicability and the sustainability of teacher research as well as the ideas of teachers related to teacher research and teacher research process. The gains of the teachers and the problems that they encountered give us valuable information in introducing teacher research to teachers and supporting them throughout the research process.

For instance, a group of University level English teachers' experiences with action research as a part of a course which they took on this research, describes the process

and the gains that these teachers have attained. In the action research module, the key issues related to action research are studied and then the teachers implemented the action research on their teaching. One teachers' study is examined as representative case of the seven teachers who used action research in their courses. The teacher in question studied the reasons of the reluctance to speak in her lessons in her action research and used student questionnaire, weekly overview, classroom observation midterm evaluation of teaching and learning as data collection tools. After the research process, the teacher stated that the students took more responsibility in their learning and the teacher made use of some ideas she didn't thought before. Although she was an experienced teacher, what she needed was a context specific tool to explore her conditions better and to be aware of the root of the problem. Action research provided her that. She became aware of the students' capacity and their point of view and therefore used new techniques at the end of her action research implementation. She became more critical of her teaching and made background reading. Additionally, other researchers in the study rated carrying out action research as not so intimidating as other research, and as one of the best ways to improve and understand one's teaching. They expressed their desire to continue action research even after the course is over (Akşit, 2011).

Wyatt & Dikilitaş (2016) also studied the effects of teacher research as a form of continuous professional development on teachers' self-efficacy beliefs. They also aimed to capture how teachers develop as researchers throughout the process. The qualitative multi-case study explored three in service English language teachers' teacher research undertakings. The research was conducted at the context of a Turkish university in which one of the authors worked as teacher trainer. He aimed to train teachers on teacher research and guide them while they were applying this research to help them more autonomous teachers who can decide on their teaching based on their own research. The first participant's research journey helped her to feel more efficient in the technique she chose as her research focus. She also grew as a researcher who especially benefits from literature reviews to inform her practice. She also highlighted the importance of regular meetings with the

colleagues and the mentor as part of the research process. Now being more proficient in conducting teacher research she defines it as an integral part of her professional development. Similarly, second participants' self-efficacy beliefs were increased especially in her second study. Throughout 2 years of research engagement, she became a more efficient researcher. Last participant transformed a more adept researcher after the first questioning his capabilities. He gradually assumed more responsibilities at the professional development unit and became more aware of the students' needs and need-specific instruction. The study cautions us that their journey as researchers aren't complete and the success at this level was only possible with the enthusiasm of teacher researchers and the personalized support by the mentor.

Al-Maamari, Al-Aamri, Khammash & Al-Wahaibi (2017) studied the effects of a research support program on teachers' research engagement and research administration. Research support program in question aimed to help teachers to organize the framework of their research and review teachers' early attempts of data collection and analysis. 24 teachers who took part in the study expressed that they have benefitted from the center. Although majority of the teachers had graduate degrees and were familiar with research processes before, the center was helpful for them in terms education on research ethics.

The 2016 originated online professional development program on classroom-based research offers valuable insights into online communities which promotes teacher led research. This program is coordinated by several moderators and the participants are teachers from different, geographically varied contexts. The number of the participants was 214 teachers moderated by 24 moderators. The program offers online instructions and tasks related to teacher research, open sources and collaborative and interactive learning opportunities to conduct teacher research in an applied way. Primary, secondary and tertiary level teachers from different subject areas are participants of the community. The community encourages peer collaboration as well as mentor-mentee collaboration (Göktürk Sağlam & Dikilitaş,

2019). Some of the reflections by the teacher researchers who participated in the online community and conducted teacher research in their contexts illustrate the effect of the experience upon them. The participants expressed the fruitful effects of the other participants support, and encouraging comments on their work and their research process. Some of the pedagogical and personal gains mentioned by the teacher-researchers include understanding of being more critical. One teacher expressed that the process taught her students the importance of reflection and being critical of one's work. She also added she believed research to be in the realm of "university people" before venturing into the research involvement herself. Another researcher underlined the support in the community in the means of resources. He also added that the research ordeal increased his abilities to carry on exploratory research on his own.

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

This chapter is comprised of six main parts. In the first part, the overall research design is explained and information related to research purpose is laid out. There, the research questions are also outlined. Along with this, the design for the study and the rationale for this design are explained in detail. Following the study design, the information concerning research participants were given. At this point, each teacher was introduced separately. After the boundaries of the cases are illustrated and their relevance to the main issue is established, the information related to the research setting, which is the online community, were presented. In the next parts data collection tools are introduced and in the data collection process section, how the research data collection tools were used to gather data is described in the chronological order. In the last part of the chapter, the data analysis process is discussed referring to the relevant literature. In the analysis, the piloting process is presented and it is pointed out how the ethical issues as well as, validity and trustworthiness issues are ensured.

3.1 Overall Research Design

Corey (1954) states that: “the best way to learn how to conduct action research, as well as the values it possesses, is to try it” (p.378). Similarly, (Levin & Martin (2007) advocates that action research is learned by doing it and reflecting on your work with others. Therefore, the study’s aim to shed light on teachers’ views of themselves as teacher researchers and the importance of teacher research for their profession could only be understood if the teachers took part in a research project themselves. Furthermore, the possible changes in teachers’ understanding of their

roles and contexts as a result of participating in teacher research necessitated a design in which the teachers conducted a teacher research. The desire to describe the effect of online community in other words "the opportunity to reflect with others" necessitated construction of an online learning community in which the teachers come together to support each other in their research undertakings.

The research questions of the study were defined as follows:

1. What will be the impact of Teacher research participation on

a. In service EFL teachers' views of themselves as teacher researchers?
b. In service EFL teachers' views on the importance and necessity of teacher research as a professional development tool?

2. What will be the impact of Teacher research participation on in service EFL teachers' understanding of instructional roles and context?
3. What are the reflections of the teachers before during and after teacher research?
4. What is the impact of "online Professional Learning community (PLC) of teachers for teacher research" on the application of teacher research and willingness to continue to teacher research (TR) in in-service EFL teachers?

In order to answer these research questions, the participants were asked to be a member of an online community which was created to ease the teachers' research conduct processes. The teachers were informed about the theoretical underpinnings of the teacher research and how to conduct teacher research in the online group via 4 modules teacher research course prepared by the researcher.

The research design of this study is designated as a multiple case study and each teacher represents a case. Case study is defined by Yin (2003) as an empirical inquiry that:

- "investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context especially when
- the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident" (p. 13).

Lincoln & Guba (2013) argue that case study is one of the most useful formats to report constructivist inquiries since they present sufficient depth and scope, thick description necessary to comprehend the circumstances, and setting which constitute the case. They also point out that this format is legitimate for constructivism since it allows us to hear the voices which have an influence over the outcome.

3.1.1 Multiple Case Study Design

Case studies are appropriate for in depth analysis of a topic in its natural context via more than one source (Hancock, D. R. Bob Algozzine, 2006). Flyvbjerg (2006) underlines the importance of case studies by highlighting the importance of cases in being true experts in the subject. He goes on to say that rule based contextual knowledge is also necessary but it can only be helpful only at a beginner level. In order to understand the complete relationships and the real essence of the experience one needs to live it in its real-life functioning. Therefore, it is important for researchers to carry out case studies and to gather "multiple wealth of details" (Flyvbjerg, 2006 p.223). In the case study the issue is "explored through one or more cases within a bounded system"(Creswell, 1998 p. 73). When the study includes more than a single case it is called multiple case study. In multiple case study:

> Each case to be studied has its own problems and relationships. The cases have their stories to tell, and some of them are included in the multiple case report, but the official interest is in the collection of these cases or in the phenomenon exhibited in those cases. We seek to understand better how this whole operates in different situations. (Stake, 1995 p.vi)

In multiple case studies the aim is to gather in depth data related to the cases and compare them to understand the research problem. Stake (1995) calls this construct as quintain. He voices "the quintain is something that we want to understand more thoroughly, and we choose to study it through its cases, by means of a multiple case study." Stake (2013 p. 6). Flyvbjerg (2006) indicates that case studies present us with contextual knowledge, and since the multiple cases provide us with different realizations of the phenomenon it can bring about new insights to the situation (as cited in Svendsen, B., 2017).

In this study each teacher is taken as a case. Cases are described as best understood when they are chosen as nouns or entities (Stake, 2013). He adds the functioning of the case and the events are going to provide us details and information of it but the functions and events are not chosen as a case. Each teacher with his or her bounded context therefore represents a case. Each teacher has a different context, and different reasons to take part in the teacher research project. Their different contexts will provide insights in different realizations of the teacher research and the effect of it on the practice. Each case will present us different details in its life situations for us to experience the quintain that we study. Each case is unique; it is a story for us to unravel. As well as our understanding of each case in detail, the inevitable comparison of the cases will contribute to our understanding of the phenomenon to occur in different contexts. In order to benefit from multiple case more efficiently, it is advised the number of the cases should not be fewer than 4. At the same time more than 10 cases aren't advised to be suitable for the reason of dealing with them efficiently (Stake, 1995). Therefore, in our study the number of the cases was defined as 7.

Stake (1995) indicates that when the focus is beyond the case, it is instrumental case study. Since the aim is to understand quintain in this multiple case study, the single case itself is instrumental case. Similarly, since the aim of the study is to answer the effect of participation in teacher research on teachers and the effect of online

community on teachers' research conduct, each case is important to answer this general question. Therefore, this study at hand is an instrumental case study.

Stake (1995) advises to follow these three criteria to select individual cases to a multiple case study. They are:

- "Is the case relevant to the quintain?
- Do the cases provide diversity across contexts?
- Do the cases provide good opportunities to learn about complexity and contexts?" (Stake, 1995 p.23).

Table 1 presents the data collection and data analysis methods.

Table 1

Data Collection Tools and Analysis Methods

Research Questions	Data Collection Tools	Participants	Data Analysis
1. What will be the impact of Teacher research participation on a. In service EFL teachers' views of themselves as teacher researchers? b. In service EFL teachers' views on the importance and necessity of teacher research as a professional development tool?	• Initial, final individual interviews with each participant mid-term questions • written action research plans • research journals	Teachers	• Constant comparative method
2. What will be the impact of Teacher research participation on in service EFL teachers' understanding of instructional roles and context?	• Initial and final individual interviews with each participant, mid-term questions • research reports • researcher field notes (based on the interactions on the website)	Teachers	• Constant comparative method

Table 1(continued)

Data Collection Tools and Analysis Methods

Research Questions	Data Collection Tools	Participants	Data Analysis
3. What are the reflections of the teachers before during and after teacher research?	• Initial, final individual interviews with each participant mid-term questions • written action research plans • research journals	Teachers	• Constant comparative method
4. What is the impact of "online Professional Learning community (PLC) of teachers for teacher research" on the application of teacher research and willingness to continue to teacher research (TR) in in-service EFL teachers?	• Initial and final individual interviews with each participant, mid-term questions • researcher field notes (based on the interactions on the website). • Interview for the drop out teachers	Teachers	• Constant comparative method

3.2 Rationale for the Design

3.3 Researcher's Role

Stake (2010) underlines the importance of humans as one of the main instruments in research. Especially in qualitative research, the place of human interpreter is undeniable in the research process. He also adds that unlike physical sciences which is impersonal, qualitative research depends heavily on researchers' definition and redefinition of the meanings of what they observe in the data. Therefore, regardless of all the precautions (such as data triangulation) they somehow leave some traces in the understanding of the case. Connected knowing is expressed as a part of qualitative research and defined as a lens that includes using one's own experiences and links while understanding the case (Stake, 2010). Similarly Stake (2010) adds that empathy which is to be sensitive to the happenings is also a part of the qualitative research process. Therefore, the stance of the researcher should be explained and her place with regard to the research topic and participants should be established to ensure reliability of the study.

The researcher in this study played the role of the designer of the study as well as the facilitator of teacher research in the professional online community. She holds a MA in English Language Teaching and her thesis was on English Language teachers' views towards teacher research as a professional development tool. She has both etic and emic stand points to the investigated quintain at hand. She is currently working as a language instructor at university level; therefore, she could emphasize the instructional struggles of the everyday lives of English teachers. However, the conditions of the schools, their level, geographical positioning of the teachers in the study was quite different form the school she was working. Therefore, she had the etic standpoint in that point. She strictly stuck to interview protocols while conducting them and cross checked the codes that were identified in the data with a fellow researcher. She also used member checking technique in order

to verify her interpretation of the data and she supported her inferences with the quotes from the data.

3.4 Selection of the Cases

In this study 7 EFL teachers from public secondary and public high schools from different parts of Turkey are recruited as participants by using snowball sampling. Since the quintain is the exploration of teacher research experience by teachers, the teachers were chosen due to their relevance to the phenomenon. Stake (2010) explains that

> How things generally work is a macro interpretation. How a particular thing works in a particular situation is a micro interpretation. Both use qualitative research, but most of the time qualitative research results in micro interpretation (p. 39).

In that light, there has been a focus on individual teachers with regard to understand their research engagement in an online community. Additionally, the common themes and deviant occurrences across the cases will add our understanding of the general quintain of the effect of online PLC participation on teacher research and the effect of teacher research as a professional development tool on teachers.

In undertaking teacher research process, willingness and enthusiasm on the part of participants are the key factors of success of the projects. Therefore, the participants as cases are chosen from the enthusiastic teachers who would like to learn about teacher research and willing to carry it out to be able to evaluate its effectiveness as a professional development tool for themselves and for their school contexts. Each such teacher who completed their teacher research in the group represented a case. In order to be able to represent the different conditions around Turkey, the teachers who worked in cities and in villages were chosen to assure diversity. Additionally, the reason for the selection of participants from people who were non-related to university work setting, was because it is more probable that these teachers will have little experience or guidance on their own in terms of research. Additionally,

none of the participants hold either masters or PhD degrees. Thus, it would be possible to see the effect of the online community's support in undertaking the research activity. All the schools that the teachers work are public schools. They work under the legislations of Ministry of Education, they have similar syllabuses and similar conditions (Individual conditions are quite different, but the general aims of the schools, the structures etc.… share similar characteristics.) Therefore, these circumstances could help teachers to form a community of practice.

The researcher announced the research study in conferences that she has been to, and used snowball sampling via the colleagues she knew. She also advertised the research study in special online groups dedicated to English teachers on social media such as Facebook. Following this, the teachers who provided their e-mail addresses or who requested to be added to the community via writing an e-mail, were added to the Edmodo online community by the researcher. 20 teachers became the members of the online community "we-are-teacher-researchers-2019". There were members who have never participated in any of the activities, there were members who viewed the tasks but didn't participate in any of them and the ones who read the content, did the task and carried out a teacher research. The teachers who completed the tasks and conducted teacher research were the main participants of the study. They were 7 in number and most of them were the participants who were recruited through announcement in an English language teachers' Facebook group.

In this Facebook group in question, the teachers post about their problems, suggestions related to teaching and school related topics. There are also English language teaching related jokes, translations and daily personal information sharing as well: Wenger & Snyder (2000) states that since the communities are "organic, spontaneous and informal" (p.140), it is difficult to govern or supervise them, but bringing right people together may provide the necessary conditions for communities to thrive. The teachers who actively participated in the Edmodo online

community in study are from the participants of the Facebook group mentioned. Since they are already willing to share their practice and try to apply innovations in their classes, it may be easier for them to adapt to this new community of practice.

In this study each participant who conducted teacher research is taken as a case. In order to preserve the anonymity of teachers who took part in the study, the assumed names were used for them. The cases are introduced separately. Some brief information related to cases is presented in Figure 2.

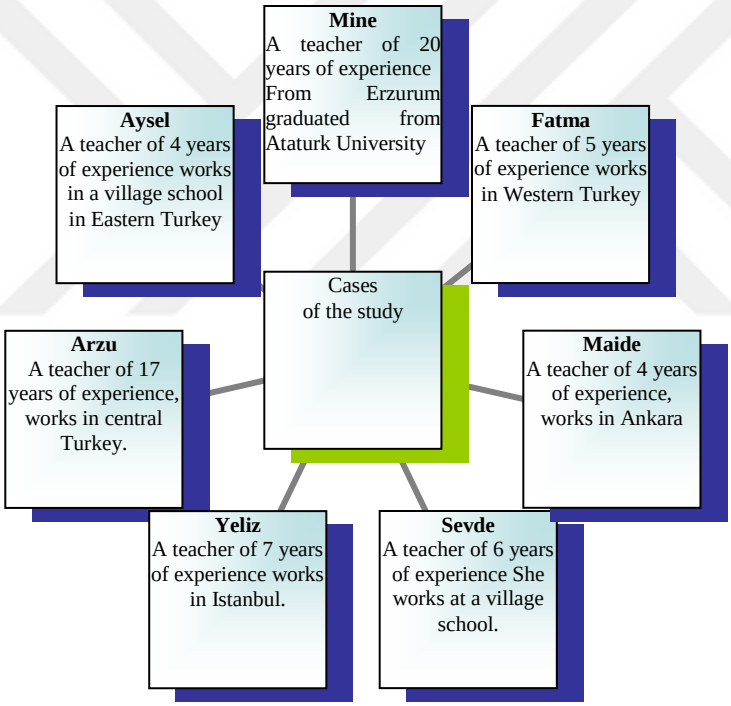


Figure 2. Cases

Case 1 Mine

Mine works at a public high school in Erzurum. She has been teaching English for 20 years. She has been teaching in Erzurum for 18 years. She has graduated from Erzurum Ataturk University. She doesn't have Master or PhD degrees. She believes that regardless of the subject a teacher is teaching, the teacher has to teach the rules of society, love for one's nation and country. The teachers should guide and help students to understand the ones who are different from us, tolerate them and respect them. The students should be against indiscrimination and it is the duty of a teacher to assure that. In her opinion the duty of a teacher is to teach how to question the world around us, and the things that are against our reasoning. A teacher opens the doors for students and teaches them how to study and investigate. The teacher motivates them to be better selves.

In her lessons she makes use of English teaching methods and techniques according to her purpose. In the beginning of this term, she generally used Grammar Translation Method. However, in the second terms she mostly used Direct Method accompanied by Grammar Translation Method. She believes that teachers should take responsibility in new implementations in Education. Teachers should be investigative and curious. She has never conducted or heard about teacher research before this study. Mine wanted to learn "what the hardest point was" for her students in English lessons in her teacher research study. The school that Mine is working is situated in the city center. It is a technical vocational high school.

Case 2 Aysel

Aysel is a teacher at a rural secondary school in the Eastern region of Turkey. She has been teaching here for 3 years since she started her profession as an English teacher for the Ministry of Education. Before that, she worked at a private institution for 1 year. She doesn't hold a Master or PhD degree. As for her idea of

the duties of teachers, she believes teachers should be role models not for the students but also for their families. She states that teachers are highly respected and looked up to in the community that she works in. That is why the teachers should be careful about their behaviors. The teachers' main duties should be mentoring students so that they can see what is best in life. They also should help students to become more self-confident. She also acknowledges that the teachers must show students that, education is not just about academic knowledge. The teachers should also eradicate the erroneous ideas which are established in the society such as the notion that the most valuable jobs are formal high-level for instance engineering and being a doctor. The teachers instead, should highlight the importance of other jobs such as bakery mechanic, tailor, hair dresser along with the jobs which are regarded highly by the society and parents such as engineering or being a doctor. The teachers should teach the importance of work ethic and morals as their first duty to their students.

She states that being a village school, there are lots of areas in which they experience limitations. She aims to use contextual authentic and communicational aspects and tasks in the lessons to teach English. She underlines the importance of communicative skills and task-based education. For instance, in cooking unit, she made sure that they cooked in the class as an activity and described each stage in English and made videos about it. They acted like investigators who are trying to solve mysteries and interrogated the suspects in related unit and learned the relevant tenses. However, there are infrastructure problems. For instance, internet connection is a problem and most of the families don't have private internet connection in their houses. When she gave homework that necessitate students to make videos and upload the homework, there were students-not owning a phone themselves- who brought the phones of their parents in class and demanded the teacher to take the homework videos via Bluetooth or by other means. There are no cinemas in the village and the village is 80 km to the province. She complains about the lack of

motivation of her students towards her lessons. Therefore, she wants to research the reasons and the ways of improving motivation in her classes.

Case 3 Arzu

Arzu has 17 years of experience in teaching. She is currently teaching 12th grade in central Turkey. She is a very enthusiastic about teacher research and an active participant of the online community. She doesn't hold a Master or PhD degree. At the time she participated in the study she was teaching "Talking about past events and narrating past events". She wishes she had fewer students and a more flexible curriculum to be able to make a difference in her profession and her major. One of the biggest concerns that she has is explained via her words:

She states:

> "*I always want to catch up with new and different teaching methods and techniques in my area. Apart from this, most of the time, I feel desperate about not getting my students speaking ability improved." (Arzu, community entry data)*

The reason for her to take part in our study is to stay up to date in the field and to be able to solve the problems related to speaking in her lessons. According to her, English lessons are very important and they make a difference at school. Via English lessons the students are able to learn a new culture and a language. They also acquire self-esteem via these concepts. However, she also acknowledges that the teacher doesn't have magic stick and learning and teaching is not the sole responsibility of the teacher. Education requires the active participation of the learner too as well as the favorable school conditions. Her teaching philosophy is that she always believes in progress and that it is always possible to go one step further. Rather than setting general aims and goals, she believed the progress within each student according to their abilities. She also acknowledges the importance of intrinsic motivation in students in the success. Although not impossible, it is very hard to reach the students who don't have the desire to learn and it slows the process

and reduces the success according to her. The duty of the teacher is to know each student individually and make individual progress plans accordingly. The aims to improve each student in line with the student's abilities. She describes the school context as follows: The socioeconomic situation of the students is not very good as well as the academic success. The school is an Anatolian High school and accepting students based on the address. However even before there was a central exam, the academic success as she describes was below the Anatolian high schools.

Case 4 Sevde

Sevde is a teacher in central Turkey. She works in a village school. Her understanding of teaching takes shape around the proposition that teachers is the guide and the students should take more responsibility in their learning. The students should explore and find out the content that the teacher is introducing or guiding them to learn. The students in her classes are in multiple levels in English. The school management is quite supportive and the colleagues are open to improvement and innovations. Their participation in research activities are supported and welcomed.

She gives a general outline of her lessons as follows: She gives her students the vocabulary item before the lessons so that they can study them. In the lessons, they are studying the same vocabulary items either with videos or with pictures. They later study grammar points related to the unit. She tries to use games related to grammar topics and vocabulary items but she states that she cannot succeed. Only a few of the students participate in the activities; they can seldom do speaking activities.

She would like to take part in teacher research because she wants to be better at teaching English. She also aims to make her students love English much more. She sees this research activity as an opportunity to motivate both herself and her

students. She doesn't have a Master or PhD degree. She explains her main problem in her teaching as:

> *"The main problem for me is that, while some students are so motivated, some classes are so unmotivated. I try to teach in an enjoyable way in my all grades but only some of the students are not interested in learning English. The main (reason) for this is the exam I know but it is the reality of our system. So, what should I do? Please help." (Sevde, community entry data)*

Case 5 Fatma

Fatma is 27 years old and she is a teacher of 5 years. She has been teaching in her current school for half a semester. She doesn't have a Master or PhD Degree. She believes the students should take responsibility for their own learning however she has to deal with behavioral problems in the first place. Additionally, she tries to make them love English as she sees it as prerequisite for the success. She gives an example on how she tries to make her students take more responsibility in their learning in an anecdote:

> *When they see a word in lesson, I prefer not to answer the Turkish of it immediately. The reason is that: I desire the student to look it up in the dictionary first or if they want to use the internet and visuals, to encourage and direct them to research that way. I don't like to give ready information. I also share the reasons for this behavior with them. I am stating it is my aim and I don't answer the question. They are used to it and it works well. I want the effects to be permanent. I want to act as a guide to direct. It is my aim. (Fatma, 1st interview data)*

There are 15 students in her classes. There are students both from urban areas and rural areas. Some students come a long way to commute to the school. She also believes this situation has its effects on students. The general socioeconomic state of the school is that the parents are in farming related jobs. The research concern of Fatma was: "how can we deal with motivational and discipline problems?"

Case 6 Maide

Maide is 33 years old and she is a teacher of 4 years. She has been teaching in her current school for 2 years. She doesn't have a Master or PhD degree. In the school in which she works, the school and the classes are crowded. She is teaching 27 hours of English lessons in a week. Sometimes she continues to teach 7 lessons consecutively with no break hours in between. She defines her job as more of a life skills and educator primarily than an academic educator. She believes that educating the students is accomplished as long as the teacher who teaches it has a good grasp of the subject and willing to teach it. However, she values the morals, being useful to the country and society first and foremost. She believes the students who mastered those skills can easily master academical issues and academic success without those cannot be academically successful. She states it as:

> *I believe the real lacking point is this. I don't believe the students who have no idea in terms of respect and the general truths can be successful in terms of academical areas (Maide, 1st interview).*

She believes that her students are motivated towards English lessons. She stated the following as for her research concern: She observed the level of the students are below the teacher's expected level. Therefore, she wanted to see the possible reasons for this situation. It was one of the reasons that she wanted to participate in the study. She also had some reservations before the research process as to its applicability and the full potential of it. She wanted to experience the process and see the effects of it.

Case 7 Yeliz

Yeliz is a 29-year-old teacher who has been teaching for 7 years. She has been teaching in her current school for 3, 5 years. She doesn't have a Master or PhD degree. She describes herself as a tolerant teacher. She believes that the English is a subject which cannot be learned without loving it. She states; therefore, she tries to

be patient and tolerant at the highest degree. She wants her students to learn by experiencing and she aims to teach the ways of learning first before the content. She aims to educate her students to be lifelong learners. She also believes the teachers set important examples for students. She observes that the students take the teachers as role models from clothes to the behaviors. Therefore, a teacher needs to show exemplary behavior with his/her moral values and justice. She then states the education part comes in. She also adds that an English teacher should teach the students to be open minded and open to other cultures and mold their world views accordingly. Her research concerns were also related to motivation. She wanted to see the motivational level of her students and possible reasons for the lack of motivation.

Other Participants in the Professional Online Community

There were also teachers who were participants of the community but left the research process without completing the research. Knowing them, their situation and participation were also important in understanding the true nature of teacher research in teachers' lives as a professional development tool. Additionally, the reasons for leaving the study and the experiences related to the use of the online community could throw some more light into the phenomenon at hand. Therefore, the teachers who left the study were also used as data sources. The participants which fall under this definition of data sources included Tarık, Esen, Hatice Armağan and Hakan.

Tarık

Tarık has 5 years of experience in teaching. He works at a high school in the grades of 9-10-11 and 12. He wanted to carry out teacher research because he wants to improve himself professionally. He also would like to learn different ideas and

approaches to teaching. He doesn't have a Master or PhD degree. He explains his teaching philosophy as:

> *"My teaching philosophy is mixing of CLL, CLT, TPR and Natural Approaches. I believe in these 4 because a language is a live thing. It has also a soul. For this reason, if you don't move it by firstly speaking and listening and then reading and writing, its soul will die. Finally, you will have a skeleton, which is grammar in this metaphor that will eventually rot. Making mistakes is my other philosophy. If you don't tolerate the mistakes in normal dose, you can't teach anything (Tarık, community entry data).*

He also describes his duties in the school by using "the tour guide" metaphor. He explains:

> *"I am a tour guide in my school. Think about your tour guide if you had one of them. A tour guide knows many of the stories about the city you visit. But you don't know. He tells you everything he knows and gives you free time to discover on your own. He must make you happy and at the same time you must follow his instructions. Otherwise you will lose your direction in this city. I am that tour guide." (Tarık, community entry data)*

Tarık also adds that he evaluates his success by assessing if the students can what he taught them in their lives. If the topics has no practicality in life, he takes it as a token for failure. He also states that he has a balanced attitude to exploration of the topics by the teachers and the lecturing of the teacher. In his opinion foremost duty of the teachers is to break the prejudices towards English and make the students love English. Tarık initially wanted to study the effects (benefits and negative effects) of current educational methods on students of generation Z. Later he changed the question as "What are the individual differences in learning English?"

Esen

Esen is 43 years old and she is a teacher of 20 years. She has been teaching for 8 years. Her teaching philosophy is a student centered one. Far from the classical methods, she aims to make a difference in students by using sustainable methods. She adds that she always updates herself keeping her basic philosophy in mind. She teaches in an Anatolian high school. Up to this year, the school accepted students with a central examination. However, this year the school is accepting students based on their addresses. This situation led to a change in the student profile and she realizes that motivation and interest among students are less compared to other years.

Her problem is: "Despite the fact that language class students are really good at grammar, reading comprehension, writing and so on, they are not good enough at speaking" (Esen, comments in PLC). After negotiation in the group she defined her research question as:

1. What are the reasons of high school students' low level of attainment of speaking skills compared to other skills in English lessons?
2. How can we improve speaking skills of these students?

Hatice

Hatice is a teacher since 2000. She doesn't have a Master or PhD degree. Her daily teaching work includes

> *"(teaching) basic structures of English, some grammatical rules, daily speeches, words that they need in easy life, writing sentences and reading short paragraphs or dialogues. A little bit listening through songs or stories. (Hatice, community entry data)*

Armağan

Armağan did not share much related to her context or herself. However, she defined a research question in the group. The research question she posted in the Edmodo group is as follows:

> *"Secondary school students are not willing to use target language. They generally try to speak in Turkish. How can we improve their speaking skills?"*

Hakan

Hakan is a teacher of 12 years. He has been teaching in his current school for 5 years. He describes his lessons as interactive lessons and desires his students to talk during lessons. He doesn't support heavily grammar-based lessons. However, in language department classes in high schools, the system shows a little variation. Here the focus is on solving tests and preparing students to university exam. According to him the duty of the English teacher is to provide the environment in which students can talk since there is no alternative places where the students use the English language.

Summary of the all the data sources.

All the data sources that were utilized for this study were summarized in Table 2.

Table 2

Summary of the All the Data Sources

Name	Experience (years)	Reflection	Research question	Research plan	Research conduct	Research report	First interview	Second interview
Mine	20	?	?	?	?	?	?	?
Aysel	4	?	?	?	?	?	?	?
Arzu	17	?	?	?	?	-	?	?
Sevde	6	?	?	?	?	?	?	?
Fatma	5	?	?	?	?	-	?	?
Maide	4	?	?	?	?	?	?	?
Yeliz	7	?	?	?	?	?	?	?
Esen	20	?	?	-	-	-	?	?
Tarık	5	?	?	-	-	-	?	?
Hakan	12	-	-	-	-	-	?	?
Hatice	18	?	?	-	-	-	-	-
Armağan	-	?	?	-	-	-	-	-

3.5 Research Setting

The main research setting is the online community in which teachers and the researcher are the members. The community is created on Edmodo. Edmodo is a social platform, a learning management system in which teachers and students come together. They communicate, share material, assign and do tasks in a secure manner. There are management tools which allow educators to create assignments, quizzes and questionnaires and set a deadline to those activities. The teacher can grade the tasks interactionally with the students and be notified when the students submit a task. Teachers can give feedback to the students and the students can write responses to teachers' notes. They can send messages to their peers and the teacher via the website. They can also see the shared content, general notes or questions posted on the website all together.

The platform is free. It is described as "the world's largest learning network for K-12 students, teachers, administrators, and parents" (About, n.d.). Founded in 2008, the headquarters are located in San Mateo. It has about 10 million users worldwide (About, n.d.). One of the most important factors in designing an online community is the ease of its use. In order to enroll to a specific class in Edmodo, one either has to write the code which is provided by the instructor, or the community facilitator/instructor should add the member himself/herself. This assures the security and privacy of the content that are shared and consumed by the participants.

Edmodo has a friendly interface. This has an important bearing since the usability of the community depends on the interaction of the users with the technology (Preece, 2001). The online community required participants to get an account and password to be the members of it. Two of the members had Edmodo accounts before the study; the others were invited by the researcher via their e-mails. Except for one member, none of them needed technical assistance in the membership process of the Community. In order to answer technical problems a WhatsApp group has been

created as well. WhatsApp could also provide synchronous mode of interaction which was suggested as an important component for an online community (Yuan & Kim, 2014).

The layout of the website is plain and effective. On the left side, the students (English teachers in our case) can see the classes that they enrolled. On the top of the main page, there are notifications section which reminds any approaching assignments or events, there is also a messages section, a progress section and a library section which will give the opportunity to access to the general shared materials. The materials can be shared as news feed in the page too. The features and components of the website are going to be presented in detail.

Front Page

The front page is called home page. This is the main page where the feed can be seen by the participants in a downward sliding fashion. Every message, shared content, announcement, task and video is shown on the main page when it is posted by the members of the community. The researcher had a privileged position; such as she could create assignments, exams and questionnaires (polls) via the properties that the website offered to her. However, the other participants could share any form of files or content, write messages or could comment on the messages posted by other members. The general layout of the front page of the website is illustrated in Figure 3.

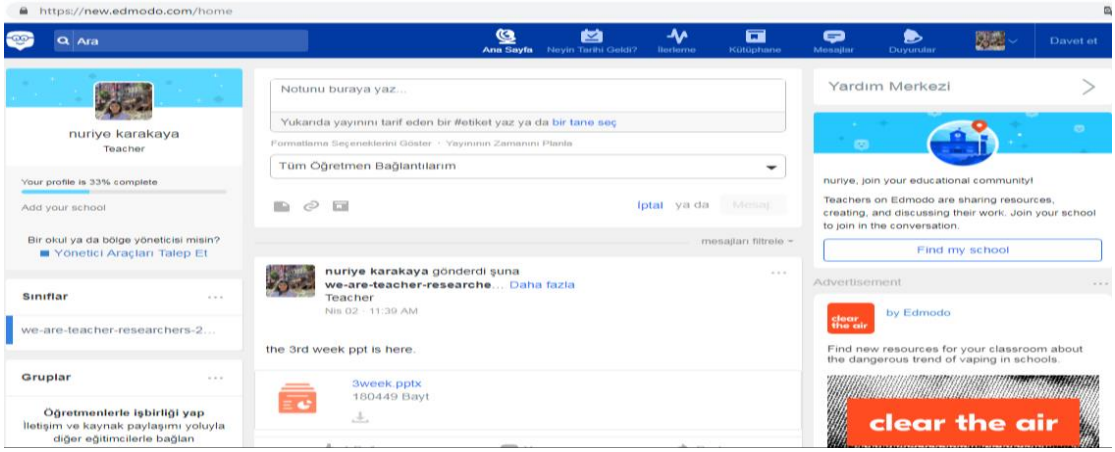


Figure 3. Front Page of Edmodo

The messages and the content also appear on the front page. The instructor (teacher research- facilitator) as well as any member of the community can share notes, materials, and any forms of information. All the members can comment on the messages, respond to them or use "like" button to show their feelings towards it. The illustration of the messages is seen in Figure 4 and 5.

Figure 4. Display of Messages in the Front Page.

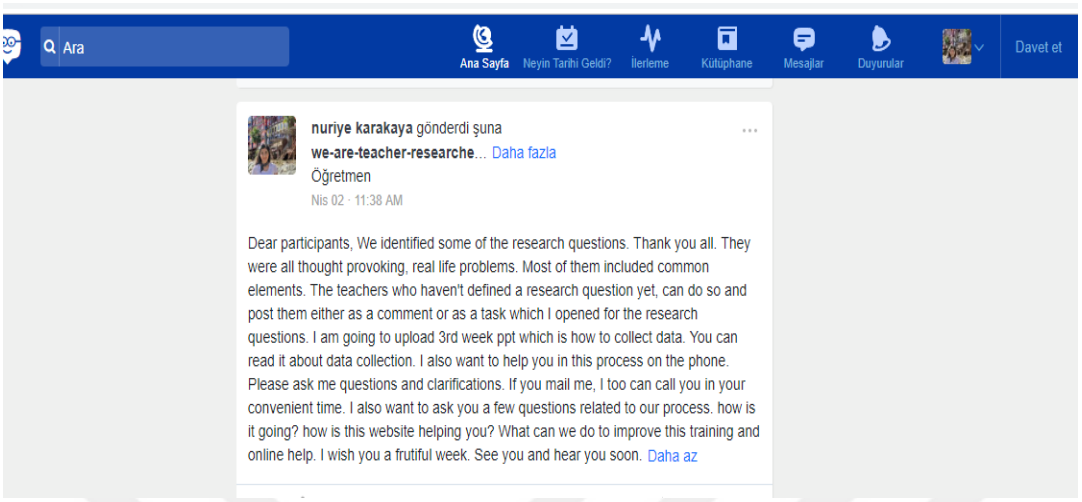


Figure 5. Display of Messages in the Front Page.

Tabs on the Top-right

On the top-right of the Edmodo website there are several tabs. The tabs are seven in number for the teacher research facilitator (researcher of this PhD dissertation) and there are also seven tabs for the other members. However, one tab is different in teachers (participants of the study) and the researcher (teacher research- facilitator). For the teacher research facilitator, the module tabs are listed as the following from left to right: (a) main page, (b) deadlines, (c) progress, (d) library, (e) messages, (f) announcements and (g) the tab in which the settings for the account take place. For the other members, the library is called backpack.

In the deadlines, the students and the teacher research facilitator can see the deadlines that are defined by the teacher researcher. In the announcement tab, whenever there is a new post (assignment, if someone liked a post or commented on some content) a red alert notification pops up. The module tabs are presented in Figure 6.

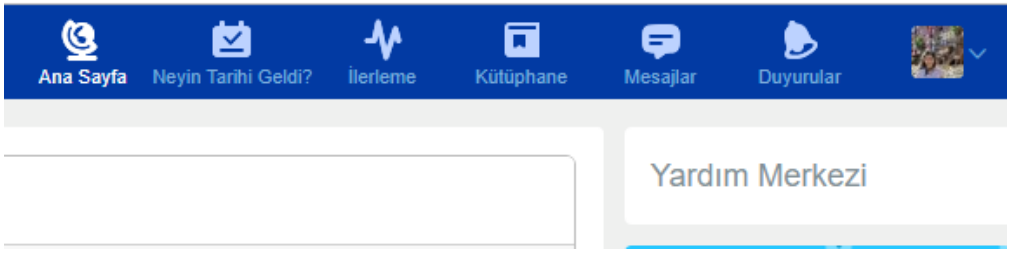


Figure 6. Module Tabs of Edmodo

<u>Menu on the Left</u>

On the left side of the front page, one can see the online classes she/has been enrolled into. Our class in which all the teacher research activities were carried out is called "we-are-teacher-researchers-2019". When clicking on the classroom the participant can see messages, folders and members of the classroom if she/he chooses the concerning tabs on the top of the page. The page which is encountered when clicking on the class name is displayed in Figure 7.

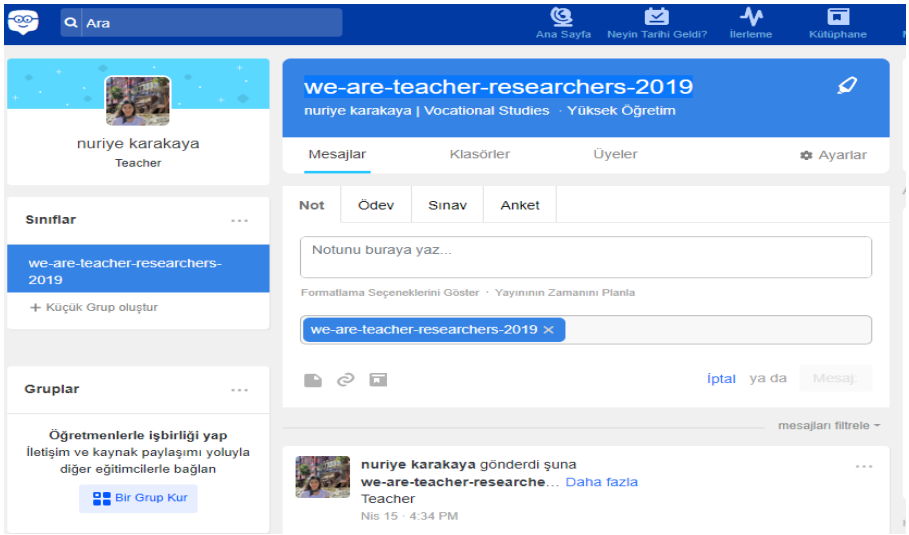


Figure 7. The Sub-Menu of The Online Class Containing Messages, Folders and Members.

When clicking on the members tab, the names of the members who are the participant of that online course and their roles are seen. In the organization of the Edmodo website, the researcher (researcher of this PhD dissertation) assumed the role of the instructor of teacher research. The teacher researchers (the participants of the doctoral dissertation) assumed the role of students. The members list is illustrated in Figure 8.

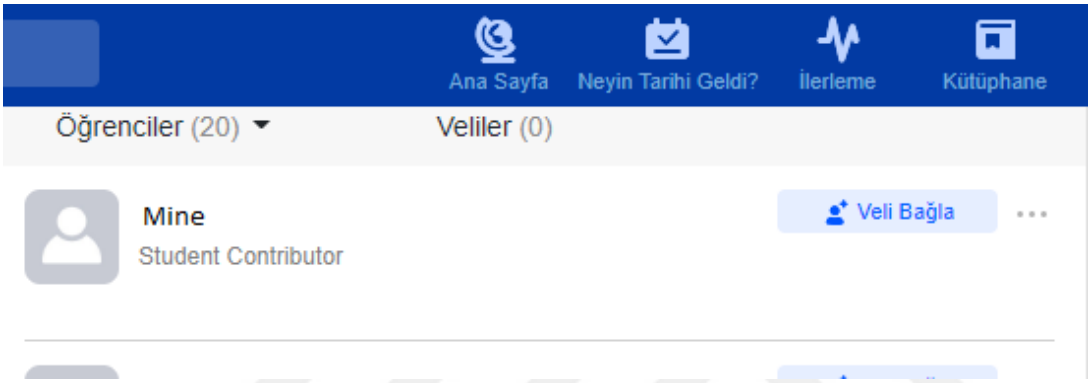


Figure 8. Some of the Members of the Edmodo (Real names of the participants are changed for the study)

<u>The features that the teacher-research facilitator can use</u>

The teacher research facilitator can create assignments, tolls, exams and view how many students turned them in. The instructor can also see how many of them viewed the tasks. Instructor can control whether or not to accept assignments after their due dates passes. If the assignments are accepted after the due date, the website marks the late assignments differently than the other assignment responses. When a participant turns in an assignment, a notification is sent to the instructor. The appearance of notifications for the turned in assignments for each individual assignment is shown in Figure 9.

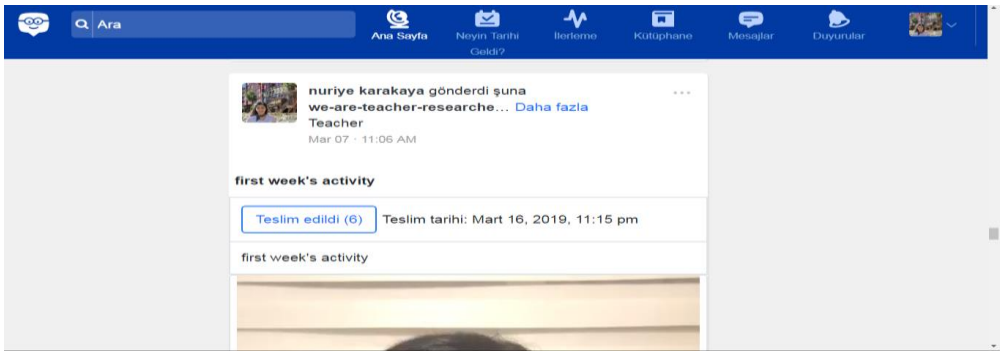


Figure 9. Notification for Completed for Each Assignment

The appearance of the summary of all of the assignment can be viewed under the section of due dates. The teacher-research facilitator can see how many times an assignment is viewed. This page is illustrated in Figure 10.

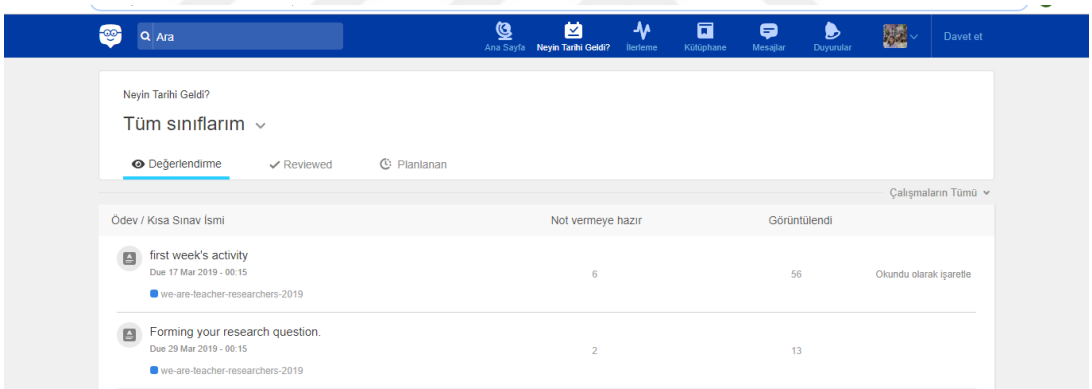


Figure 10. Summary Page of the Turned in Assignments

When an assignment is created, the students (teacher researchers of the study) cannot see other students' answers for the assignments. Therefore, the teacher research facilitator turned some of the assignments into open questions posted in the website. By doing so, she managed others to see the answers as well. For instance, in defining research question task, there was an assignment created for it however it acted as a reminder for the fact that assignments have due date notifications. However, in reality the teacher researchers shared their research questions as comments to the thread the teacher research facilitator started. If there was a teacher

who submitted their research question through the space created for the tasks, the teacher was requested to post the same research question as a comment. In doing so, the teacher researchers could see and comment on the formation of the research question of others.

The Content of Training in PLC

The training which was comprised of 4 modules was presented via PowerPoint presentations uploaded to the Edmodo. There were also other supplementary materials in addition to the content in presentations. For instance, there were the screenshots of the data analysis programs in PowerPoint presentations. However, since there appeared a need in the course of the study, other screenshots were added as contents. Additionally, sample teacher research studies, articles related to the research topics of teachers as well as sample data collection tools were provided in the community. The content also included several videos created by the researcher. The videos included welcome messages and the explanations related to the reflection tasks of the weekly modules. The screenshots of the announcement messages when a new content is uploaded to the community is provided in Figures 11, 12, 13, 14, 15 and 16.

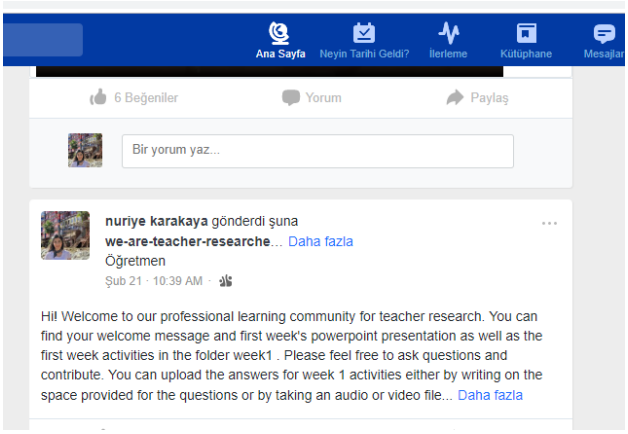


Figure 11. Announcement of Upload of New Content

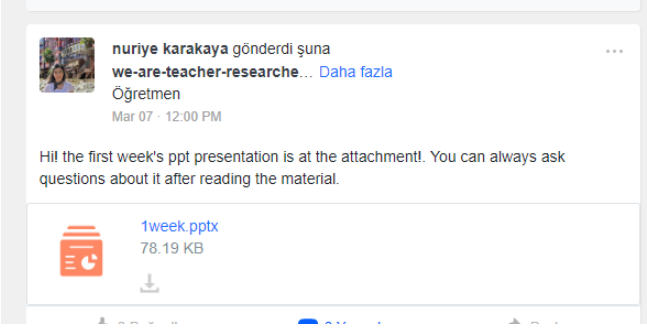


Figure 12. Announcement of Upload of New Content

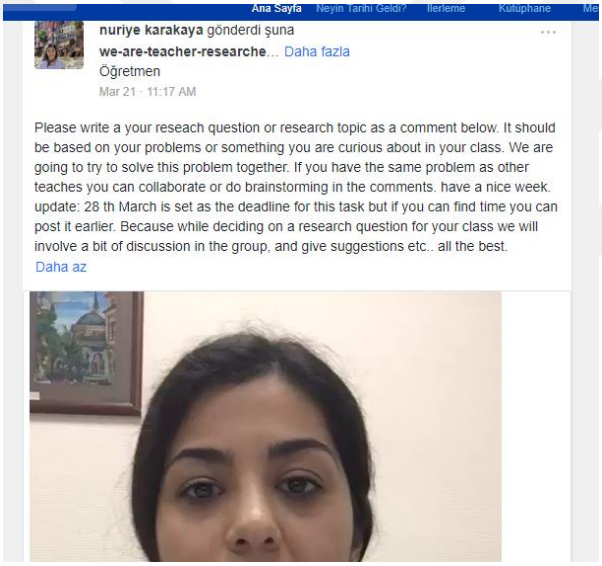


Figure 13. Announcement of Upload of New Content

Figure 14. Announcement of Upload of New Content

Figure 15. Announcement of Upload of New Content

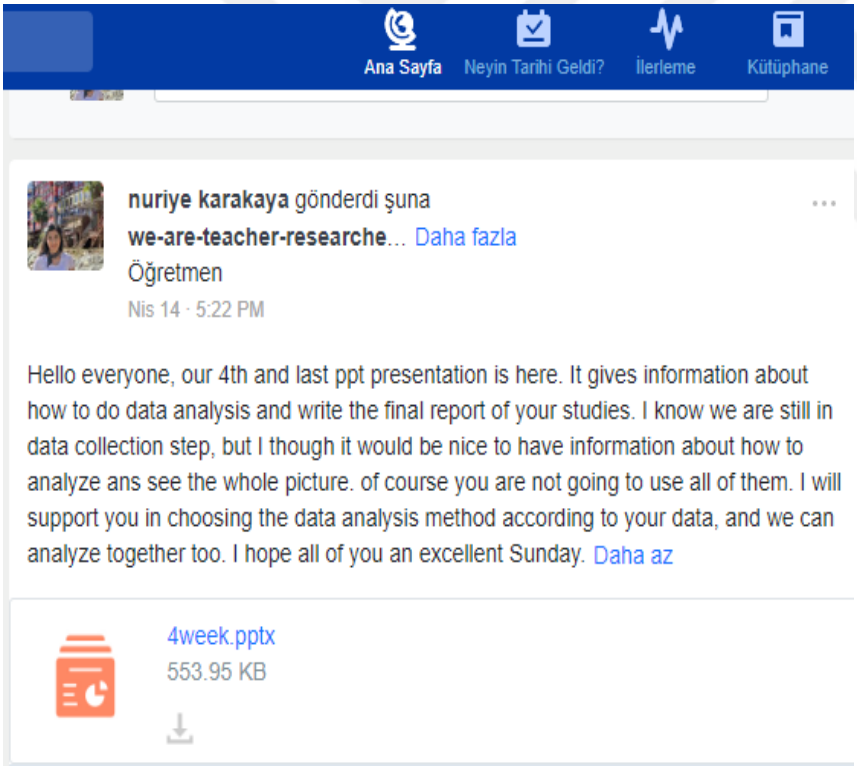


Figure 16. Announcement of Upload of New Content

3.4 Data Collection Instruments

Creswell (1998) and Yin (2003) suggest that data collection should be extensive and rich in case studies, therefore it is important to employ different and multiple sources of information. In this study the employed data collection tools include initial, and final interviews with each participant, research journals kept by research participants, action research plans of participants, written final action research reports of participants and researcher field notes (based on the interactions on the website). The importance of documentation and record keeping which is stressed by Yin (2018) necessitates researcher field notes, memoranda and other notes. This type of documentation is also important for it makes the replication of the studies feasible.

Interviews and Survey Questions

Interviews are regarded as one of the most important data collection tools in qualitative studies (Silverman, 2000, Yin 2018). They are particularly useful if the aim is to understand the people and their worldviews, experiences and their opinions, in their own words via mutually co-constructing the meaning between the interviewer and the interviewee (Kvale, 2007). Interview is defined by Kvale (2007) as:

> A conversation that has a structure and purpose determined by the one party-the interviewer. It is a professional interaction …. (A-semi structured interview) is defined as an interview with the purpose of obtaining descriptions of the life world (everyday life) of the interviewee with respect to interpreting the meaning of the described phenomena (p.7-8).

Interviews are useful in answering the why and how questions and give us detailed and reflective information related to the insights of the participants (Yin, 2018). In semi structured interviews, the interviewer has a set of questions or the basic focus on his/her mind but the adherence to the questions is not very strict. The course of interview may require new questions, and the flow may show variations from

participant to participant. A successful semi-structured interview should cover all the necessary concerns and should be able to have answers for the areas of purpose, at the same time the interviewee should be left with the sense that he or she participated in a meaningful and purposeful conversation (Heigham & Croker, 2009).

This study employed two consecutive interviews. The interviews were developed after an extensive related literature was completed. When the interview questions were prepared, the initial interview was piloted on 2 teachers who had never conducted teacher research before. The questions of the initial and final interview questions were scrutinized by an English Language instructor to see if there are any ambiguous questions. There were also written, midterm questions to see the research process of the teachers. The midterm questions were also prepared with the same principles. After these processes were completed, the initial interview was conducted. In initial interviews it is aimed to gather information related to teachers' teaching philosophies, their teaching contexts and their reasons for participating in the teacher research study. It also aimed to show their current situation related to this research type. The midterm questions focused on the teacher research projects that each participant was carrying on at that present time to help the teachers in their struggling points. This interview addressed the needs of the teacher researchers in the act of teacher research administration, and their opinions related to the support of the online community. Lastly the last interview had questions that directed participants to describe their whole experience with teacher research and aimed to find out any differences in terms of research conduct competence, their ideas related to their instructional roles or contexts. The interview and survey questions are given in Tables 3, 4 and 5.

Table 3

Initial Interview Questions

Initial Interview Questions
1. What is your teaching philosophy?
2. What is your understanding of your instructional roles?
3. Can you define teacher research in your own words?
4. What is the place of teacher research in your life?
4a. What is the importance of teacher research as a professional development tool for you?
5. Why did you decide to engage in a teacher research project?
5a. What is your research question that you wanted to study in this project?
6. Can you tell me your views towards yourself as teacher researcher?
7. How competent do you feel yourself to conduct teacher research?

Table 4

Survey Questions

Survey Questions
1. What can you tell us about your project?
a) What are the problems related to it?
b) What are the positive developments related to your research?
2. How does participating in online PLC affect your research undertaking?

Table 5

Final Interview Questions

Final Interview Questions
1. Can you define teacher research in your own words?
2. How did your understanding of your instructional roles or context change after your research participation if applicable?
3. What was the importance of this research experience on your teaching?
4. How did your view of yourself as a teacher researcher change?
a) How did your competence to conduct a teacher research change?
5. In what ways did participation in teacher online community for research (PLC) affect your teaching research administration?
a) Was your research administration process aided with the use of online PLC in any way?
b) What features of the PLC were useful for your teacher research administration process?
c) Why did you use the PLC the most/least? Prompts: (developing ideas, sharing and discussing research questions/process, asking questions etc.)
6. How would you describe your experience with teacher research utilizing the PLC?
7. Would you like to continue doing teacher research on your own?
a) If so what conditions, if any, can support your research conduct?
b) What is effect of PLC, if any, on your future teacher research undertakings?

Research journals kept by research participants

Throughout the study 3 research journals were requested from the participants related to their decision-making process in the implementation of teacher research. The prompt used by teacher researcher journals were presented in Table 6.

Table 6

Research Journals

Research Journal 1: Please write your research process in the group. (About 300-450 words) How did you come up with your research question? Why was this question important for you? How did you develop it? Which factors or who helped you to develop it into a well formulated research question?
Research journal 2: Please write your thinking process in the group. (About 300-450 words) How did you decide on your research method? How did you develop it? Which factors or who helped you in this process?
Research journal 3: Please write your research process in the group. (About 300-450 words) How did you decide on your data analysis method? How did you develop it? Which factors or who helped you in this process? Are there any ethical concerns in your study? How are you planning to present your study?

Research plans of participants

The research plans of the teachers were their short notes on the framework of their research. The research plans were gathered through the Edmodo, e-mail or WhatsApp messages from the teachers.

Written final teacher research reports of participants

The participants were asked to post their final research reports on the Edmodo PLC. The template for reporting research was taken from the project Alberta Teachers' Association (2000 p.31). Some sample research presented by Göktürk Sağlam & Dikilitaş (2019) were also provided for teachers in Edmodo. Some of the teachers used the general headings in these sample research to report their studies. The template provided in the website for reporting research is presented in Table 7.

Table 7

Template for Reporting Research (taken from Alberta Teachers' Association, 2000 p.31)

Introduction
What was the research question?
Why is this research question important to me?
What was the context of the study?
Review of the Literature
What did I learn from my investigation of the topics?
Methodology
What was my research plan?
What data collection methods were used?

Table 7 (continued)

Template for Reporting Research (taken from Alberta Teachers' Association, 2000 p.31)

Results and Conclusions
Summarize the data collected.
Discuss your conclusions based on the data collected.
Implication and Recommendations
What have you learned from doing this study?
How can this information be useful to others?
If you repeated the study, what would you do differently?

The physical artifact- which is teacher participants' research studies themselves- was important in that, they could demonstrate the improvement of them in research and if applicable changed understanding or experiences of the teachers' related to teacher research beyond their own reports. The list of the final teacher research reports analyzed in the study is seen in Table 8.

Table 8

List of Final Teacher Research Reports

Mine	An Exploration of English Language Learning Journey of My Students
Aysel	Motivation Problems in My classroom
Sevde	Motivation problems in Rural Setting

Table 8 (continued)

List of Final Teacher Research Reports

Arzu	A Study on the Use of Target Structures in Speaking Activities
Fatma	Investigation of the Disruptive Behavior
Maide	Analysis of Motivation
Yeliz	The Motivational Factors in my Class.

Researcher field notes

Researcher took notes after interviews and personal conversations (questions related to research and technical processes), kept e-mails and messages which has the nature of clarification of the research process. She documented them and used them after taking permission from the parties involved and member checking. She used member checking in the documentation to assure whether she interpreted them correctly. They are quite effective in terms of deepening the qualitative data and add an extra dimension to it, they can help us to situate the study into its context. Especially the field notes with critical reflection may serve as guides for future studies. Field notes can take many forms including slam notes and drawings (Phillippi & Lauderdale, 2018).

Interview Questions for the Teachers Who Left the Study

In order to obtain feedback related to the process of teacher research engagement and the experiences in the online community, the teachers who left the study were interviewed for their reasons for leaving and the opportunities and conditions they envisaged if they would continue their research studies. The interview questions were presented in Table 9.

Table 9.

The Interview Questions for the Teachers Who Left the Study

1. Can you state the reasons for you not being able to complete the project? 2. What kind of opportunities and features should an online community and teacher research education have possessed for you to be able to complete your teacher research process?

3.6 Data Collection Procedure

Stake (1995) adds that the researcher cannot definitely points to the exact starting moment of data collection. The acquaintance to the case, first impressions and background work all contribute to our understanding. However, they should be refined and strengthened by other data throughout the study. The data collection process started to take shape when the voluntary participants were recruited for the study and they became members of the professional online community which is designed for this study. This community is situated in Edmodo website. The aim of this online community is to promote and assist the teachers in their research undertakings. The first posting in the Edmodo teacher community is 21st of February. The end of data collection is 12th of May. The visual representation of the data collection process in provided in Figure 17.

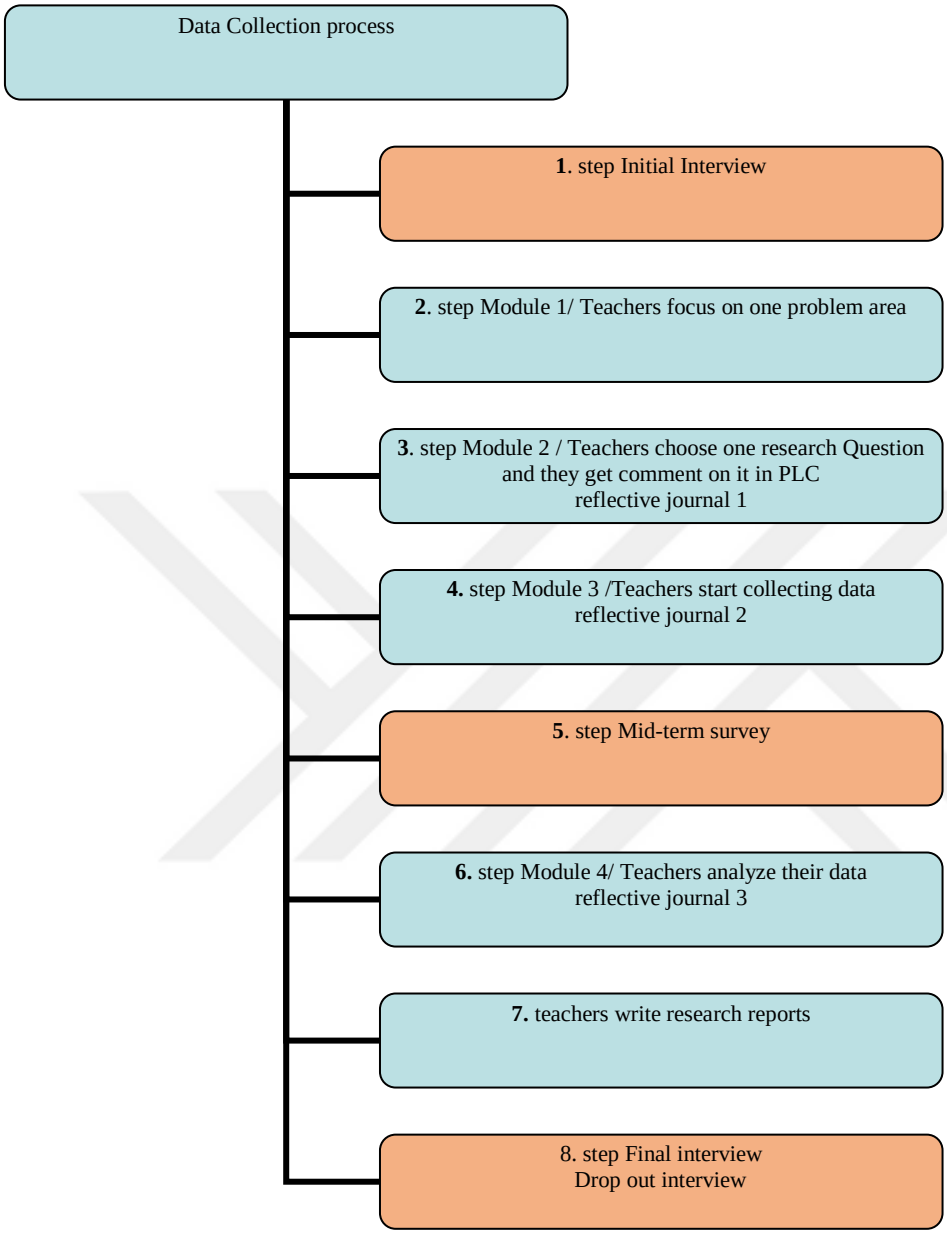


Figure 17. Data Collection Process

After the interview questions were piloted and necessary adjustments were made to the questions, the necessary permissions from Ethical Committee of the Middle East Technical University, and Ministry of National Education (MONE) were obtained. The research participant teachers took part in the initial interview at their convenience via mobile phone calls. The interviews were recorded and transcribed

verbatim. The information related to interview administration was presented in Table 10.

Table 10

Initial interviews

Number	Participant	Duration
1	Mine	12 min
2	Aysel	10 min
3	Sevde	12 min
4	Arzu	10 min
5	Fatma	10 min
6	Maide	13 min
7	Yeliz	9 min
8	Esen	15 min
9	Tarık	20 min
10	Hakan	6 min

Each week the researcher gave information related to a different aspect of teacher research, simultaneously asking several tasks to be done, such as asking teachers to define their teacher research questions based on the guidance provided on “defining research questions” week. In the first week the teachers were introduced the general ideas behind teacher research, the definition of it, the potential benefits that they

may take advantage of if it is used, and the challenges which may be encountered on the way. In the first week building of a sense of community was targeted, therefore activities which involved teachers' introducing themselves and their contexts as well as their teaching philosophies were requested. The teachers were able to communicate with each other as a group in Edmodo online community, and in the WhatsApp group. WhatsApp group was generally used for management issues, such as tackling technical problems or informing members about a new upload or an activity in the Edmodo group.

In the second module the teachers were instructed to look critically into their classrooms. They were asked to define the topics that they were interested, they were curious about or they wanted their students to do better. They were instructed on how to define a research question. After reading the information on the website, the teacher participants expressed their research topics or the general problems in their classrooms. Some of the teachers had a research question in their minds in the first week (Sevde). The researcher requested the teacher participants to post their research questions on the Edmodo website. The general concerns or initial questions were turned into well formulated research questions via the negotiations in Edmodo group.

In the third module, the teachers were provided with the ppt lecture related to data collection methods and tools. At this point the teachers were asked questions related to their research process, the challenges they encountered or how the project was coming along. Their personal problems were identified and suggestions were provided.

In the fourth module, the data analysis methods were introduced and the teachers were asked to analyze their data. One to one help was provided for teachers in data analysis. After they completed their research, they were asked to write a research report. After all those processes, they took part in the final interview. Their contributions on the online community and the research artefacts (the research itself,

teachers research journals etc.) were analyzed as well. The interviews were conducted via telephone calls and recorded by a voice recording application. The information related to final interviews were given in Table 11.

Table 11

Final Interviews

Number	Participant	Duration
1	Mine	12 min
2	Aysel	12 min
3	Sevde	14 min
4	Arzu	18 min
5	Fatma	12 min
6	Maide	10 min
7	Yeliz	10 min
8	Esen	8 min
9	Tarık	10 min

3.6 Data Analysis

Maykut, P., & Morehouse, R. (1994) suggest that when the aim is to learn about the case at hand deeply, with minimum interpretation of the researcher's part while analyzing the data, Glaser and Strauss's (1967) constant comparative method of data analysis serves the purpose quite effectively. It also fits the inductive nature of qualitative research design.

Glaser and Strauss's (1967) explanations on constant comparison show us the finer details of coding in several steps as well. In the first step which is "Comparing incidents applicable to each category" (p. 105) the researcher makes a comparison between groups (cases) in which the events are taking place. For instance, while the researcher is coding for an occurrence for a category, he/she needs to compare it with previous occurrences that are coded for the same category. They also add that this comparison is generally done based on the memory not necessarily referring to the occurrence each time. The codes come directly from the actual utterances of the participants, or the researcher may categorize the chunk as a code. When it comes directly from the participant Glaser and Strauss highlight (1967) it as a "current label". When a researcher makes the code, it is generally the "explanation" (p. 107). After that, "Integrating categories and their properties" (p. 108) should take place. Here the coder looks at the memos and the details pertaining his or her initial codes and accumulates information related to the categories for a category may have different and various features. Later on, the researcher must "delimit the theory" (p. 109) as it may be an overwhelming task if the researcher doesn't set the present boundaries. Lastly the codes should be saturated. If the new coming data cannot make any difference to the category anymore, it could be noted that all the necessary properties and the category is captured and it is saturated.

In line with the explanations, the researcher firstly transcribed the interview data into word documents. She read the transcription, reflection and artefacts in the study

several times, compared the different data sources coming from the same people to see whether there are incompatibilities or whether they supported each other. Reflections and research artefacts were merged into a word document for each participant. Following these the mentioned word-format data sources were imported into MAXQDA software program. It is a program which is used for computer-assisted qualitative data. The word documents were read again and labeled with different labels called codes. They were identified in the meaningful chunks and the names of the codes were given by the researcher keeping the meaning of the chunks and research focus in mind. Then the codes were categorized under bigger themes in relation to the research questions and as well as semantic relationships. When the coders re-read some of the refinements such as changing some of the sub codes or moving them under another theme was realized.

Figure 18 summarizes the general steps of constant comparative method of data analysis.

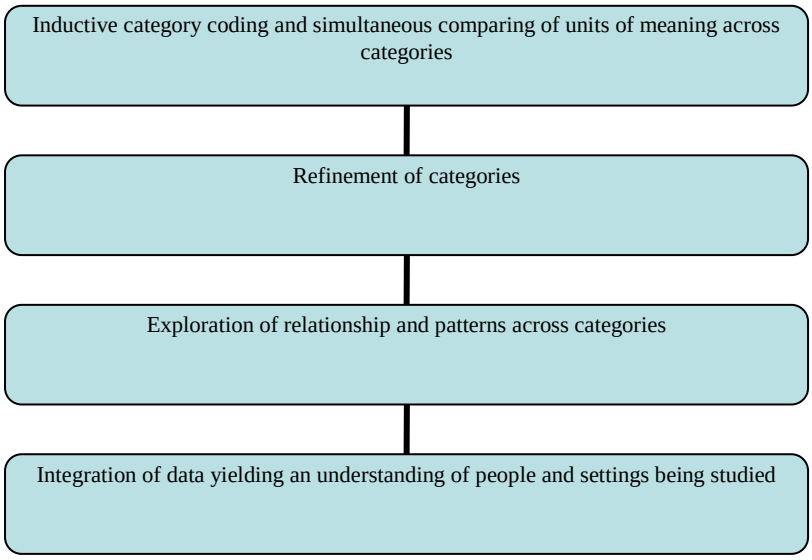


Figure 18. Constant comparative Method of Data Analysis (Maykut & Morehouse, 1994).

Table 12 provides an example on the coding of the data in the study. After all the data sources were gathered, the coding process began. The recurring ideas are designated. When the ideas overlapped, they were unified.

Table 12

Coding of the Qualitative Data

I believe this type of study is efficient in terms of identifying problems, identifying how to solve these problems. It would definitely be helpful if we do it large scale. However, I did it in a class of 20. It would be difficult to apply it in classes of 35 and in the classes in which there is discipline problems. Maybe it will not even reach its goals. It may not even define the problems especially, in classes of 35. Because while trying to identify the problems, there will certainly be a discipline problem, there will be a state of chaos and the learning environment will be negatively affected. I did it in 11th grade and in the class of 20. Age and class are an important factor. It would be more difficult to apply it in 9th and 10th grades with the classes of 30-35. Maybe it can even hinder the education (in class) instead of supporting it. However, when the population is suitable, it can be done widely. I believe in the benefits of this kind of studies. Arzu IDAS	THE THEME: Benefits of TR SUB-CODE: Identification of problems in class SUB-CODE: Identification of solutions THE THEME: Concerns related to TR SUB-CODE: Problems in the application process THE THEME: Benefits of TR
Böyle bir araştırmanın sorun tespit etme süreçte yaşadığın sorunları nasıl çözebileceğini tespit etme açısından verimli olduğunu düşünüyorum. Geniş çapta uygulandığında muhakkak verimli olacaktır. Lakin ben bunu 20 kişilik sınıfta uyguladım. Bunun 35 kişilik olan sınıflarda ve disiplin sorunu olan sınıflarda uygulanması gerçekten zor olacaktır. Belki amacına bile ulaşmayacaktır. 35 kişilik sınıfta sorunu spesifik olarak tespit edemeyebilir. Çünkü bunları tespit ederken bir grupta mutlaka bir disiplin problem olacak sınıfta bir kaos ortamı yaratıp öğrenme ortamı da olumsuz etkilenecek. 11. Sınıfta 20 kişilik sınıflarda yaptım. Yas ve sınıf çok önemli bir etken 9 ve 10'larda 30 35 kişilik sınıflarda disiplin problemi olan öğlencilerle uygulamak çok daha güç olur. Belki öğretime engel bile olur destek yerine. Ama mevcut uygun olduğunda geniş çapta uygulanabilir bir çalışma.	

Table 12 (Continued)

Coding of the Qualitative Data

I felt efficacious in defining the problem. I think I am a little inadequate in collecting data. Then, in the solution of the problems I had guessed the reasons of problems I believe I am good at this however in data collection, I may have lacking points in which methods to be used, where I can gather data. Sevde, IDAS	THE THEME: Research competencies after TR SUB-CODE: Forming the research questions THE THEME: Research competencies after TR SUB-CODE: Lacking points THE THEME: Research competencies after TR SUB-CODE: Forming the research questions THE THEME: Research competencies after TR SUB-CODE: Lacking points
Hocam problem belirleme konusunda kendimi yeterli hissettim. Biraz veri toplama konusunda yetersiz olduğumu düşünüyorum. Daha sonra sorunların çözümünde de problemlerin nedeninin az çok ne olduğunu tahmin etmişim daha öncesinde bu konuda da başarılı olduğumu düşünüyorum. Ama veri konusunda hangi yöntemler uygulanmalı verileri nerden toplayabilirim gibi konularda eksiklerim olabilir.	
As a teacher, the deal was not only lecturing. I was a bit of aware of that. However, teacher research was quite beneficial in that it helped me in the point of how to find a solution to the problems. We identified the problem and we could analyze the problem. It was good and beneficial. Sevde, IDAS	THE THEME: Understanding of roles THE THEME: Benefits of TR SUB-CODE: Identification of problems in class
Evet hocam şöyle. Öğretmen olarak olay sadece derse girip çıkmak değildi. Bunun biraz farkında idim ama sorunlara nasıl çözüm bulabilirim aşamasında "teacher research" bana çok fayda sağladı. Sorunu bulduk ve bu sorunu analiz edebildik. Nail çözümler bulabileceğime dair yok gösterdi. Güzel, faydalı.	

Table 12 (Continued)

Coding of the Qualitative Data

From Yeliz's research Report **Data analysis** In the analysis, I used Excel. The research mentor shared an Excel sheet with me. In it there were pre-prepared sections. Such as slots for students in the column (student number 1, student number 2 etc.…) and number of the questions in the lines. I filled in the information that I gathered in the data collection. I wrote the chosen grade for each question which were: 1,2,3,4,5. I added the points for each question and got a sum point for each question. By doing so I understood what the class thinks or how much importance they give to that item. That gave me information about their situation or ideas related to that question.	THE THEME: Research competencies after TR SUB-CODE: Analyzing in Excel THE THEME: TR Professional Benefits SUB-CODE: Teacher Realizations After Research
Online Edmodo support The group was very important for me. Although I didn't participate much (I came a bit later), I could see what was written in it. Therefore, it acted as a guide to me about what to do. There was information about research question definition, there were also research questions that were defined by the teachers. There was information about data collection. There was information about data analysis. And templates to report my research. After I talked to the research mentor, I understood how to analyze data. There were also excel templates for it. The group also made me realize that the other teachers were also doing research and it was a good feeling.	THE THEME: Roles in the Community SUB-CODE: Lurker THE THEME: Benefits of PLC SUB-CODE: A route SUB-CODE: Sources SUB-CODE: Mentor Support SUB-CODE: Sources SUB-CODE: Sense of Community

When the coding of the ideas concluded, emerging categories were reviewed. Re-categorizations were made if they were necessary. If there were negative instances for the categories, they were included under the category too. It is one of the approaches used in the literature (Maykut & Morehouse, 1994). For instance, in the Figure 19 it is represented that under the theme "Research Competencies After TR" there is a negative code: "Lacking points" as well as the positive code:" Forming Research Questions".

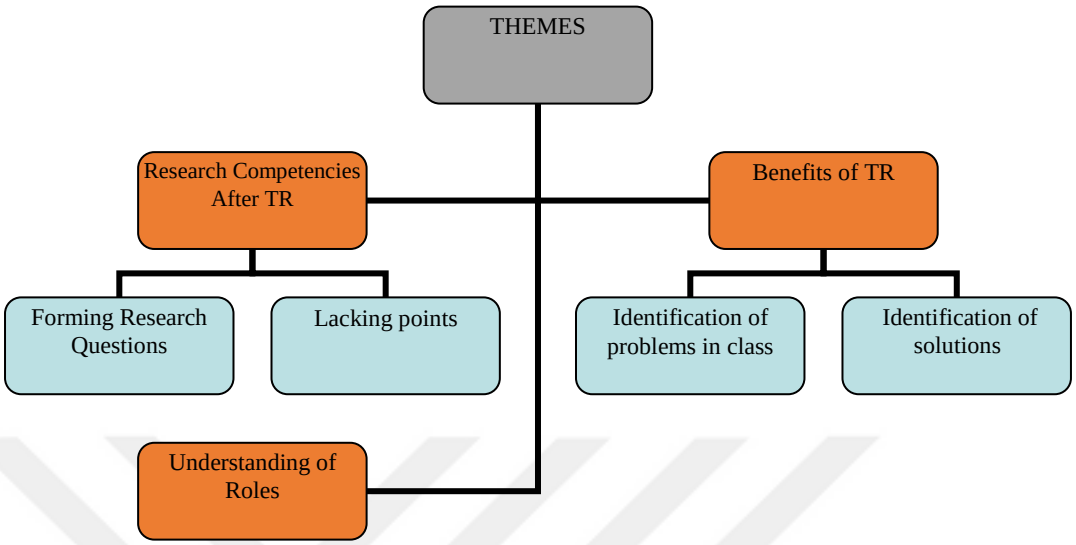


Figure 19. Visual Representation of the Coding

The interpretation of the codes was done by following cross case procedure. In multiple case design the general themes and common points need to be identified and presented as well as the deviant factors in the general phenomena. However individual cases are still important in coming to general conclusions. Therefore, they should be understood individually and situationally should be ensured. The balance between reporting individual cases and the cross-case analysis should be administered. Stake (2013) expresses the analytical reporting process as:

> … it is desirable for the analyst to set up a "case–quintain dialectic"—... (p.46). He adds that we need to be able to see each case first and then merge the individual cases to the main research question and to the whole multiple case design.

3.7. Trustworthiness

In order to assure trustworthiness in the study, the steps which were suggested by Lincoln and Guba (1985 as cited in Maykut, P., & Morehouse, R., 1994) was followed. The first step was to use multiple methods of data collection. For this purpose, data collection methods included the combination of the interviews with

the relevant document, artefacts and field notes. Secondly, the transcripts and researcher notes will serve as means of audit trail for other people. Furthermore, member checks are important in assuring the data gathered and used accurately characterize what the participants meant to convey. This step helps the trustworthiness of the interpretation of the data. The researcher contacted the participants to check if she reflected their thought correctly during and after data collection. The researcher based her interpretation strictly on the evidence. She provided large samples of data in the thesis when making comments to lay the data before the eyes of readers too. Lastly peers collaborated in coding process to secure the coding and check for discrepancies. 10 % of the coding were executed by the external researchers and the results were compared. There were no discrepancies found in the interpretation. The slight differences in the distinction of codes were negotiated and as a result, the themes were decided to their final forms.

Additionally, to assure the rigor in the study which was proposed as an indicator of quality in qualitative research, the researcher used the four criteria which were defined by Lincoln & Guba (1985). The criteria are credibility, dependability, conformability and transferability. To assure credibility, the data from different sources were made use of as well as the commitment of the researchers and the teachers in the study for their research was prolonged. To assure dependability and conformability, audit trail is left and the research process is narrated in a reflexive manner. Lastly to assure the transferability, the detailed descriptions of the cases and important characteristics of their setting are described. In that way the results might be transferred without losing the meaning.

3.8. Limitations of the Study

The design of this study is a case study. The aim of case studies is not to arrive at statistical generalizations but the capture the particularity of the case. Stake explains it this way:" that knowledge (a full and thorough knowledge of the particular) is a form of generalization too, not scientific induction but naturalistic generalization,

arrived at by recognizing the similarities of objects and issues in and out of context and by sensing the natural covariations of happenings" (p.6). Although the aim is not to generalize, it is important to understand the real life happening of the particular topic at hand to be able to draw conclusions and make future decisions related to the similarities of the cases. The limited number of the participants in this study is one of the limitations for these sorts of future decisions. This fact also hindered the division in the online community (small groups who share the similar conditions in their own schools and who shares similar concerns in terms of research problems) This division was stated as one of the important aspects in collaboration by some participants.

The relatively short-term duration of the study is also another limitation for our understanding of the maturation of the dynamics in the online community in which the teacher research training took place. A longer period is advisable for this research education. Ice-breaking activities which are necessary for a community to form should take longer time. Additionally, the training of research and the application of it should be extended over a period of time considering school related duties, and other duties of teachers.

CHAPTER 4

FINDINGS

This chapter mainly describes the findings of the study in relation to the impact of the participation in an applied online community which aimed to foster teacher research on teachers views themselves as teacher-researchers, the necessity of teacher research as a professional tool and the effect of an online community in their future teacher research projects. The results were organized as the themes according to the different data sets that were obtained from different data sets. The reflections of the teachers were added in the final research report of the teachers. The final research report of the teachers is labelled as "8the name of the participant)-research". 1st refers to the initial interview, 2nd refers to the final interview. Initially, each case was represented in relation to the importance of the themes. Following this, the results which were obtained from cross-case analysis were presented via themes.

4.1 General Layout of the Codes across Data Tools

In Figure 19 the occurrence and the accumulation of the themes were shown across the different data sets. When the sub codes that represent the theme were identified they were marked in the data and represented as a dot in the matrix. When the repetition of the same codes represented as the dot's getting bigger. The importance of themes should be presented in multiple case studies (Stake, 2006). Figure 20 represents the general layout of the codes across data tools.

Figure 20. General Layout of Codes across Data Tools

4.2 Representation of the Cases

In this section each case is presented in relation to the themes in the study. The importance of the themes was represented as the proportion of the dots. It can also be seen which theme is obtained from which data set for the case. This section gives a general outline of the themes in each case. In the next section: Multiple case results, the themes are presented in more detail and they are represented via the plausible relationships among them. Stake (2005) elaborates that the aim of multiple case studies is not to make comparisons between cases, but to depict how the reality is being experienced in the cases. Stake (2005) also asserted that in cross case analysis, the central action is to understand the experiences in the cases and apply the findings to the research questions. Therefore, subsequent to giving a general outline for the cases in this section, in cross case analysis the findings related to the "situated experiences" in the cases are applied to the research questions Stake (2005 p.47). The individual representation of the cases is also important in showing the utility of each case in the final themes for the study.

Mine

Figure 21 shows the themes in the different data sets that belong to the case Mine. With the figure, it is possible to visually see the place of the themes of the study in this particular case.

Figure 21. Mine

The results which were gathered under the opportunities theme refers to the desired opportunities and conditions for future teacher research engagement of the teacher. After Mine took part in the teacher research process, she defined several opportunities which would be described in detail in the cross-case analysis. This theme covered an important place in her data, as well as the teacher research identity development. In her reflection and research data and in her final interview, the theme is salient. This represents the engagement of the teacher for the future teacher research activities. The disadvantages of the PLC are seen as an important theme at the end of the teacher research process. This theme gives us information concerning the difficulties that this teacher experienced during the study. The perceived benefits of teacher research also increased at the end of the study. The researcher identity refers to the engagement or ideas of the teacher in relation to teacher research. It is inferred that this teacher had previously had ideas or experience related to this theme and it had an important place before during and after the study. Understanding of the roles refers to the teachers' ideas concerning their roles and responsibilities as teachers. The dot representing this theme in the second interview however shows the changes in the understanding of the roles.

Therefore, the proportion of the dot shows us that this teacher has undergone a change in the understanding of her educational roles and responsibilities.

Aysel

Figure 22 shows the themes in the different data sets that belong to the case Aysel. By investigating the figure, it is possible to visually see the place of the themes of the study in this particular case.

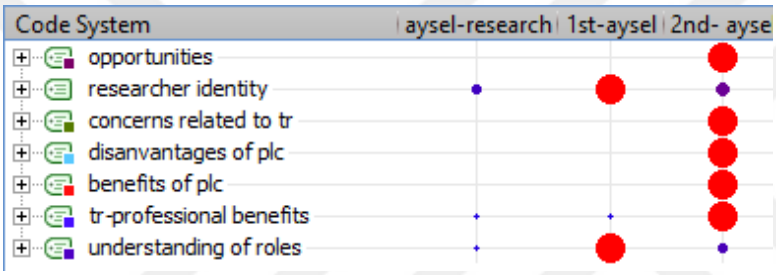


Figure 22. Aysel

The specifications for the desired opportunities and the conditions for the future research is an important theme for Aysel as well as concerns related to teacher research, and benefits and disadvantages of PLC in her final interview. The teacher experienced the research in her contexts by evaluating the difficulties and the positive points. Thus, gaining insights which were not salient in her previous interview related to research. There was an increase in the importance of benefits of teacher research theme. The importance of the researcher identity theme also increased at the end of the study. There was also changes in the understanding of the instructional roles of the teacher.

Arzu

Figure 23 shows the themes in the different data sets that belong to the case Arzu. With the figure, it is possible to visually see the place of the themes of the study in this particular case.

Figure 23. Arzu

In Arzu, most of the themes had an important place especially in her final interview. The ideas related to researcher identity, benefits of PLCs, teacher professional benefits were also the themes which had a prominent place in her data before the study. There is an increase in the proportion these themes. The concerns related to teacher research had a moderate place before the study. At the end of the study there is an increase in this theme. The theme of the disadvantages of PLC has a salient place in her data. The instructional roles had a prominent place in her first interview. There was also some change in the instructional roles after she took part in the research process.

Yeliz

Figure 24 shows the themes in the different data sets that belong to the case Yeliz. With the figure, it is possible to visually see the place of the themes of the study in this particular case.

Figure 24. Yeliz

Yeliz had ideas related to the benefits of the teacher research before the study and this theme had a substantial place in the data that were gathered from her. There were also mentions to the gains and benefits of teacher research after the study was completed and the themes had a more extensive place this time. The necessary opportunities and conditions for the future studies of teacher research, concerns related to teacher research, disadvantages and benefits of PLC and teacher research identity were all important themes for her. In her research report, some changes related to the roles and responsibilities of teachers were identified.

Sevde

Figure 25 shows the themes in the different data sets that belong to the case Sevde. With the figure, it is possible to visually see the place of the themes of the study in this particular case.

Figure 25. Sevde

Sevde had some previous encounters with the teacher research and had some opinions related to it beforehand. Therefore, the theme researcher identity under which previous encounters were dealt with covers an important place in her data. Therefore, she also had significant codes which culminated into the theme related to teacher identity before the study, this theme still increased after the research process. The theme "concerns related to teacher research" was slightly more important previous to the research completion process. In her final interview this theme had a moderate place. There was also a considerable change in the understanding of the roles theme for her. This theme has prominent place in her final interview and her research report.

Maide

Figure 26 shows the themes in the different data sets that belong to the case Maide. With the figure, it is possible to visually see the place of the themes of the study in this particular case.

Figure 26. Maide

There were also some changes in the understanding of the roles theme at the end of the study for Maide in the final interview data set and in the final research report containing the reflections as well. The benefits of teacher research theme as well as concerns related to it were important themes in her data after the completion of the study. She hadn't conducted teacher research before. However, she defined research as solving the problems in the class. In her opinion all the activities regardless of

whether it has been done systematically or not, whether it is reported or not should be defined as research. Therefore, in her definition, she had the researcher identity in the beginning of the study. This theme was also important for her in the beginning and at the end of the study. After the study the proportion of the theme: concerns of teacher research had a substantial place in her data. Similarly, disadvantages and benefits of PLC as well as teacher research's professional benefits themes were important.

Fatma

Figure 27 shows the themes in the different data sets that belong to the case Fatma. With the figure, it is possible to visually see the place of the themes of the study in this particular case.

Figure 27. Fatma

The themes teacher research opportunities for future studies, benefits of teacher research and benefits of PLC were important themes for the case Fatma. The theme teacher researcher identity had a moderate place before the study. After the study the theme had a proportional place in her data. The place of theme: benefits of teacher research increased for her. Benefits of PLC was an important theme for the data of Fatma. There were also additions in the understanding of the roles.

4.3 Multiple Case Results

The findings of the study were categorized as answers to the research questions through themes. The themes are going to be presented as their relevancy to the answers to the research questions.

4.4. Research Question 1a

This question was: "What will be the impact of teacher research participation on in service EFL teachers' views of themselves as teacher researchers?" It was answered through the following themes.

Theme 1. Researcher Identity

The first question aimed to capture and describe the impact of teacher research participation of EFL teachers on their views of themselves as teacher researchers. It has been argued that one has to step far away from concepts to see what can be done with them in a classroom context. This angle which is the ability to visualize the research's findings and what they mean in class exist in teachers (Evans, 1964).

Evans (1964) also add that "While curriculum development has been increasingly in the hands of teachers, by and large their 'expertness' has not been tapped correspondingly in searching for problems to study, or in devising ways for extending practical knowledge about these problems" (p.80).

The teachers in this study became genuine conductors of the research. as part of their roles in the social practice community, they took part in the planning process; they conducted the research and they interpreted the results. It made them legitimate participants of the research study (Megowan-Romanowicz, 2010). This experience affected their views of themselves on teacher researchers.

In activity theory the agency in the teacher research in other words the teachers' view of themselves as researchers are of close relationship with their social context, their previous experiences with research, their immediate position related to it and their future prospects (Feryok, 2012). The teachers' views of them as researchers are in close relationship with the previous encounters of research since the awareness of research and their role in position to it, is in close connection with this situation. Furthermore, the definition of research by researchers and their position in relevance to the subject are investigated to find answer to the research question which aimed to see the views of teachers on being researchers. Lastly their self-confidence and competencies towards it and how those two changed after their experience in the study is scrutinized. The themes which was associated with this concern was the theme "researcher identity". This theme had the sub codes of "place of research", "research competencies after TR", "self-confidence", "positive thoughts for future studies", "reserved positive thoughts for future studies", "voluntary nature of TR", "necessity of added duty of TR" and "lacking research skills". The frequencies of this codes were portrayed in the Table 13.

Table 13

Researcher Identity

Researcher identity	***f***
Place of research	32
Self confidence	9
Research competencies after TR	19
Positive thoughts for future studies	10
Reserved positive thoughts for future studies	3
Voluntary nature of TR	5

Table 13 (continued)

Researcher Identity

Researcher identity	***f***
Necessity of added duty of TR	5
Lacking research skills	6
TOTAL	89

Place of Research

Some of the teachers in the study have never heard of the term teacher research before the study. Their only encounter with it were via the advertisement for the recruitment for the study. There were also some initial basic definitions in the Edmodo group which the teachers could see when they first become members of it. Some of the teachers realized after discussions of the underlying ideas of the teacher research that they were doing research-like activities in their lessons without knowing the definition or the term with or without all the steps of the research. In activity theory, it is specified that due to circumstantial differences, a person associate his or her role in the activity with their understanding of the activity (Feryok, 2012). Therefore, after they conducted teacher research, their own role in the research helped them to view their roles in terms of research in a different light. The teachers described their encounters with the research before they carried out research as well. This gives important information as to their views of themselves as the conductors of research before the study.

Fatma and Aysel stated that actively research has no place in their lessons. Sevde stated hearing the term for the first time in this study. Mine also stated she hadn't heard a similar project before. These reports indicate that these teachers don't consider themselves as active researchers who embedded research into their lives.

Having said that Aysel stressed her enthusiasm to carry out research. She remarked that:

> *I believe that I have enough energy to do the research to follow the steps what are they I don't know now I think I can do what is necessary Aysel (IDBS).*

However, the teachers also acknowledged that, considering the aim and the nature of teacher research, some of their other activities resembled or carried some of the features of teacher research thus making this concept a familiar one to them. Although, Sevde had never hear of the term teacher research, she likened them to some of other projects that they were carrying out school wide. She mentioned K-101 and E-Twinning projects. Generally, in K-101 projects, the reasons for failure in teaching is researched and tried to be remedied. Similarly, in E-twinning projects, the quality of education is aimed to be increased. Another teacher, Arzu also questioned whether the exam analysis work they do, counted as research. Since it has some of the common goals with teacher research. She debated:

> *Although I don't know if we can count it research, some time ago there was an exam analysis study. In exam analysis we focus on the areas that the students cannot do, review them. Though I have doubts if it has any benefits on students - because the ones who cannot do still cannot do no matter how we teach. These are not systematical action research. The student population is a great handicap. We cannot reach every one of the 35 students in the classroom. On the top of that there are several students who have discipline problems. However, if the student is internally motivated, it is easier to observe the lacking points of the student and reach the goal by remedying them. Frankly that is what comes to my mind when I hear action research. Near the end of the unit and near the exams we do these activities. It is more effective in internally motivated students. In poorly motivated and unreceptive students no matter how hard I try to remedy some points; I cannot reach them (Arzu, IDBS)*

The excerpts affirm that teachers are not quite far way the ideas of research. They acknowledge that some of the activities that they carry out resembles it, indicating that they believe they can carry out research. Their agency is salient. However, their need for confirmation as to what counts as research also demonstrate their lack of

self-confidence on the subject. Since their awareness is limited on the topic, their researcher identity is far from complete. Although, not represented as a case, the information that the participant Tarık provided related to teacher research is important for us to be able to understand the cases. It shows a sample practice of a teacher in-service education that has transacted in a high school in Turkey. The information of this practice and its effectiveness can play a role in the future design of similar education activities for similar cases and other cases in the study. Tarık described his previous encounters related to teacher research as the following:

> *I did not do it officially. However, whenever I entered into class, I spent some time in thinking I did it that way it didn't work, how I can fix it. At the beginning of the semester, in November, there were some academicians from 4 different universities who came to our city to give us 2-day long seminar. ….. We got education related to the innovations in foreign language education. The atmosphere was good. Then we were told that we were going to do action research. They stated that they would send a teacher to educate us in the matter but they did not. It is nearly the end of the term. ….. We are forgotten. I did prepare myself to do that research, therefore I said I will do your project if not that (Tarık, ID).*

Tarık's awareness of teacher research is raised by a previous teacher development activity which involved giving initial ideas of teacher research. It was what made him follow the trail of research and participate in this study. The teachers' knowledge of the concept, their place towards it is the most important step in their construction of views of themselves as researchers.

Similarly, Esen also left the study before completing her teacher research, however similar to Tarık she had also specified her research question and followed some of the steps. Therefore, her ideas as well assisted us in understanding the cases better. She also acknowledged that although not thoroughly, she did research-like work in her class before ever participating in the study. These occurrences conform the condition that previous experiences related teacher research may increase the teachers' research engagements (Borg, 2010). Maide discussed that, as teachers they do lots of activities to solve the problems, and they take notes to apply them

elsewhere. But never think of them as research topics but daily activities. Therefore, Maide doesn't consider herself as a researcher in the sense of someone who conducts research following systematic steps, report and disseminates it. However, she believes that she is capable of conducting some of the prominent features of research.

Lacking Research Skills in the Beginning

At the beginning of the study, Maide, Fatma and Yeliz stated that they hadn't taken a research skills lesson. Arzu had this lesson in her education. However, Arzu, Maide, Fatma and Sevde voiced their concerns related to their lacking points and the feeling of inadequacy in conducting research. Their lack of knowledge and technical skills to carry out teacher research are one of the most prominent barriers for them to consider themselves as researchers. To legitimately claim the identity of a researcher or consider oneself as a researcher, one needs to know what research entails and the necessary skills to carry it out. However, it is observed that, the teachers have questions marks in those areas.

Sevde stated that she had question marks related to what to do when, and with whom. She asked whether she or the school principal would do it or another critical friend. She also stated having little knowledge related to analysis. Similarly, Arzu also focused on that she had no information on the process and the criteria in doing research. Additionally, the teachers Murat and Esen also voiced that they saw themselves in adequate in some aspects of research. Esen envisaged that data collection and analysis is beyond her current ability. Tarık also specified that the reason that he never attempted to do teacher research was due to his inadequate knowledge and skills. He stated that:

> *I had an education in relation to it, but never learned anything. There was an education all right, I didn't learn anything. Since I didn't know where to start, how to report, I have never attempted to do it (Tarık, IDBS).*

Maide stated that she lacked the necessary knowledge and skills related to the organization of the data and the steps in the process of research. Maide and Tarık expressed the negative associations with the writing aspect of research. Maide stated that she found writing part unlikeable. Tarık also stated that writing makes the process harder causing the person to restrain himself.

Self confidence

When the participants were asked whether they defined themselves as the teacher researchers, they described themselves and their positions related to teacher research. The teachers had self-confidence in defining themselves as researchers at varying degrees. Maide confidently defined herself as a teacher researcher before she took part in the study. In the first interview, she stated that considering the problems she solved in the classroom and within her viewpoint, she would describe herself a researcher. Her viewpoint in regard to teacher research is revealed in her self-definition of teacher research. Her definition is as follows:

> *If a teacher is aware of the problems in her classroom, tries to solve the problem, applies her solution alternatives, evaluate if the solution in fact worked, in my view it is what I call research. Simply put, if I can find solutions to the problems and if the feedback is really positive, it means I did research. The most important thing here is to be voluntary. We can ignore the problem -maybe we do that most of the time- or we can act responsible and resolute. It can be a small problem such as the cleanliness of the classroom. Acting resolutely, finding realistic solutions in accordance with the specific situation and the soul of the students and seeing the results are research for me. Otherwise, writing in papers in an official way is not something I think in a favorable way. I don't do that (Maide, IDBS).*

After the Maide conducted a study related to the individual studying habits, learning types of her students and their comfort levels when they ask a question to the teacher, she didn't change her views related to writing component of the research. Although she acknowledged the importance of sharing, she preferred informal professional talks with colleagues rather than writing a report of a study. She added

that she could define herself a researcher from her view-point. Stremmel (2002) state that whether on just reflecting on experiences or systematically working on a problem in class, the teachers have the unique position. However, it is also reported that writing the research and the research may have an important place in constructing researcher identity as well as elevating the profile of teacher research (Fleischer & Fox, 2004).

Fatma had never carried out a research in her classroom before. However, she defined teacher research with referencing the term "action". She defined research as carrying out an activity and working on that activity to investigate the opinions about it. She also added that she was not sure of this definition. After she carried out a teacher research in her classroom related to disruptive behavior, she reported increased self confidence in carrying out research. She stated in her second interview:

> *I had never done teacher research before, after completing it, I felt the feeling of accomplishment and confidence. I believe I am more aware of it. I had some reservations before, however after working on the problems by using observation and questionnaire, I developed positive ideas and I believed maybe I can use it to deal with problems... I did the process myself or I become a part of the process. (Fatma IDAS).*

Aysel also had her ideas related to research as its being a type of study which are done by teachers on the members of the school. She added that it was the limit of her knowledge on the matter. After the study she stated that:

> *Although, I cannot be regarded as a big researcher, I see myself a better researcher than before (Aysel, IDAS).*

These reports indicate and increase in the self-confidence of the teachers in defining themselves a researcher. Sevde and Arzu also reported an increase in her self confidence in conducting research. Sevde reported that she had been in two minds whether or not a Master's degree have for some time and she explains that this

experience encouraged her. She realized that doing research can be manageable after all.

> *It encouraged me a bit more. It is not so very difficult. You do research and be useful. I am a little more confident about it now (Sevde, IDAS).*
>
> *Of course, experiencing the process increased the self-confidence. You say it works; I can apply it for another problem too, even it can be more effective if it is more extensive you say. Therefore, I could say I can do it again (Arzu, IDAS).*

These results pointed out the fact that, engaging in teacher research in this study, helped some teachers to gain self confidence in conducting research. They took part in the activity themselves and their views related to their capability of conducting teacher research is increased based on their accomplishments in the study. In the situated learning experience, the teachers participated in social learning activities and they produced artifacts. They became the participants of a community of practice. By taking part in the production, their learning is improved and they became a full member of these practice community. Therefore, their self-confidence as the legitimate member who can do the activity increased (Zuengler & Miller, 2006). The teachers also gained some research competencies after they conducted teacher research. These will be described in detail under the theme: Research Competencies after TR.

Research Competencies after TR

After teachers took part in the study and carried out teacher research, they reported some improvements in some of the research skills. The mentioned improvements were checked in their final research reports to see if they are consistent, and the data was backed with the content of the studies as well. The skill points in which the teachers showed improvements were use of data collection tools, data analysis methods, hypothesis testing, to learn the steps to be followed in a research and

capability of further research. Although there was information related to different data collection tools and methods in the training sessions, the themes which were identified in teachers' interview and reports indicated that they learned the ones which they used in their own studies.

As for the competencies in data collection, Aysel assessed that she was capable of using a questionnaire and analyze it. She stated:

> *As a researcher… I mean I used to see myself as a researcher person before but after the study, I could at least learn how to introduce a question and a questionnaire, how to support it and how to analyze it. I learned them. Therefore, I can call myself a researcher. Although I am not a big researcher, I see myself a better one (Aysel, IDAS)*

She added when she was curious about something, she asked one or two question about it. However, she now learned that the questions should support each other and she should collect data from different angles. Arzu used observation in her study and she reported that she understood how to use it effectively for her purpose. She also added although not in the perfect sense she learned all the steps of research, she made progress.

One of the competencies mentioned by teachers were the formation of research question. Aysel informed that it was difficult for her to put the question in paper. She had several doubts. However, Arzu and Sevde stated that they felt adequate in forming the research question.

> *I had an awareness in terms of specifically defining our problems and it was beneficial. I believe this research was effective in terms of defining the problem and defining how to solve the problems (Aysel, IDAS).*
>
> *I felt adequate in forming a research question (Sevde, IDAS)*

The teachers also showed competencies in testing their hypotheses. Aysel stated that her initial hypothesis that the students are skipping classes due to their other

responsibilities such as feeding the animals or taking care of younger siblings were not supported by the data. Additionally, Maide added that after the survey, she realized her ideas were supported by students. Teacher research also plays the role of validator of what is good in teachers' practices and what are true in their intuitions (Abbott, 1994). Therefore, they had the opportunity to check their ideas' validity as well.

In her reflection Aysel explained what she would have done differently in her research if she had done it again. She mentioned that

> *If I had done the study again, I would have the parents as participants as well. I would ask them these questions related to their educational background and the importance that they give to English or how they support their children (Aysel, RRD)*

Aysel wrote these ideas by referencing the source in her reflections and pointed that she became more aware of them after reading articles. Therefore, her awareness is elevated in those points.

In the teacher research studies Microsoft Excel is sued in quantitative data analysis. It was easy to reach and already installed in teachers' computers. There were some teachers who indicated that their analysis skills in Excel were improved. There were also some teachers who preferred analyzing the data by hand.

> *In the analysis, I used Excel. The research mentor shared an Excel sheet with me. In it there were pre-prepared sections. Such as slots for students in the column (student number 1, student number 2 etc….) and number of the questions in the lines. I filled in the information that I gathered in the data collection. I wrote the chosen grade for each question which were: 1,2,3,4,5. I added the points for each question and got a sum point for each question. By doing so I understood what the class thinks or how much importance they give to that item (Yeliz, RRD).*

> *I didn't think I would be able to read the data in Excel. I realized it was not that hard. My self-confidence increased (Yeliz, IDAS).*
>
> *I used Microsoft Excel. It was quantitative data analysis. I counted the times a student listed a topic as a difficult topic in the first three ranks. I added them and therefore I could see the topics in which my students had the hardest time in understanding as a whole… (Mine, RRD)*
>
> *However, since I conducted the questionnaires with only 20 students, I could analyze it by hand in some points (Sevde, RRD).*
>
> *For the interviews, I listened the recordings and took notes on common themes (Sevde, RRD).*

Aysel and Mine learned the steps in a research study. Aysel confirmed that she learned the know-how of research. And Mine stated:

> *I obtained knowledge on where to begin, what kind or processes we were going to undergo (Mine, IDAS)*

These results show that the experiences of teachers transformed their perspectives towards themselves. The teachers used research like activities before however they were anecdotal and not systematic. The fact that they became more aware of the disciplined observation, statistical base and careful planning, their anecdotal and experience-based decisions were turned into more critical professional decisions based on evidence (Mitchell, Reilly, & Logue, 2009). This was an important step for teachers to view themselves as researchers.

Willingness to continue

The teachers' willingness to do research in the future was a good indicator or their views of themselves as researchers. There were some teachers who stated that they would continue carrying out research. While some of them highlighted their agency in these future studies, some indicated that they needed guidance from a mentor. Arzu and Esen highlighted the importance of guidance. Sevde also pointed that she

may not be 100% good at data collection in her future work. Arzu stated she preferred continuing it in a systematic way guided by a mentor. Esen also highlighted that she will call the research facilitator (writer of this thesis) if she encounters problems. Yeliz highlighted that she will first try to apply the results to her class and in the future continue to do similar studies. She also added it is teachers who experience problems in class, they should be asking and defining the questions in the future studies, however she could get help from a professional in data analysis in terms of time and effectiveness. Fatma stressed considering the benefits, she would continue doing it. Mine also considered doing research in order to stay up to date. Lastly Maide expressed her desire to further study for the teacher research that she conducted during our project as there were some inconclusions in it. There were some teachers who has some reservations but still wanted to carry out research. Maide expressed although research made her feel good, she doesn't think she is quite capable in every aspect of it. Besides not every topic is suitable for research, if her problem can be solved with a research, she may try to do it in the future. Arzu also highlighted the importance of conditions to be able to continue research. She stated:

> *It is difficult to apply in classes where there are discipline problems. It may even hinder education. However, if the class population is manageable, it can be done even at a greater extent. I believe in the benefits of these kinds of studies (Arzu, IDAS).*

These answers also indicate the importance of mentor support in the teachers' future research studies. Although by carrying out teacher research the teachers experienced it and gained self-confidence as well as new capabilities related to research, being a researcher is a long and continuous process and it necessitates a facilitator. Collaborating with a facilitator was important for the teachers to carry out research in the future. Collaborative practices are seen some of the best methods for the sustainability of research (Fien, 1998).

Some teachers in the study viewed research as an activity which should be part of teachers' duty. There were also some teachers who highlighted the voluntary nature of the teacher research. The teachers who defended the voluntary participation were Sevde, Hakan, and Yeliz. Sevde expressed:

> *This is a voluntary work. If you had forced it, it wouldn't have been successful. If you gather the voluntary teachers just as you do now, it would work... But I don't know its success, if it is directly started to be used in schools (Sevde, IDAS).*

Yeliz stated although, it is not the duty of teachers to do research, it could be useful for them. However, after completing the study she added that she now thinks that it should be their duty to be able to make improvements both in teacher and in students. Hakan also stated that the prerequisite of teacher research is the willingness of the teacher to develop himself/herself. Mine and Esen pointed that being a teacher requires improving oneself, keeping up with the improvements maybe more than any other professions. Therefore, teacher should do research. Esen also added she wanted other teachers to do it as well. Yeliz also stated in her research report that:

> *I can start with needs analysis and use research as a helpful tool to understand my classroom more (Yeliz, RRD).*

This excerpt indicates that she is planning to continue teacher research in the future and she evaluates the possible ways of using it in the need analysis of her students.

4. 5. Research Question 1b.

This question was: "What will be the impact of Teacher research participation on in service EFL teachers' views on the importance and necessity of teacher research as a professional development tool?" "TR professional benefits" summarized the findings as an answer to this question.

Theme 2 TR professional benefits

Several teachers either openly or through their reflections expressed that teacher research is beneficial. They specified the benefits into different aspects. The Table 14 shows the frequency of this theme and their sub codes.

Table 14

Teacher Research Professional Benefits

TR professional Benefits	***f***
Keep up advances	4
Feedback	1
Ground for decision	3
Job satisfaction	6
See other solutions	1
Be aware of problems and possible solutions	7
Bridge between practice and theory	2
Teacher realizations after doing research	34
TOTAL	58

Keep up advances

Mine, Maide and Esen believed the importance of updating oneself in the profession of teaching. Due to the fast advances in the field and in the student profile, the teachers voiced the necessity of staying up to date with the current developments in the field. They also expressed that teacher research is either a tool to assure that or one of the novelties itself to be aware of. These statements agree with Olsen' (1990)

declared benefit of teacher research as being an opportunity to improve education and bridge the gap in the theoretical field and the practice. Esen and Mine stated:

> *Definitely, personally, I believe I should update myself. If I realize education without breaking the molds, I would be making no progress I am open to innovations. I try to use new materials, new researching techniques. I speak on behalf of myself. I believe every teacher should do it but I am not sure if they do and to what extent. I try to find sustainable approaches and research is important in this respect (Esen, IDBS).*

> *A teacher really has to do research. Education is from cradle to grave. We should do it to be up to date. All the generations are educated by us. A teacher should be able to adapt to the changing conditions; therefore, she should be aware of everything that is going on and this could only be accomplished via research (Mine, IDBS).*

Feedback

Arzu believed research would be beneficial in terms of reaching the students and to get individual feedback before she started her research project. Aysel as well pointed to this feature of research by likening it to a mirror. This way she could see herself and get feedback. Similarly, Maide also asked in the initial interview whether teacher research is a kind of feedback, trying to understand the success rate of the activities.

Ground for decision

Mine stressed the importance of data from the classroom in order to make decisions in the classes before she took part in the study.

> *No matter how much experience we have in practice, statistical or documental evidence help us work in a solution-oriented way. Therefore, I believe it is quite beneficial (Mine, IDBS).*

Job satisfaction

The participants Tarık and Esen revealed that teacher research could be beneficial since it has an aim of studying the lessons that they give and this gives them an active applied goal. In return they feel happier in their jobs and their teaching days gain an extra meaning. The stated as follows:

> *The teacher would know himself and the students in the light of the data that he collected. As a result of this, this person would be happier and his views towards the students would alter. As long as he solves the problems, it would have an effect upon him. If you are happy at work, you are happy in life (Tarık ID).*
>
> *In my professional life, maybe I came upon twice, I experienced a workshop by academicians. We were the students there and had some tasks ... It was definitely beneficial. I also got that feedback from other colleagues too… It works as long as we actively participate in things rather than being passive listeners in in service education. It was one of the most effective. In my teaching life I only encountered such kinds of activities twice. (Esen, IDBS).*

See other solutions

Fatma regarded collaborative teacher research, or seeing other research could be beneficial in terms of seeing other solutions. She explained:

> *Definitely, there could be information exchange or what could be done for this problem, whether there are same problems at others. What do they do, how do they prevent? What can be done so that it wouldn't repeat? We could have good results by experiencing actively researching together doing brainstorming and with information exchange. I would definitely have an effect (Fatma, IDBS).*

Be aware of problems and possible solutions

According to teachers, teacher research could help them see and solve an unnoticed problem in the class. Yeliz, Arzu and Aysel believed this would be the beneficial effect of teacher research. They expressed:

> *We encounter problems which we had never anticipated, research of it on the spot and immediately applied the solutions by the experience of the problem would be beneficial (Yeliz, IDBS).*
>
> *it will help me maybe I figure out a problem in my environment and try to solve it (Aysel, IDBS).*
>
> *This research will provide the opportunity to see the individual lacking points in students. You see it and try to compensate (Arzu, IDBS).*

Bridge between practice and theory

Yeliz pointed out the potential of teacher research as to bridge the gap between theory and practice in language teaching. She mentioned:

> *It (TR) definitely would be beneficial. We always complain about this. We cannot apply the things we learned at university because the things that are designed for groups of 15-20 may not be applied in groups of 30-40. Additionally, we may encounter things we have never foreseen (Yeliz, IDBS).*

Teacher realizations after doing research

After the teachers took part in the study and conducted their teacher research in their classes, they came to some realizations. These realizations were on the uses of teacher research and its benefits as well as the realizations related to their classes via teacher research. The teachers realized the roots of the problems that they studied in their teacher research. Some of them started to implement some of the implications of their research in their classes and reported seeing some benefits or improvements. The teacher research also impelled them to read literature. They also come to realizations after reading articles related to their problem at hand. The most salient code was that the teachers become more aware of the student perspective in the class, they could get feedback and, in the end, they could make a self-evaluation about themselves and their lessons.

Arzu studied the reasons for not being able to use the target structures in speaking of her students. In order to manage that she used observation. She devised a speaking activity which aimed students to use the structure relative clause. The speaking activity gave specific instructions and made students use relative clause. Following this, she used a checklist and recorded the correct use of Relative clauses in each student's speech production. After the study she realized, there were not big problems in the use of current target structure in speaking. However, what she realized was that the students forgot previous structures and couldn't use them properly. Therefore, in the reflection, she stated that the students may not have any problems in learning it but since they don't use it, they may forget the structures in long term. She stated:

> *I learned this; they have no problem in learning but they forget because they don't use them. It is a 4-hour lesson a week, and speaking is only 1 hour… they are also shy. …. Sometimes we need to break the barriers towards English. … to give self-confidence. They don't have trouble in daily words but they may have trouble with basic words. Although they have difficulty remembering the words which were even in 4th class syllabus, they use frequently used words even if they are very difficult. Because it interests them. There is no problem in them in learning and using even if it is beyond their current English level. However, if I do this activity one or two weeks later, I am sure we would go back to the beginning Arzu, IDAS).*

Maide expressed having made a personal evaluation after the research results, and deciding to approach more positively towards students. Yeliz also come to realize that she should take individual needs into consideration when teaching her lessons. Additionally, although she personally thought that she was using a variety of methods, the survey results from the students implicated otherwise. She realized the discrepancy between her ideas and how they students perceive the lessons. Fatma also realized that there may be other reasons for discipline problems along with immediate boundaries of the classroom. Although as a teacher she was aware of this possibility, getting the actual feedback was important for her. She stated:

> *I learned that the lack of attention of some of my students can come from personal problems or problems with friends of in the family. Although we can guess that it is better when you see it concretely (Fatma, IDAS).*

Mine realized that she needed to do more practice. She also expressed that she found the opportunity to make self-evaluation and see student point. She expressed:

> *In fact, I found the chance to make a self-evaluation… My view "how come they don't know this or can't do this" altered. I became better at looking through the students' eyes. It helped me to find different ways of teaching (Mine, IDAS).*

What she realized related to her class was the areas in which her students had the most difficulty. She expressed that she could see the priorities and the struggling points of her students

> *I could see the priorities and the most difficult areas of my students. The students have difficulty in the basic areas of English such as grammar and tenses, therefore this may affect them in building more difficult structures. They suggested repetition to solve their problems. I became aware of this situation in a better way. They also suggested watching videos with subtitles. Although, watching videos with subtitles may not solve their problems related to grammar, it may help them to have positive attitudes to the lesson (Mine, RRD).*

Aysel was one other teacher who expressed that she could see the student perspective in the matters.

> *I looked at my lacking points. There were my "rights" and they were reflected differently to the students. I saw it through the eyes of the students. I could look from a different angle. It helped me to make self-evaluation. I could get feedback. In a way it helped me to improve myself … (Aysel, IDAS).*

The realizations of Aysel after reading literature includes her defining basic structures related to her research. Additionally, her reading concerning the parents

and the social factors as the influencers of motivation directed her research process as well as causing changes in her beliefs related to the roles of teachers. (This will also be described in changes in beliefs code).

> *I chose the most relevant articles for my study. In the literature, I learned the definition of motivation. It is the force that makes us do something. There are different types of motivation. The first types are intrinsic and extrinsic. There are also different constructs in intrinsic motivation but it is generally the enjoyment of the thing itself (language learning). Extrinsic motivation is to want to study English because it will be useful for you for other things such as finding a job, getting a promotion. Although some say intrinsic motivation is better, the articles suggest that extrinsic motivation can be very powerful too and it can turn into intrinsic motivation later (Dörnyei, 1998). I learned in the same article that the value of something is really important in the motivation to do it. In another article they categorized motivation into 3 different categories: they are "life career aspects, integrative motivation and external pressure." (Kyriacou & Zhu, 2008 p.99). Intrinsically motivated students are willing to participate in outside class activities too. In the article Kyriacou, & Zhu (2008) I learned that parents don't prioritize their children's learning English and this may have an effect on their motivation. I also that the location of the school may have an effect on the success of students. In the study: Iwaniec (2018) the schools in urban areas are said to be more successful, and education and the expectation of the parents also affect the students (Aysel, RRD).*

Aysel read the literature to find answers to her problems. She critically read them and used them as to suit her purpose, it made her less dependent to others to find the answers. She searched and made autonomous decisions based on it. Aysel also realized the importance of sports activities in the lives of students and how this situation affected their motivation towards school and lessons, a point of which she was not aware before. This result came from the open-ended answers of the questionnaire she prepared and the teacher had never guessed this problem as one of the reasons for the lack of motivation of students. Aysel reflected in her report the following statement:

Interestingly in my research I realized the peers are treating each other negatively in terms of English success. Additionally, the sports activities play a very important role in the lives of my students and effect their attitudes towards themselves, school and lessons. The thing I learned related to my teaching is that the teacher is very important for students to like the lessons. The students who had high motivation stated that they liked the teacher and the content of the lessons. Additionally, the treatment of the teacher towards the students are also important. They feel that the teacher likes the students who are more successful more, therefore gives them extra duties in extracurricular activities. I didn't realize that I pick up students from the successful ones to some of the extracurricular activities such as individual performances in extracurricular activities. Even so I thought it as a reward for them. However, it affects other students negatively therefore I will be more careful about this in the future. I am aware of the situation now. Additionally, I am going to talk to the P.E. teacher about the importance of the team plays on student motivation and we should collaborate on educating peers to be respectful to others and care for other students more. Additionally, I need to inform parents about their importance in their children's success in English. They should say supportive words and make the students realize English is important for them. The reasons also showed that the student' daily life such as having to feed animals or taking care of siblings don't negatively affect their skipping lessons. The students stated when they are ill, they don't come to school. Apart from that they don't have absenteeism problems. Only one student stated that this student needs to work as an assistant to a hairdresser. I will try to help with this problem after I talk to this student. However, I need to find the student without making this situation known to other students. The questionnaires were anonymous. I will be very careful about it. If I had done the study again, I would have the parents as participants as well. I would ask them, questions related to their educational background and the importance that they give to English or how they support their children (Aysel, RRD).

Sevde also added that although she was aware teaching is more than just lecturing, it was teacher research which gave her the means to solve the problems in class. She described her realization as.

As a teacher, the thing was not just coming and going to the lessons. I was a bit aware of it. But teacher research was quite beneficial for me to find solutions. We could identify the

problem and could analyze it. It showed us ways on how I can find solutions to this problem. It was good and beneficial (Sevde, IDAS).

Sevde also transformed her views as to being an occasionally reflective teacher to knowing the means of critically assess the situation in the classroom. She also thought of a new way to solve some problems related to discipline and what she should do to motivate students via seeing the situation through student perspective.

There was something which I didn't realize. There were two students who have discipline problems in class. I was using different techniques for these students. I learned that my other students were unhappy about them. I have never looked at the situation form their view point… Maybe I can get the support of my other students on this point and with them I can succeed. Additionally, I realized that there were a lot of problems in terms of English. I realized I couldn't explain the students why we are learning English well enough. Maybe I can use some videos for it. The student who wanted to be a chemist, I should teach this student how English is necessary for the education, for the terminology of the job. I looked at videos about how to do it. …. I am observing the outcomes of the research in my class for a few weeks now. I also realized I may contribute to the problem too. When they are unmotivated, I become unmotivated and I am only making the problem more apparent… some of the answers that some of the students gave in the interview surprised me a lot. I could never imagine that this student would say it considering the success of this student. (This student said English was unnecessary). I looked at the situations in a clearer way and I examined them in an objective way… Maybe because I look at the situation differently the students started to participate in the lessons more. Without even actively do something to remedy the problem, with this little awareness I could manage that. When I do something oriented to solution, maybe things become much better (Sevde, IDAS).

Maide learned that although majority of her students could ask questions to the teacher, there were also a large number who felt uncomfortable asking questions when they don't understand. Therefore, she valued this research in the sense that it helps teacher to share student opinions. Aysel also remarked that although observation is in the normal course of lessons, this research gave her the means of statistics and a more developed observation skill.

> *I already knew that not only lecturing but observation skill was important for a teacher. I defended it. However, with this research I realized I improved it. Beyond the observations I did, in this questionnaire, I saw statistical data. With this data I can now speak firmly (Aysel, IDAS).*

Arzu expressed teacher research checklists are quite vital in defining the problems in class. Mine realized the importance of student perspective more, and she improved herself on that matter. She expressed:

> *Indeed, I was thinking of myself s a teacher who could emphasize with students. I was partly so. However, with this study, I can look through their eyes better (Mine, IDAS).*

This study also helped teacher to be aware of one of the professional development tools which may be of service to them in several ways. Some teachers reported having an awareness towards this kind of work and that they will not have difficulties in the future if they participate similar kind of work. The participants of this study recommended this study to their friends (Mine and Esen) and they wanted other teachers in their schools also participated similar projects. The teachers who reported an increased awareness towards research included Maide, Arzu and Mine. Maide stated that she would need a mentor in a possible future study but she would be more comfortable that time. Mine stated that she was also a member of other teacher communities in her social networking account. She stated mentioning this project to them and stating its benefits to other teachers. Arzu also reported becoming aware of the potential of research in identifying her problems in class.

As for the necessity of research in the lives of the teachers, the teachers also had a variety of answers. Sevde and Mine underlined the importance and necessity of research in the lives of the teachers. Sevde prioritized the potential of research for solving problems in the class and Mine highlighted that staying up to date is important for teachers. Therefore, she stated that research should be a part of the teachers' life.

4.6. Research Question 3.

This question was: "What are the reflections of the teachers before during and after teacher research?" It was answered through the following themes: "What is Research" and "Concerns Related to TR" include the answers to this question.

<u>Theme 3 What is research</u>

The reflections of teachers were important for the focus of the study. Teachers reflected on their understanding of research before they took part in the application of it. They also reflected their thoughts and conflicts related to research while they are doing it and after they have completed it. The overlapping ideas in the definition of research by teachers before they took part in the study is given in the theme of what is research their conflicts were given in the theme of concerns related to teacher research. Fatma underlined the action element related to teacher research. Tarık and Aysel focused on its role as a feedback provider. Aysel and Yeliz highlighted the teacher as the doer of this activity. They stated:

> *When I hear the word action in it, it comes to my mind to do something to carry on an activity and then work on it to see its effects. To theorize on, do these things and see if they happen. I don't know how much it is true though (Fatma, IDBS).*
>
> *I think is the research of teacher. Teachers are actively conducting it in the field (Hakan, IDBS).*
>
> *It is a study which focuses on my deficient points. For instance, I feel that I an inadequate or I feel that my students lack something. If it because I am doing something wrong or if it is related to my students. I am doing a long-term study to see it by trial and error (Tarık, IDBS).*
>
> *I think it is field related studies done by teacher (Yeliz, IDBS).*
>
> *Helping teachers to see themselves like through a mirror (Aysel, IDBS).*
> *Is it like feedback on their activities? (Maide, IDBS).*

Hakan, Tarık and Fatma underlined the agency of the teacher and their power to change or affect the things in classrooms by their definition of research. The teachers expressed what came to their minds when they hear the term. They made deductions from the name of it and they used their previous knowledge. The teachers were not sure if they definitions were correct. They needed approbation from the research mentor to check if their ideas correspond with the teacher research.

Theme 4 Concerns Related to TR

There were some concerns, suggestions, and questions in the process of carrying out teacher research. These were compiled under the theme of concerns related to TR and give us information about the process. It also presents the reflection of the teachers. Most of the teachers conducted teacher research for the first time during this online training. Therefore, in the application process, some teachers experienced some difficulties. Some of the difficulties arose from other types of problems such as lack of time or unwillingness of students to take part in a study that their teachers were going to carry out. The teachers also had several concerns in terms of the power of teacher research. After they conducted their studies, some teachers realized that even after knowing the roots of the problem and possible solution ways, some of the changes are too extensive which cannot be accomplished within the extent of individual teacher research projects. The sub codes of this theme are presented in Table 15.

Table 15

Concerns Related to Teacher Research

Concerns Related to TR	***f***
Problems of application process	20
Things that research can't change	2
TOTAL	22

Problems of application process

In the routine of teaching life, the teachers sometimes had some problems in the application process of the research. The unique relations of the teachers in this research type brings out some concerns. One of them the position of the teacher both as the teacher of the course and the researcher Therefore, in data collection some concerns aroused. Sevde questioned whether the students would be comfortable criticizing her if there are some lacking points in her lessons. In the development of interview questions, she also reflected her thought while preparing the most suitable questions which would draw the answer. She remarked:

> *The students may not say negative things so as not to upset me, even if there are (Sevde, IDBS).*
>
> *When I ask "Why don't you like English" they may answer: I do like it (Sevde, IDBS).*

The remedy for these concerns were found in the form of varying the questions and asking other determiners for us to define motivation in the questionnaire and interviews that she used in her research. Additionally, she assured her students that, the answers to the questionnaire is really for the purpose of feedback and the aim is make class life better for both parties. Additionally, another teacher conducted interviews for students to feel more relaxed. Her data collection process took longer than expected. In the first attempt, there were some other responsibilities of the

teacher related to school, in the second attempt there were some students who didn't attend to the lesson that day (Sevde, data from the private messages of the group members).

Arzu mentioned the difficulty that she would experience in observing group work for the use of target structures in speech, if the class were more crowded. She managed this data collection with her class but it was difficult, in more problematic classes she claimed that it would even hinder instructional flow. She stated:

> *I cannot pinpoint the problem specifically in a class of 35. While I try to detect problems in speech, there would be a discipline problem in another group. There will be chaos, thus effecting the educational atmosphere negatively. I did it in a class of 20 (Arzu, IDAS).*

Esen couldn't complete her study. There were problems in the application process. She had students who were 12th grade preparing for the university entrance exam. She stated the uncooperativeness on the part of her students.

> *Their motivation was too low. Their priority now is their score in the university exam. They are focused on that. They though it as a loss of time in the short term. I tried but I couldn't start the research (Esen, IDBS).*

Similarly, since there are other responsibilities of teachers in school, the activities that we planned needed to be rescheduled in some instances in Arzu's research as well. For instance, we needed to postpone several of the steps to a later date and then complete them. She wrote in the group:

> Dear Nuriye hocam,
> *As we have exam week at school, we have been very busy and I couldn't' return your message. Also, it will be difficult to perform this week's assignment. Even If I did, it wouldn't be fruitful as much as we expect, as well. In this case, do you have any suggestion? Thanks in advance (Arzu, Data from group comments).*

Similar messages came as the teachers fell behind the activities in the group during the exam times and science fairs or other extra-curricular activities.

> *Hi Hocam, we've been really busy with the exams, tests... :) As soon as we're done, we'll keep in touch. Thank you so much (Esen, Data from group comments).*

Since the teachers didn't know each other well before, there were some problems in asking questions too. Some teachers commented on this issue. Aysel expressed that she sometimes abstained asking questions in the research process for the fear of being criticized by others. Arzu also commented this may be the reason why the teacher didn't share much related to their processes. Additionally, associating research with scientific work, caused teachers to be more rigid according to Arzu (IDAS).

Aysel also had problems in narrowing down her question. As well as she reported feeling disoriented in some of the steps of research (IDAS).

Maide mentioned that she was skeptical about research considering her workload. Sevde also mentioned her other responsibilities and her workload. Additionally, Esen also focused on the heavy workload of the teachers which makes research engagement more difficult. She explained:

> *As a teacher when I speak on my account: since I have the last grade students who are preparing for the university, I have to deal with them individually, both inside of the school and the outside of school. It really is a very intensive a program. The situation as it is, I couldn't contribute to this research project (Esen, IDBS).*

<u>Things that TR can't change</u>

Another concern was the scope and capacity of research in being a remedy to the problems in class. In some of the studies although the teacher could localize and define the problem, the solutions were beyond their power. This made them question the ultimate capability of research.

> *However, there are still some things we may not do within the limits of schools. For instance, the students state that they*

> *need a language laboratory. This may not be accomplished easily but, it is good to see the necessities and we may work on thinking a way about it Sevde (RRD).*
>
> *It is good in terms of sharing students' ideas however not realistic in the reality of classes. The classes are very crowded. For instance, the students said that teacher should different activities, games. They are reflecting what it should be like. They are normal for classes of 20. However, it is not possible to do them in current classes (Maide, IDAS).*

What the teachers voiced indicates that teacher research cannot solve the problems which requires radical solutions in the short term. Zeichner expressed this as teacher research "is not a form of teacher education that will produce quick fixes for complex and enduring problems of schooling or compensate for the unsatisfactory working conditions" (Zeichner, 2003 p.320).

4.7 Research Question 2.

This research question was: "What will be the impact of Teacher research participation on in service EFL teachers' understanding of instructional roles and context?" It was answered through the following themes.

<u>Theme 5 Understanding of roles</u>

Another question of the study was: "What will be the impact of Teacher research participation on in service EFL teachers' understanding of instructional roles and context?" In order to see it, the teachers' understanding of their roles were asked them at the beginning of the study. Differences in the patterns were tried to be identified in their reflections and in final interviews if they existed. The codes which could enlighten this question were compiled under the theme understanding of roles.

The research in which the teachers took part was relatively short term. It took three months from beginning to the end. A big proportion of this time was spent on the training and the education of the concepts and the technical aspects of data

collection or analysis. The teachers improved in terms of research competencies and awareness towards their lessons, how the lessons were perceived by the students and the problems in their lessons and students' lives. As a result of these occurrences, some teachers strengthened some of their initial understanding of their instructional roles. Some of them gained new understandings. The teachers learned new way of approaching to the classroom and discovered some new information related to their classrooms, the relationships of students, the students' opinions via participating a community (Lattuca, 2002). They became apprentices in research administration and at the end of the process, they were more capable of doing research. This experience helped them to see their roles in a new light, in some occasions adding doing research to their existing roles. In addition to it, due to their realizations after doing research they expanded their roles on some other aspects too. These aspects were being involved in student daily live more, know more about their families and other conditions, be more flexible, try to integrate English to everyday life, acting as a guide in life to make students more aware of the career benefits of English. Lastly the teachers appreciated the value of student feedback and see their view point in designing and conducting lessons by experiencing the first hand effects.

The participation for this study was voluntary. The profile of the teachers who participated in the study reflected teachers who would like to try innovations in their lessons, who were willing to observe their students closer and take a responsibility in their teaching. Their relationship with research, helped them to experience research engagement first hand and helped them to form opinions whether doing teacher research should be an integral and mandatory part of teaching, thus whether it should be an extension of their instructional roles and responsibilities. They also realized some of their initial assumptions may not correspond closely with their classes so they must change some parts in their conducts. Table 16 gives a summary of the changes and the understanding of teachers.

Table 16

Understanding of Teachers

Cases	Understanding of roles		Adding TR to duties
	Before study	After study	Before/ After study
Mine	• Gives importance to staying up to date • Gives importance to students' perspective	• Gives importance to stay up to date. • Gives importance to students' perspective realizing her lacking points in the matter.	• Positive before and after the study
Aysel	• Give importance to students' perspective	• Give importance to students' perspective	• Positive before study • More confident after study
Sevde	• Teacher should be guide	• Realizes lacking points in guidance • Teacher should collaborate with students to remedy problems.	• TR should be voluntary before and after study
Arzu	• A teacher should reach every individual student • Guide in class	• A teacher should reach every individual student. • Guide for out of class activities too.	• TR should be integral after study

Table 16 (Continued)

Understanding of Teachers

	Understanding of roles		Adding TR to duties
Cases	Before Study	After Study	Before/ after study
Maide	• Tries to change behavior with a reward system • Repetition is important	• She partly agrees with student opinions	• Doesn't believe is as a separate activity. Doesn't favor writing part of research. • Partial positive after study
Fatma	• Before the lessons she tries to remedy student misbehaviors.	• Due to knowing students more, she become more tolerant and flexible.	• Become more aware of research
Yeliz	• Teacher research is very beneficial although it is not the teachers' duty.	• Doing research should be the duty of the teachers.	• Positive after study

Sociocultural framework acknowledges that teacher cognition is not fixed but subject to change with time and experience. It is of utmost importance to know teachers' prior understandings, beliefs to be able to see the developments in them. Self-reflections are quite important tools to understand the cognition and how their thinking changes (Cross, 2010). Arzu has been already undergoing some changes in

her understanding of her role as a teacher. At the beginning of the study she wrote in the community that;

> *In fact, my thoughts have been changing on teaching English recently. Not until few years, I thought, I could teach English as a foreign language but now, I totally changed my mind. I can't teach English, I can only mentor my students during learning process. Actually, what I mean that I can't be helpful in learning process without intrinsic motivation. Besides, even if my students have this motivation, I can only teach by leading them to use language not by giving lecture in front of the board. My job should be mingling among students and giving ways to them to use target language (Arzu, Data from group comments).*

She commented on the group about her problem before we formed it into a formulated research question. She wrote her problem as:

> *I'm having great difficulty in making my students speak during the activities. Even if I insist on using target language, they stick on using the same vocabulary or chunks. They always refuse using new ones and so we can't make progress. However, the students interested in English aim to use but most of time, this trial ends with failure. My research topic must make students speak English during the course and keep up this speaking process (Arzu, Data from group comments).*

After the study that she conducted in class, she reflected that the problems were not the fact that the student can't learn new structures or use them but the problem is in retaining them. Additionally, she realized that the students don't have difficulty in remembering the words that they hear daily from series or on internet in daily life eve in if they forget easy words. Therefore, she had a realization that she needed to make them use English in their daily life too extending her role as a teacher who is not confined to the class but to out of the class too.

> *I learned this; my students don't have problem in learning but in retention since they don't use them. There is a problem in that area. They forget one thing while they are using other. Because they don't use them. 4 hours of English in a week is not enough… we have to provide one to one support. There is*

> *lack of self confidence in most of them due to their previous experiences with English. They have barriers…. We can tear down these barriers with support and motivation. They have no problem in the structures which are a part of daily lie, series for instance but they are having problems in remembering simple words from primary school syllabus... I think our problem is not using language (Arzu, IDAS).*

What was in Arzu's reflections before, during and after the study was to reach each individual and the importance of intrinsic motivation in each student for the educational efforts to be successful. Additionally, she explained she discovered to potential of checklists to get the feedback from the state of every one of the students. It is quite important considering her understanding to reach each individual. She explained she could manage that with research.

Sevde pointed that a teacher should be a guide to students. She wanted them to take responsibility in their learning. She also shared that she was not directly using GTM (Grammar translation Method) but she directs the students in a way that they can guess the structure from examples. After the study, she explained that she realized that the importance of English for the future career of the students was not stressed enough, so she should guide them in this matter. Additionally, she realized the importance of looking from students' perspective and the necessity of working with the students to solve the problems rather than seeing them as separate entities to apply the solutions on.

> *Maybe I can collaborate with students in the issue of discipline. I realized that. I could look from the student perspective. Then, I also learned we had so many shortcomings in English. I realized that I couldn't explain the students why they are learning English well (Sevde, IDAS).*

Sevde explained her routine of lessons. She warms up students, introduces the content and adopts an approach of making students explore her being a guide. She acknowledged the importance of feedback to solve the problems as a routine or role of the teachers as well. However, she also pointed out the workload and the time

that has to be spared for teacher research for it to be through. Therefore, she suggested this activity to be voluntary activity to become successful. The teachers who really wanted to do teacher research could became successful she suggested. Some sacrifices needed to be made for it to be good research in the current juncture.

> *I think there was a problem in time. If I have time everything will be good. You need to sit and study thoroughly. You really need to be willing. There is that too though. You can make sacrifices. We are always complaining about time but with the sacrifices, you can manage it too (Sevde, IDAS).*

Her realization that her students valued her knowing of their levels and her use of technology helped her to realize that teachers should get feedback from students.

> *Other things I learned from the study is my students give a lot of importance to my knowing of their current levels and they reported that I know their current level. In the same way they give a lot of importance to the use of technology and they state that we are using technology at the rate of 81%. Similarly, they give importance to the use of different activities and they also say that we are using different activities. It is important to get feedback from the students to learn which aspects of the lessons are successful for them and increase their motivation (Sevde RRD).*

Mine believed that the duty of a teacher is to raise good human beings at the same time good citizens who can understand life, being respectful, inquisitive about the occurrences around them. Additionally, according to her understanding a teachers' role and responsibilities included to take responsibility in education. She explained:

> *I see assuming responsibility in education is my first duty… Of course, a teacher should do research …. She has to do it. Education is from cradle to grave. We need to do it to keep up to date. The whole generation is affected by us (Mine, IDBS).*

She studied what was the hardest points for her students to understand in her research. After the study she preserved her understanding that the duty of teachers should include doing research. She also added seeing the technical aspects of research made the process more effective.

> *Yes definitely (as an answer to should teachers do research?) especially your directions and your showing technical and practical aspects of it (research). I learned a lot on how to start and what to do in the process (Mine, IDBS).*

Aysel defended the role of teachers to be examples for their students. She stated the students take the teachers as their role models and they teach life skills. She valued the opinions of students and had the initial ideas related to teacher research as a form which may provide this at the beginning of the study. She participated in the study to improve herself. However, she didn't have any experience about teacher research. She even said that it didn't have a place at the moment.

> *I have never heard about it. I haven't done before so it doesn't have a place in my life actually (Aysel, IDBS).*

She studied the reasons for lack of motivation in her lessons. In the literature review she did for her study, she also reminded of the importance of parents in the lives of the students and for their academical knowledge. She wrote that in her research report:

> *In the article Kyriacou, & Zhu (2008) I learned that parents don't prioritize their children's learning English and this may have an effect on their motivation. I also that the location of the school may have an effect on the success of students. In the study Ivanić (2018) the schools in urban areas are said to be more successful, and education and the expectation of the parents also affect the students (Aysel, RD).*

When she studied the aid of parent and the friends (peers) in the motivation of her students, she realized that this was lacking. Additionally, the students' answers showed they needed more peer support, they prioritized it but at that moment they

didn't have much of these supports. Therefore, the teacher decided to work on that topic. Her understanding of her role is expanded by taking the duties of raising awareness in parents, other teachers and other students in her existing ones:

> *Interestingly in my research I realized the peers are treating each other negatively in terms of English success. Additionally, the sports activities play a very important role in the lives of my students and effect their attitudes towards themselves, school and lessons… Additionally, I am going to talk to the P.E. teacher about the importance of the team plays on student motivation and we should collaborate on educating peers to be respectful to others and care for other students more. Additionally, I need to inform parents about their importance in their children's success in English. They should say supportive words and make the students realize English is important for them (Aysel, RRD).*

It has been explained that in the changing roles of teachers it is seen that "beyond the familiar teaching of content and methods and require a wider orientation and greater understanding. The teacher of today is expected to be able to recognize the need for all the different kinds of handicap…" to learning (Frank, 1959 p. 122).

Maide defines herself as a teacher who focuses on educating the students on life skills, morals and a good citizen. She believes academic success should follow those pre-requisites. The ones who can't accomplish the life skills cannot be successful in the latter. She gives importance to repetition and practice. She told an example activity from her lesson exemplifying this:

> *First you read the reading to improve the pronunciation of students. Everybody does this. Then you make them read the same way. This way we are studying pronunciation… After we studied the meanings of the word in the reading, I make them read the passage in front of their peers. After they really are really saturated, we are doing a dictation work. I believe it to be quite permanent. I give stars in every activity. We have this star system. In every activity, their stars increase (Maide, IDBS).*

After research, she pointed out that, she could find the chance of self-evaluation. She justified some of the recommendation of students but considering the conditions, she concluded some of them aren't realistic. She added that it was in her understanding before the study. She remarked:

> *In these conditions, the reality can't be reflected. For instance, the students suggested different activities, fun practices or videos. These all reflect what it should be like. It is normal in classes of 20. However, it is not suitable in these types of classes (crowded). I saw that again (Maide, IDAS).*

She added seeing the benefits of it still, however admitting the limited power of research. She reported possibility of considering to do research if the topic (her problem) is suitable for research (and to be able to be remedied by research). She values sharing experience with colleagues and exchanging ideas rather than a research with its all steps. She explains:

> *Though not considered as research, the exchanges with colleagues the kind of I did this it was beneficial you can do it too, exchanges are effective (Maide, IDAS).*

Yeliz's understanding of her role also included the teacher's being a role model. She added the students take her example from her clothes to her understanding of justice. Her another understanding related to education is education is lifelong. Her duty is to make students love English, experience with it. Therefore, they can continue their education of English for the long term. She explained that research could bridge the gap between theory and practice and can be a beneficial tool for teachers though not a compulsory part of their duties.

The changes in her understanding related to her duties included that she should reach every student. Additionally, she stated that research should be a part of the lives of the teachers. It is also a part of their duty. She explained those as follows:

> *Though not a duty, I believe it would work immensely. Maybe there could be extra time for it (Yeliz, IDBS).*

> *I thought these questionnaires should be the duty of teachers. After all we are the ones who do the lessons, we need to do these types of studies more. I also realized we should make improvements both in students and in ourselves. I saw my lacking points (Yeliz, IDAS).*

She also came to some realizations about her teaching. She stated:

> *There was expected results. The school has some disadvantages in terms of physical conditions. Especially in terms of technology… The students were not happy about it. This stands out in the study. Apart from that the population is not crowded and the students are happy about it. I thought I was teaching in different methods but I realized it was not so. It was the surprising part. I thought I got negative comments on it. I need to be more careful about it (Yeliz, IDAS).*

This understanding was in line with her initial definition of the duty of teachers. She aims to make students love English and adding different varieties of English is consistent with it.

Fatma gives importance to being guide to the students. She aims to make them explore things on their own. She doesn't give ready answers but helps or makes them research first. For instance, when the students ask for the meaning of words, she advises them to look them up in the dictionary. She believes learning is more permanent this way. Additionally, she gives importance to the behavioral problems. She explained that firstly she tries to repair disruptive behavior before the education part. She stated:

> *Let me put it that way, first of all because of our field, we approach this way: teaching vocabulary and helping students to achieve self-competency in English. I try to focus on those. I try to attract their attention. I mostly deal with those topics. If there are disruptive behaviors, I first try to solve them… Yes this (solving distributive behavior) is what is on the fore-front for me (Fatma, IDBS).*

After the study, her ideas related to the disruptive problems became more flexible. She stated that although she knew these things, her concrete learning on the topic that there may be other factors in students' problematic behaviors made her more flexible towards them. She stated:

> *I knew better the students in this process. I started to be flexible in "I am such type of teacher", "it has to be that way" issues. I knew them better with observation, therefore became more flexible (Fatma, IDAS).*

After the study Mine realized where her students had the most difficulty. The students' answers showed their problematic areas. Mine wrote in her research report that:

> *I could see the priorities and the most difficult areas of my students. The students have difficulty in the basic areas of English such as grammar and tenses, therefore this may affect them in building more difficult structures (Mine, RRD).*

After seeing the problems if her students in a clearer way. Mine voiced that in the past she thought she could see the things from the point of students. However, after study she realized that she was not at the level she believed in understanding student view point. Her understanding of her role in the class changed and she saw her lacking point in this aspect. She stated that:

> *In fact, I reckoned that I was a teacher who could see from a student viewpoint. I was partially so. However, this study made me more aware of their viewpoint. As if I can understand them more. I gained the capacity of thinking like a student. I am now taking them more into consideration. It helped me (Mine, IDAS).*

The teachers gained some new understandings related to their approaches to the students, the way of delivery and their duties in school. One of the most common occurrences is the fact that the teachers could find the chance of seeing student viewpoints better. Therefore, they had experienced some changes in their beliefs towards themselves. They realized that they should be more aware of their students'

ideas. When they learnt their students' view point, they realized some of the things which were obscure to them before. Some teachers became more flexible after realizing other effects in students' lives. Some realized that their duties extend beyond their current lessons and includes other teachers, school environment and parents in a more concrete way. Even though some teachers were reserved in changing their previously held beliefs, they also had a glimpse of what their students think about them and the way lessons are being carried out. They even found them right in some aspects. Carrying out teacher research, pondering on the results and reflecting on them helped the teachers to be more reflective and critical towards their work. The teachers in whose life research didn't have a proportional place, appreciated the effects of research and some of them considered to add this tool into their usual way of doing lessons. They became active participants in understanding the classroom life better. Therefore, their roles as teachers assumed this critical reflexivity after the research process.

The teachers' cognition has undergone some alterations. They experienced and internalized some new information due to their social interactions in a community with others and with their tasks. However, their change of ideas wasn't dictated by the activities that they have carried out but, they have dialogically interacted with the new data and tasks (Cross, 2010). They fitted them into their existing frame of minds. They interpreted the new realizations in the light of their prior beliefs and there were some additions and small changes in them.

4.8. Research Question 4.

This research question was: "What is the impact of "Online Professional Learning community (PLC) of teachers for teacher research" on the application of teacher research and willingness to continue to teacher research (TR) in in-service EFL teachers?" It was answered through the components and the interactions in the online community.

In this study, the teachers were educated about the basics of teacher research, its originating point, ideas behind it as well as how to conduct it via a weekly basis schedule. In each module they were given information about a different aspect such as defining question, collecting data, and data analysis. Divided by geography, and not having known each other before, the teachers all got this training and support through the online community.

Representation of Online Community via Activity Theory

In activity theory, learning of an activity is integral in doing that activity. The object of doing and learning is also necessary to be able to understand that activity. Additionally, the community in which the content is learnt is also of interest due to the necessity of understanding the operational conditions and the context of the activity. The activities are context bound and shaped by our membership roles in these communities (Jonassen & Rohrer-Murphy, 1999). The organizational scheme of the online community is visualized using the Activity triangle model by Engeström (1987) in Figure 28.

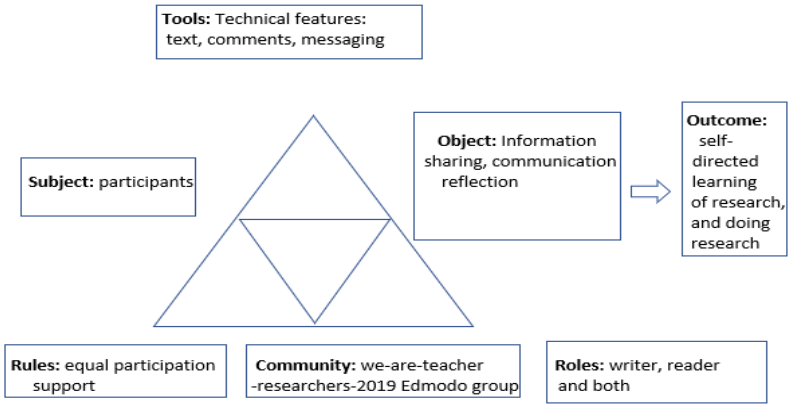


Figure 28. Representation of the Online community via Activity Theory Diagram (Adapted by Engeström (1987)

Use of Tools in the Community

There were various tools in the community and their use was different among members. While some members used some tools more frequently some others preferred different tools. The Table 17 illustrates the general use of different tools by different subjects.

Table 17

Uses of Tools

Subject- Object	Tools	Frequency
Teachers -to learn teacher research	Front page comments Section	Rarely
Researcher-to guide teacher research	Front page comments section	Frequently
Teachers and Researchers -to communicate related to research process	Private messages	Frequently
Teachers and researcher To do tasks and assign tasks	Assigned tasks section	Occasionally
Teachers -to learn teacher research	Library/content section	Frequently
Researchers-to announce new content	Announcements tool	Frequently

Mine rarely used front page comments section and assigned tasks section. She did the tasks via e-mail and telephone. She had technical problems in the beginning of

the study and via a general message to the group, she asked how other members downloaded and used the Edmodo application in their phones since she could only find the Chinese version. Several members (Aysel and Tarık) explained that the program works without problem in them. The researcher and Aysel gave some directions for easy download as well. She could download the application. However, in the later stages, he used the Edmodo website as a guideline or a due date organization tool mostly. She took advantage of the presentations and materials. When a new task or content is uploaded there, she phoned the researcher to get more detailed information about how to do it. She stated in her final interview that:

> *I couldn't benefit that much. I don't know if it is due to my age or not but I had trouble in following it. I talked to you, messaged you… When we discussed, it helped me much better. There was a Chinese version of Edmodo in my phone, I couldn't do it. I couldn't figure out where to write. Maybe it is good and I couldn't be adapted fully. The conversations that I individually carried out with you were more beneficial (Mine, IDAS).*

She also explained the reason why she didn't answer the questions of others or helped them as her not being accustomed to the system and the teacher research concept in the earlier stages. She said that now that she completed the study, she is more confident to help others. This also shows her peripheral membership turned into a potential full membership after she took part in the process and by completing the activity and learning it. She explained:

> *If it is now, since I could know the problems that they face, I could help them. However, since everyone started new in the group, they are a bit reserved. If I joined this project again, I could answer everyone's questions (Mine, IDAS).*

Aysel used the different tools in a balanced way. She used like buttons when someone posted in the group. She commented in the front page. Her comments were related to support and bond rather than asking questions. For instance, when someone asked a question, if it is also her concern, she supported the person who asked the question via indicating she had the similar problem. She also interacted ith

the researcher too in the front page. When the researcher uploaded tasks, she wrote that she would do it in a short time etc.… She used materials and tasks section and private messages as well. She commented that the reason why the front-page comments aren't used frequently by her and by other members due to the fact that they don't know each other well. Additionally, she also shared her fear of being criticized as one of the reasons for not sharing her concerns too often. She stated:

> *I hold back myself because I thought of what others will think of me. We don't know each other well. This group was like Facebook but since it is about our field it is more serious. Therefore, I felt the need to behave more deliberate. Therefore, I directed my comments on you (Aysel, IDAS).*
>
> *Time was short. I mean if it was loner such as a whole year, maybe we could become more socialized with each other (Aysel, IDAS).*

Arzu also used different tools in a balanced way. She was one of the teachers who frequently used the front-page comments section. She asked her questions related to research there. She negotiated her ideas via comment section in the group. She also used private messages. She used uploaded material such as presentations or sample data collection tools. She used task section as well. She also commented that the lack of front-page comments from other participants may be caused from their fear of being criticized or their fear of sharing their academical information. She also explained the formal nature of the group due to the topic which is research.

> *I won't comment on the subject since I don't know the people much but I am also member in different communities. Sometimes there is this abstinence in colleagues as if the existing problem is our fault. We think there will be an understanding that we can't do it well. I think it that way as the reason… Sometimes they may not want to share their academic knowledge too (Arzu, IDAS).*
>
> *The way of approaching things scientifically may be intimidating rather than just making personal comments (Arzu, IDAS).*

Sevde was also an active member, however as for front page comments, she didn't share much. She used private messages, task section and following the content. She only used front page comments when a question or comment directed to her. Figure 29 shows her short answers related to the comments directed to her.

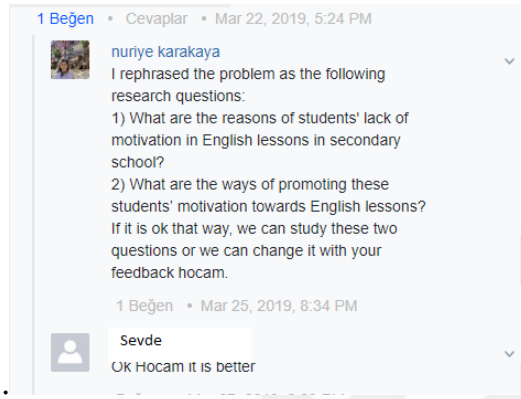


Figure 29. An example of Sevde's Comments

Sevde explained her minimum use of online community comments is due to her lack of time in her final interview. She also explained what she most used in the community is to follow the weekly content as a guide.

> *While we were doing the research, we could see the steps, what we should do weekly. We could follow them very well. When we opened the site, we could directly see the guidelines. In terms of information and awareness it was quite good (Sevde, IDAS).*

Fatma was not a frequent user of the front-page comments too. She explained that she used the community to follow the content and to ask questions in private messages. The private messages can be between the researcher and the teachers and between the teachers themselves in the group. She stated:

> *We cannot tell some problems out in the open. If a person has the similar problem, you can write to them privately. I liked the feature of private writing and the possibility of saying "there is this problem how you*

> *overcame it". or When there is a problem sharing in the common group people try to answer. It was also good (Fatma, IDAS).*

Maide also used the community to follow the PowerPoint contents. She also expressed that the fact that she can ask questions to the researcher was one of the things that she liked about the project. However, she too did it in private messages and phone calls rather than front page comments.

Lastly Yeliz also explained using online community to read what others commented and to follow the content. She expressed that: "Everyone had different ideas that was good to see" (Yeliz, IDAS).

Roles in the Community

Based on the interactions in the front-page comments, the teachers assumed the several roles in the community. The definition of the roles which were used in this study were taken and adapted from Heo, & Lee (2013), and they are provided as follows:

- Knowledge Creator: The users who post information and content to the online community.
- Information Organizer: The users who organize tasks, directs comments and guide interactions.
- Information Seeker: The users who ask questions related to their problems in the community.
- Self-reflector: The users who uses self-reflective remarks in comments section.
- Interpersonal Communicator: The users who share and receive feelings and thoughts with others.
- Lurker: The users who consume information in the community and read others' comments but don't contribute to the content themselves much.

- Research Mentor: This role was on the researcher of this study. She tried to guide the teachers in their research endeavors.

The roles of the teachers in the group are presented in Table 18

Table 18

Roles of the Teachers in the Group

Subject- Object	Roles
Researcher- to guide teacher research	Knowledge creator
Researcher-to guide teacher research	Information organizer
Researcher-to guide teacher research	Research Mentor
Esen(limited), Arzu, Aysel -to learn about research process	Information seeker
Arzu -to negotiate meaning	Self-reflector
Aysel -to communicate get and give support	Interpersonal-communicator
Mine, Fatma, Sevde, Maide, Esen, Tarık, Hakan -to see comments and try to find answers to their own problems.	Lurker

The researcher was the knowledge creator. She designed the content of the weekly modules (Lock, 2002). In these modules, the steps of research were explained in a detailed manner. She made the organization of them into weeks and posted them to the online community in a weekly basis. She also organized the tasks, decided on the due date extensions. She also suggested finding other outlets for the completed research. When a new idea seized her, she also shared what she thought would be

useful for teachers. The examples of these kinds of posts were illustrated in Figures 30 and 31.

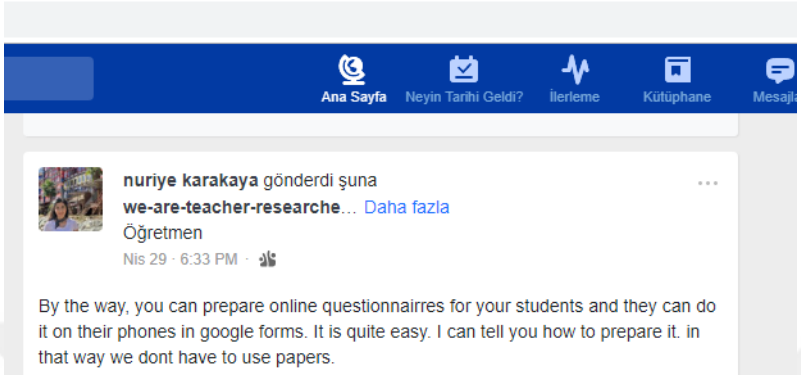


Figure 30. An Example of Researcher Posts

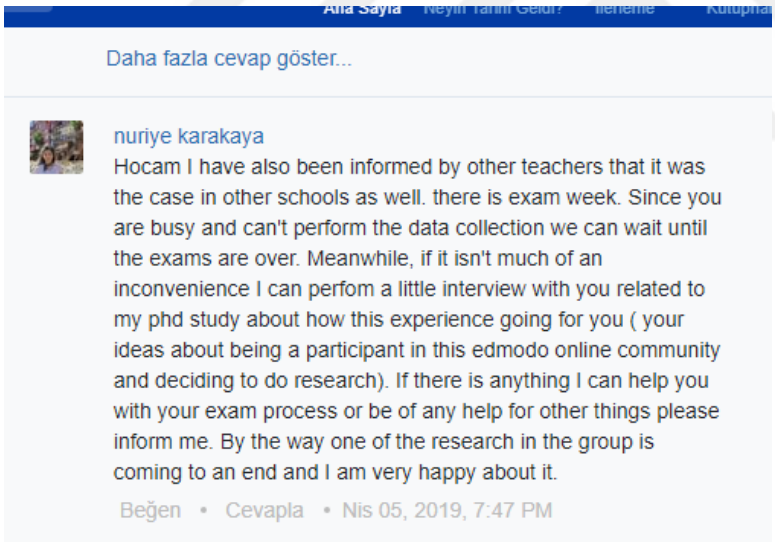


Figure 31. An Example of Researcher Posts

The researcher increased the awareness of the participants related to online community (Lock, 2002) by posting a welcome message to the group. It was a video message but, the written version of it was also provided. The message explained the aim and the uses of the community. Additionally, the welcome message was an

invitation to build the community together. An excerpt from the welcome message is provided as follows:

> ***Welcome to all***
>
> *This online Professional learning community is created in order to stay connected while conducting teacher research. Our aim is to support each other and make research process easier for each other. Although some of the main content is going to be uploaded by me (facilitator), this community belongs to us together and each member of the community can contribute to the content by their unique experiences, context related insights and with other contributions (Welcome message in the community).*

The researcher tried to create an atmosphere of the community via both task-based and social interaction-based discussion initiators and she both tried to use synchronous and asynchronous means of interaction (Liu, Magjuka, Bonk & Lee, 2007). Figure 32 and 33 shows a discussion initiator by the researcher.

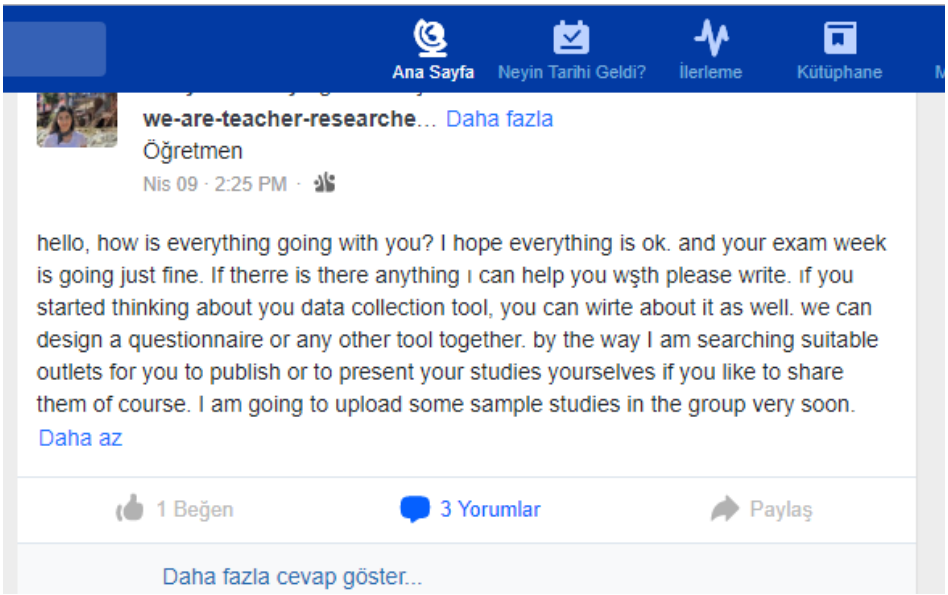


Figure 32. Discussion Initiation

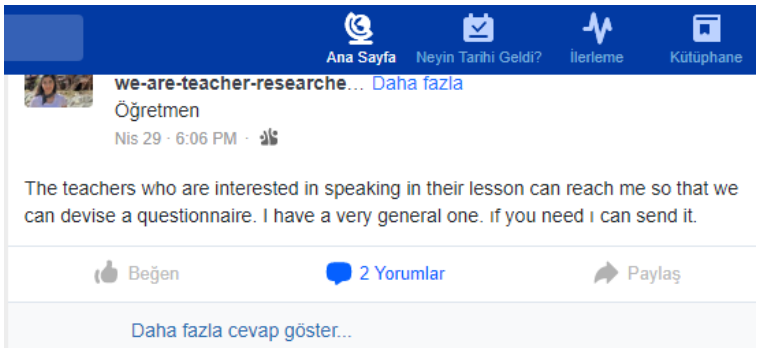


Figure 33. Discussion Initiation

The number of synchronous messages between the researcher and the teacher is as follows: Mehmet (56), Sevde (200), Fatma (53), Esen (11), Arzu (20), Aysel (49), Mine (103), Aysel (46), Yeliz (85), Maide (56).

Snyder (2009) suggest that collaborative tasks should be given to the members of the community. The researcher tried to initiate collaborative tasks such as forming a research question. The examples of tasks and Collaborative tasks are presented in Figures 34, 35 and 36.

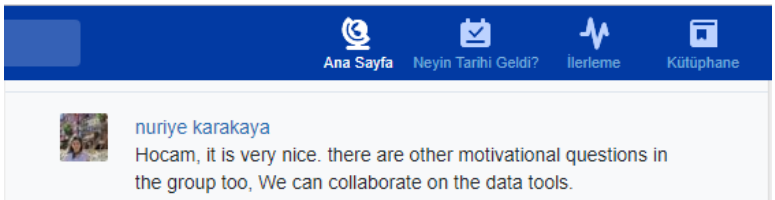


Figure 34. Collaborative Tasks

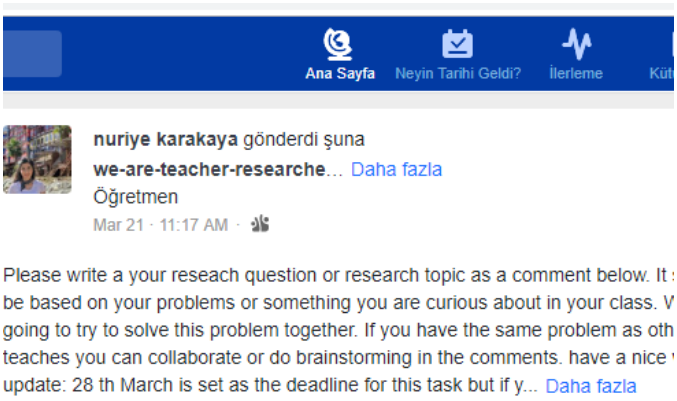


Figure 35. Collaborative Tasks

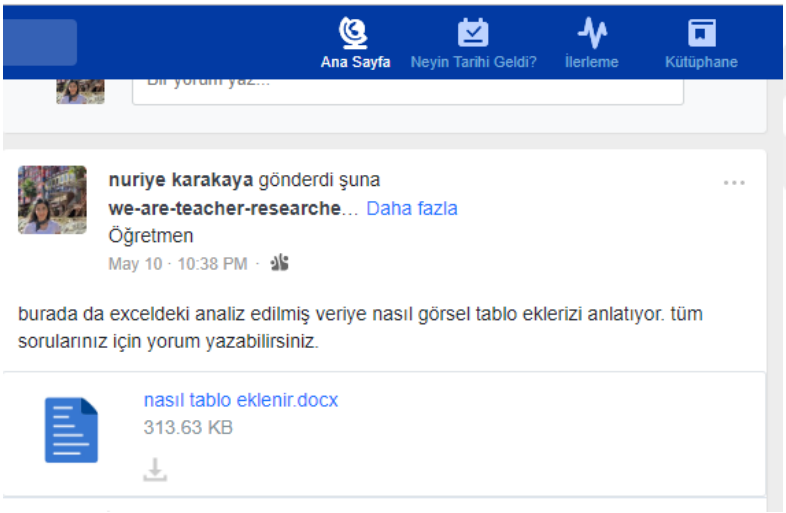


Figure 36. Tasks

(English Translation of the Picture 22: Here too, it tells how to add visual tables to the analyzed data in Excel. You can write comments for all your questions.)

Snyder (2009) also highlights the importance of encouragement and acknowledgement of success as the important factors in the building and development of communities. The researcher also had the role to assure that. When Mine completed her research, she asked the researcher to share it since uploading

was problematic for her. When the researcher uploaded the study, she acknowledged the success of the participant. She also frequently gave feedback to the steps the teacher had taken. Figure 37 shows the sharing of the research in the group.

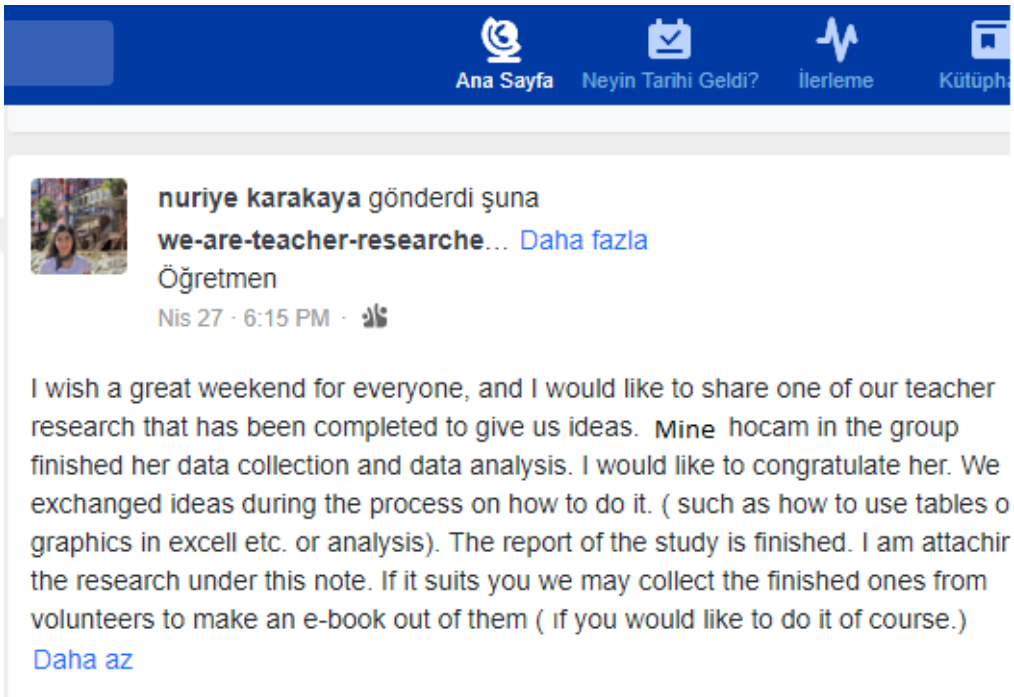


Figure 37. Sharing of the Research in the Group

Dikilitaş & Mumford (2016) also mention of the roles of the mentors in the research writing process. The same roles are valid in other steps of the research as well. The roles included moral support. This was assured via encouraging and praising the work the teachers do. The researcher had the role of research mentor in the community. The role of providing pedagogic support was assured by helping in data analysis, sharing templates to report their research studies or help them in narrowing down their research focus. The role of democratic dialogue managed via asking the teachers' opinion in every step and encouraging them to take the initiative and the responsibility in the research process. By undertaking these roles, the mentor played

a key role in the research process of the teachers and shared some of their workload. The sub code “mentor support” which will be presented under the theme of benefits of PLC deals with this issue in a more detailed manner. The picture 24 shows the sharing of workload of researcher by searching for questionnaires which would be useful for interviews of the teachers. There are some excerpts related to these roles of the researcher as research mentor in the Figure 38.

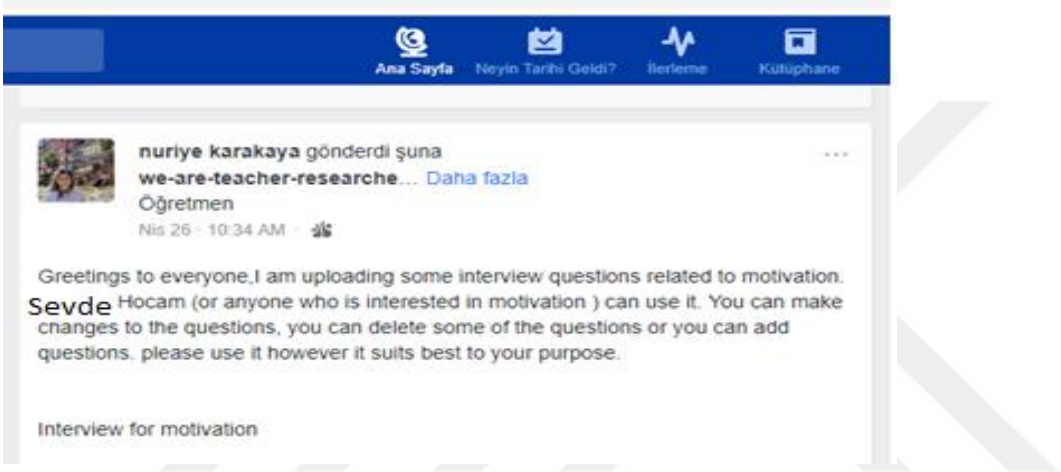


Figure 38. Researcher Role as Research Mentor

The teachers Arzu and Aysel asked questions related the points that they didn’t understand in their studies or the process itself. They are presented in Figures 39 and 40.

Figure 39. Questions in the Community

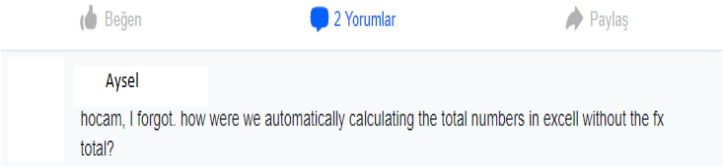


Figure 40. Questions in the Community

Arzu was a self-reflector in the group. The other teachers too did self-reflection as tasks. However, Arzu used self-reflection in her comments too. She shared her problems freely, asking and suggesting possible alternative routes. Aysel was more in the line of an interpersonal communicator. She used like button often. She gave feedbacks to teachers such as "good work", etc. She tried to give responses to the sharing in a short time.

Other teachers didn't use the front-page comments section too often. Therefore, their roles were in the line of lurkers. Yang, Hsu, & Wang (2019) stated that there were studies in the literature which asserted lurkers may play a more important role than it is initially thought. Although their presence is not readily observable, they can still play a role to transfer information to a wider audience. Therefore, they are also important assets of the community. As a matter of fact, in our study the two teachers Esen and Mine who were described as lurkers attempted to share the community with others on their own accords. They expressed the following:

> *Of course, I say to myself luckily, I had participated. I am also a member of other English language teachers' groups too. There was a question as whether we had been in a project. I mentioned you… There were lots of questions so I directed them to you (Mine, IDAS).*
>
> *Not only me, I wish my other friends would join too. I actually recommended them to join but they didn't. I wish they were here too and we could share information. We could make self-evaluation. It will be difficult just me (only teacher from her school) but I'll do my best (Esen, IDBS).*

> *Considering Turkey, we work in very different regions. There are differences in culture, socio-economic conditions… I mean I really care about the sharing and opinions of other teachers I mean more knowledgeable teachers. Why I care about them because, I am in Ürgüp, an Anatolian city, some teachers in Eastern Turkey who have more experience or teachers from big cities who have more opportunities can share their techniques. This is an ideal platform. I want to learn them. For instance, there are young teachers in schools who are working alone in school. There is no one in their fields in the school from whom they can seek help. In these instances, online platforms can help in informing them in the techniques which are to be used in research (Esen, IDAS).*

Theme 6 Benefits of PLC

Our study also aimed to shed light on the impact of an online Professional Learning community (PLC) on the application of teacher research and the in-service EFL teachers' willingness to continue to teacher research (TR). In order to answer that concern, the relevant codes were grouped under the themes of "Benefits of PLC", "Disadvantages/Lacking Points of PLC" and "Opportunities". Opportunities refer to the opportunity and conditions that the teachers reported needing to continue teacher research. The necessity for direction and support that the teacher specified could be provided by an online or other form of community.

The effects of online community were asked to the teachers and the positive comments and answers were compiled under the theme benefits of PLC. The sub codes of this theme are given in Table 19.

Table 19

Benefits of Professional Learning Community

Benefits of PLC	***f***
For future	6
Mentor Support	6
Awareness of Edmodo	3
Long term	1
Practical	6
Sense of community	11
A route	2
Sources	5
Private messages	1
See comments	13
TOTAL	54

For future

The importance of coming together with people who are doing similar activities was highlighted by teachers for their future studies. They needed a support system to keep them on track, to motivate and to assist in their future endeavors. They focused on the experience and the willingness to share for the desired features that they the people in their future community should have.

> *Of course, I could get help from people who have experience on this subject or an online group (Maide, IDAS)*

> *I would participate an online group for my future studies, if the participants aren't shy, I believe it would be of use. (Arzu IDAS).*

If I have this chance, I would definitely want to participate. No matter how much enthusiasm you have for the research sometimes you can back down when in the process. For me my motivation can get lost. I feel alone, questioning whether I am on the right track. However, if I can have online help… If I have a problem and no answer it, it affects me badly. I need to get information when I am stuck from there (Aysel, IDAS).

I would think it would be good. At least I could get information when I am stuck (Yeliz, IDAS).

At least I would want support from colleagues even if they are from another field. At least I want their positive support such as help in terms of motivation (Aysel, IDAS).

As I said before, being together with people who are experiencing same problems being troubled with the similar concerns and together finding a solution is indispensable and due to the impracticalities in an online platform is ideal (Sevde, IDAS).

Mentor Support

The teacher reported that they benefitted immensely from the support of the mentor while doing their study. Mentor support was one of the features which could be possible via the online community and messaging in this study. Arzu, Mine, Tarık and Esen stressed the importance of mentor support for the realization of their research. They also pointed out that it was the feature that they used the most in the group. Arzu, Mine and Tarık additionally pointed out the leading which may be necessary in the research process. Sevde pointed out that there was not a hierarchical relation between the mentor and the participants. Although she introduced the knowledge, they were together and equal in the work.

Of course, you gave the information as the project coordinator but there was not such a thing. I mean there was equality. There were no hierarchical relationships. There was no anxiety. We tried to solve the problems together, we joined forces (Sevde, IDAS).

One more thing, when you do action research you are not doing it alone but under the supervision of another. There is

> *a deadline for the things. I am a person who lives according to deadlines (Tarık, IDAS).*

Awareness of Edmodo

The teachers Yeliz and Tarık reported using EDMODO for the first time. They shared that they have heard some information about this tool but never had the chance of actively knowing it. Thanks to their participation in this study, they say they are now aware of the hostilities of the site and they may use it as an educational tool in their lesson for the students and their parents as well.

Long Term

Aysel thinks in service education could be more beneficial when it is long term. Online community can manage this by spreading the activity to the whole year or longer periods (IDAS). The online community helps teachers in several ways. The ideas of Aysel is in line of the idea that communities provide teachers with" an environment characterized by mutual trust, respect and shared values centered on a desire to improve pupils' learning. Such a community takes time to develop" (Holmes, 2013 p.107).

Practical

Sevde and Esen valued the support and solidarity of the colleagues. However, since it is not always possible or practical to meet in person, they defended the benefit of online community in this respect. Mine underlined the importance of online community's not interrupting their other work which is going on in school. Lastly Mine and Arzu commented on that they could get answers to their questions very fast via online community or online means.

> *The fact that this project was virtual, we didn't go to specific places at specific times and interrupt our work. It was an advantage (Mine, IDAS).*

Beneficial, information sharing corresponding is fast, serves to the aim (Arzu, IDAS).

Community

The sense of community, support and solidarity is quite important for teachers not to feel alone or isolated for the activity that they are doing. The teachers in the study reported this feature of the community which helped them to continue and succeed. The recurring salient theme was that the teachers could see that they were not alone in their problems. They were questioning themselves about where they were doing it wrong. When they came upon the same problems posted by the teachers and the hypothesis and solution alternatives that they discussed, it helped them positively in devising theirs. The teachers who alluded to this feature of online community were Sevde, Arzu, Yeliz, Fatma and Aysel and Esen.

It (the group) would be beneficial for future. (In the beginning) I thought if I am the only one who experiences this when I choose a research topic…. For solutions two heads are better than one (Arzu, IDAS).

Exchanging ideas with other teachers, reading their comments, seeing everyone is having similar problems make you feel good. In a sense you are not alone. It is not about you. It is something common, general. There were different opinions from different people about the solution and it helped (Yeliz, IDAS).

My problem was how to deal with lack of motivation and discipline problems. When I looked at Edmodo, I saw many other teachers who experience the same problem (Fatma, IDAS).

I had self-confidence. The fact that I have friends that I am together with in this motivated me. In the beginning I didn't have this level of self-confidence, I felt I am not alone. While I was hesitating if I was doing something wrong, I realized I did right. I saw most of us have the same problems. I felt confident (Aysel, IDAS).

The most useful feature (of PLC) is that I check if I understood it right. And following the sources on a weekly

> *basis and get courage from the questions that others had asked. Compare ourselves with them weekly and going on with the comments (Sevde, IDAS).*
>
> *I wish my other friends also joined. I actually suggested them, but they didn't join. I wish we could be together in it exchange information and do self-evaluation. It is going to be difficult when I am alone but I will do as much as I can do… (Esen, IDBS).*

Sources

Fatma, Aysel, Sevde and Yeliz commented on the fact that they could follow the resources on a weekly basis and it was important for them to learn about the topic and concepts. The sources were important in informing the teachers related to the foundations and epistemological roots of teacher research and how to conduct it in a practical way. The teachers learned main points related to how to define a research focus and turn it into a question which could be studied within the limits of time and the tools at their hands. Additionally, the teachers made use of sample research templates, sample data collection tools and guidelines to do research in conducting their teacher research in their contexts.

Private Messages

Fatma talked about the importance of private messages when the topics to discuss is delicate.

> We can't talk about some problems openly. Sometimes the necessity to share with a person who has the same problem can arise. Sometimes privacy is needed. This was also important (Fatma, IDAS).

There were also other teachers who highlighted that they preferred to ask some questions in private lest the others wouldn't think they lack information in their fields. Additionally, there were technical details and long explanations in the data analysis and data collection procedures. In these steps, we had phone conversations with several of the teachers. The teachers who sent pictures of their data analysis if

they were doing it right were Sevde, Mine and Arzu. Some of the teacher didn't install the App of Edmodo, they used it in their computers. Therefore, we needed to use WhatsApp to reach one another instantly and for personal messages. It also eased the transfer of documents and pictures. With the permission taken from teachers the pictures that some teachers had shared is as follows:

Tarık sent a picture of his research question formation process and his brainstorming ideas these were represented in Figure 41 and 42.

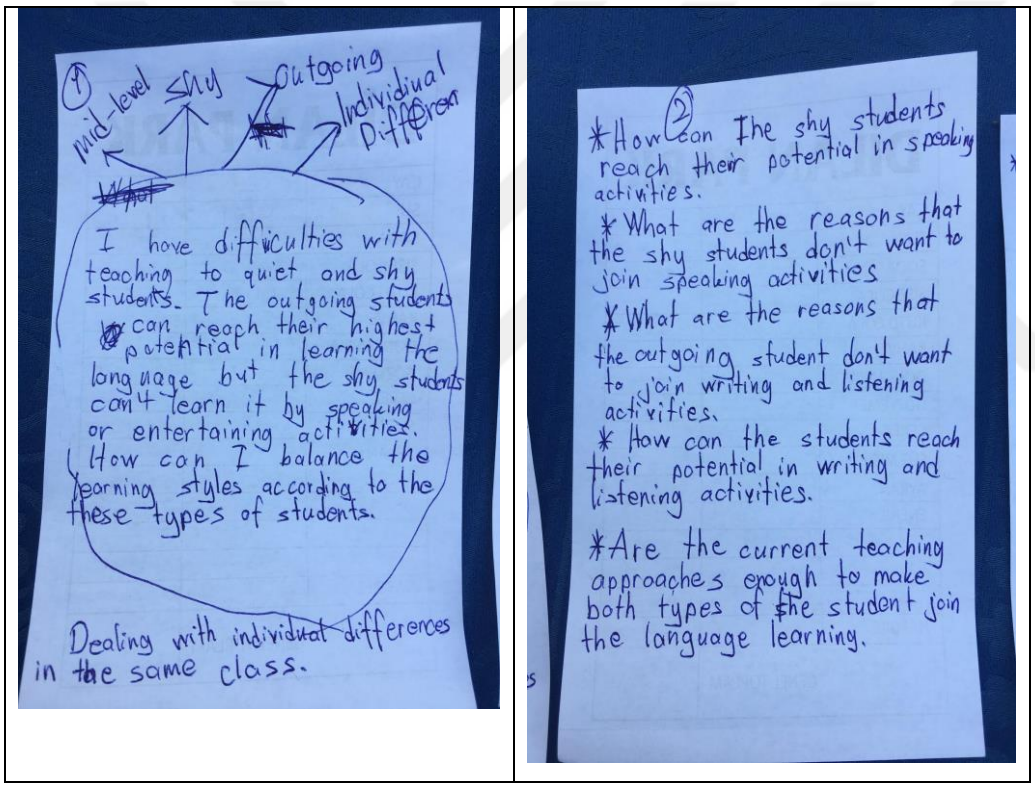
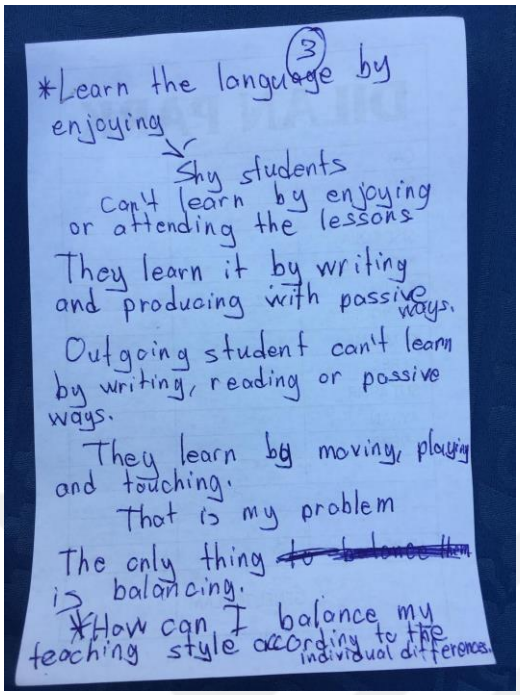


Figure 41. Tarık's Research Question Formation



3

*Learn the language by enjoying

Shy students can't learn by enjoying or attending the lessons

They learn it by writing and producing with passive ways.

Outgoing student can't learn by writing, reading or passive ways.

They learn by moving, playing and touching.

That is my problem

The only thing ~~to balance them~~ is balancing.

*How can I balance my teaching style according to the individual differences.

Figure 42. Tarık's Research Question Formation (continued)

Figure 43 shows Sevde's early attempts of tallying the quantitative answers

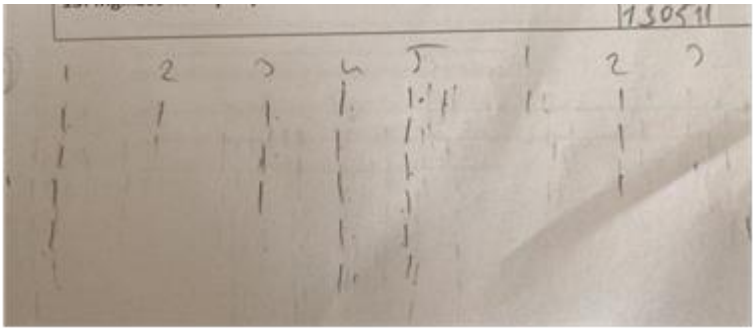
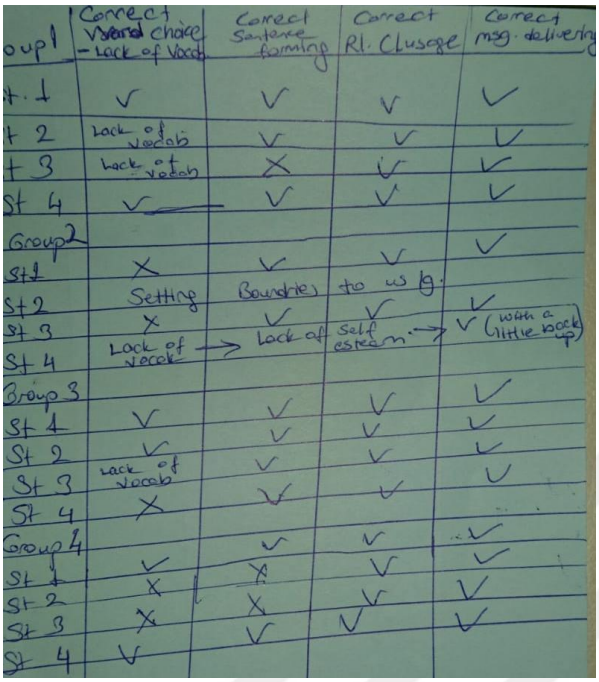


Figure 43. Sevde's Attempts on Research Analysis.

Figure 44 shows one of the messages of Arzu related to analysis.



	Correct Word choice - Lack of Vocab	Correct Sentence forming	Correct Rl. Clusage	Correct msg. delivering
St. 1	✓	✓	✓	✓
St 2	Lack of vocab	✓	✓	✓
St 3	Lack of vocab	✗	✓	✓
St 4	✓	✓	✓	✓
Group 2				
St 1	✗	✓	✓	✓
St 2	Setting	Boundries	to us	
St 3	✗	✓	✓	✓
St 4	Lack of vocab →	Lack of	Self estream →	✓ (with a little back up)
Group 3				
St 1	✓	✓	✓	✓
St 2	✓	✓	✓	✓
St 3	Lack of vocab	✓	✓	✓
St 4	✗	✓	✓	
Group 4		✓	✓	✓
St 1	✓	✗	✓	✓
St 2	✗	✗	✓	✓
St 3	✗	✓	✓	✓
St 4	✓			

Figure 44. Arzu's Attempts on Research Analysis

The approximate number of the WhatsApp messages between research mentor and the teacher researchers are as follows: Mehmet (56), Sevde (200), Fatma (53), Esen (11), Arzu (20), Aysel (49), Mine (103), Aysel (46), Yeliz (85), Maide (56).

<u>See comments</u>

The teachers discussed that PLC was helpful for them for that it provided them with the comments of others. They also occasionally commented on the issues in the group. Sevde, Yeliz, Fatma, Aysel and Esen indicated that to see what others commented on the issues were helpful for them. They provided them with a route with their research, to build up their research question. They reported in the final interview that, they saw that the questions in their minds were asked and answered before, thus made use of them. Additionally, some teachers got encouraged to ask questions themselves after seeing others' questions and comments.

> *I realized that the questions that were in my mind were already asked. I benefitted them. There were some questions about which we were hesitant whether to ask. We saw some other teacher asked it, so we took courage and ask questions. Or we could see the answers to our questions in another friend's comments Sevde, IDAS).*

An example of the encouragement from an earlier comment is shown in Figure 45.

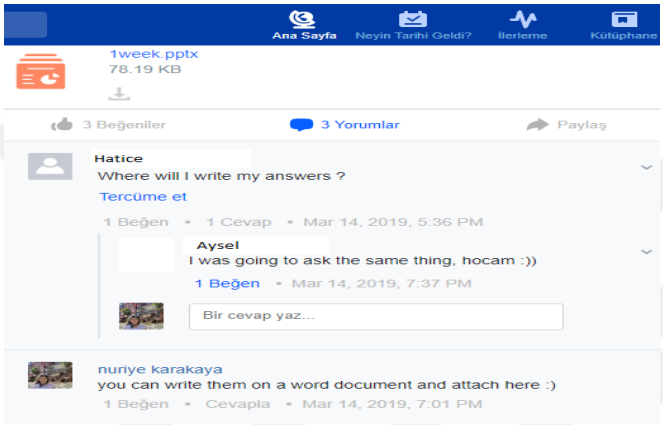


Figure 45. Comments

<u>Theme 7 Disadvantages/Lacks of PLC</u>

Although the online community served the researchers on many aspects which were specified in the theme benefits of PLC, there were some issues to be addressed related to the PLC. Additionally, not every teacher benefitted from the PLC at the same levels. Some of them didn't find it useful or couldn't use it. The reasons for not using PLC as well as the lacking points related to PLC were given in this theme. The sub codes of this theme are presented in the Table 20.

Table 20

Disadvantages/Lacks of Professional Learning Community

Disadvantages /Lacks of PLC	***f***
Short time	1
Experience in TR	6
Face to Face	9
New System	2
Technical Problems	1
Lack of Live Meeting	4
No division/ small groups	4
Lack of time	2
Fear of sharing	5
TOTAL	34

Short time

Aysel mentioned the length of the membership of the community as a determinant factor of sharing. She stated that if the community members were together for a longer period of time such as whole year, they may get to know each other better and share more freely which was the problem of the current community according to her.

Experience in TR

Maide and Esen prioritized the importance of experience in the sharing and interaction in the community. Maide expressed she would prefer the comments of

teachers who had a lot of experience in teacher research. Esen also prioritized the information that more knowledgeable teachers share. None of the teachers had an active experience in teacher research before this study which affected the nature of the interactions in the sense of expertise.

New System

Since the project is so unfamiliar, the teachers were cautious in their sharing. Esen and Mine commented on this issue:

> *They didn't (comment much). The reason for this is it is a very new system. Speaking on behalf of myself it was an activity I came across for the first time. It was so unfamiliar. I found it odd in the beginning. Mostly I examined your sharing and tried to evaluate how I can make use of it. However, since we didn't interact with other friends (teachers) we couldn't find a common ground and comment on each other (Esen, IDAS).*
>
> *If it was right now, since I could know the problems that the teachers face, I would be helpful now. However, since everyone in the group started new, they feel timid (Mine, IDAS).*

The explanations of these participants are in line with the notion of the peripheral participation which was put forward by Lave & Wenger's (1991) in the community of practice ideas. These teachers have experienced changes in their roles in the practice of teacher research. They were limited participants however; they envisage that they can be full participants after taking part of the activity and due to this learning about it.

Face to Face

Some teachers preferred face to face interaction due to several features it can offer but online community cannot. First reason was the difficulty of developing complex ideas or discussion only by virtual means heavily by writing. Additionally, the personality of the teachers also played a role for the preference of face to face

interactions. In the group, there was not a possible common time for live online meeting. Mine pointed out this lack in the community.

> *How can I put it? There are some abstract concepts which we can only reveal in one to one interaction, there are also technical problems. By talking in person, we can have clearer answers Mine, IDAS).*

Sevde also pointed that better ideas could have come out of face to face interactions. Tarık was also another teacher who commented the facilitative features of face to face interactions as to make discussions.

Tarık added:

> *I am not a person who could send messages on social media. I am not a person who can reflect everything in my mind on social media. Some people are better of explaining their ideas directly. Or they don't want to write because they cannot tell their whole thoughts. I am such a person... If I am to make a long discussion, I call and talk. I saw this lack in EDMODO. After all we are doing research, we are brainstorming. No matter how much we send videos, it is lacking since there is no one to one talk (Tarık, IDAS).*

Building of what Tarık said, sometimes complex discussion took a number of exchanges in the group and necessitated face to face phone calls. One of such a discussion was presented in Figure 46.

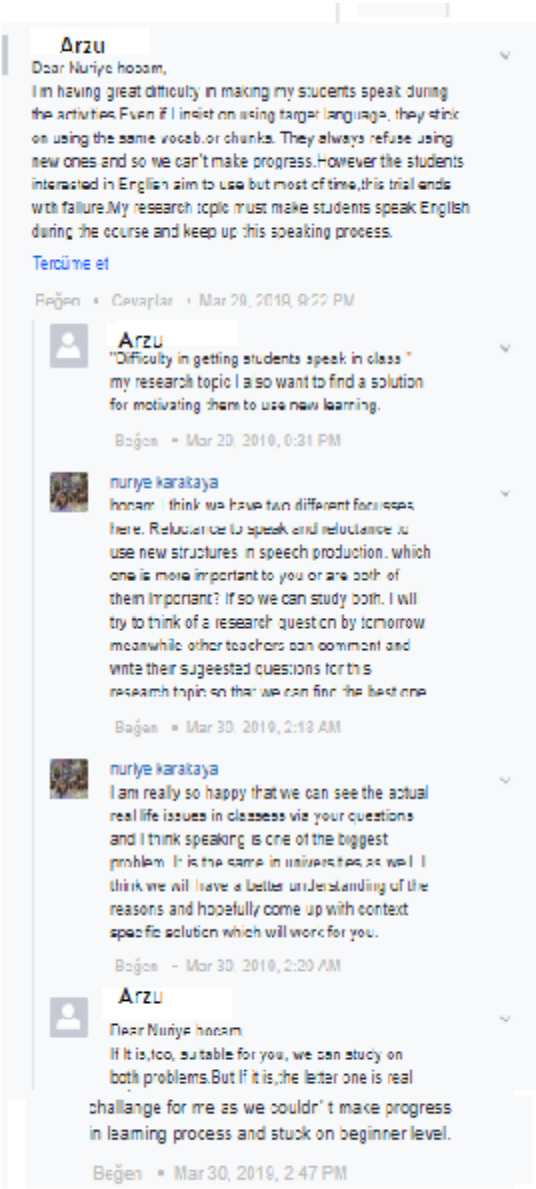


Figure 46. Discussion in EDMODO

<u>Lack of Live Meeting</u>

In the community, it was attempted to hold a live online meeting with the teachers but, it couldn't be managed. Except for one teacher, teachers didn't respond positively. It is shown in the Figure 47.

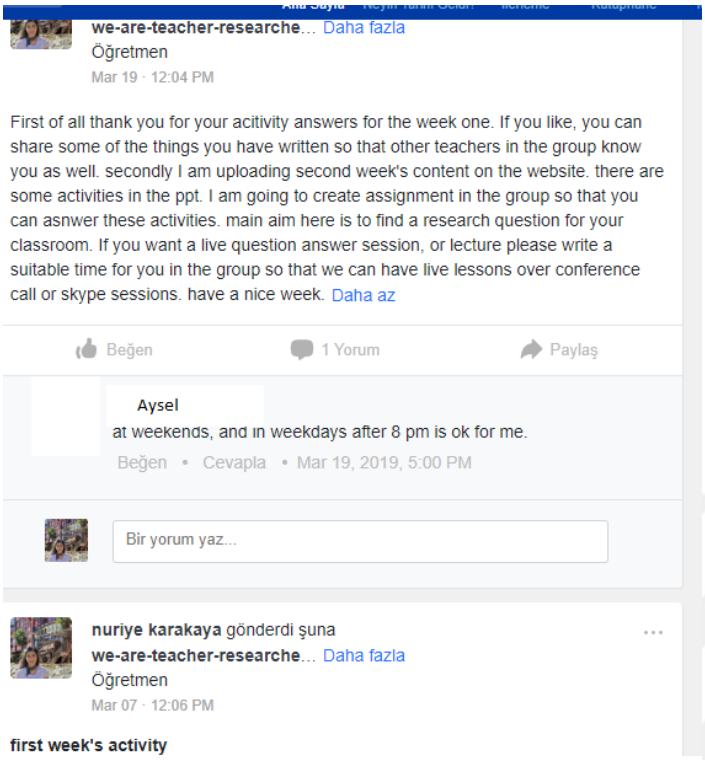


Figure 47. Invitation for Online Meeting

Arzu Tarık and Esen pointed out the lack of live online meetings in the group and its negative effects. Tarık and Esen stated:

> *There could be a live broadcast, conference for groups of 5 at specific hours… It would be an unmitigated research (Tarık, IDAS).*
>
> *There could have been video meetings or audio meetings sus as a conference. Being together on a suitable day and time for everyone. Breaking ice, introduce ourselves to each other. That way it is easier to comment on others (Esen, IDAS).*

Technical Problems

Mine had some technical difficulties in the beginning while she was downloading the Edmodo App to her phone. She voiced her problem as follows:

> *I don't know if it is due to my age, I had problems in following in Online. I talked to you, messaged you (Mine, IDAS).*

Lack of Time

Sevde expressed her reason of rare participation in the online community as the lack of time. There were other teachers as well who wrote on the community about their busy schedules. They indicated that, due to other activities in their schools, they would postpone some tasks and do them later than their due time. The posts related to lack of time were illustrated in Figure 48 and 49.

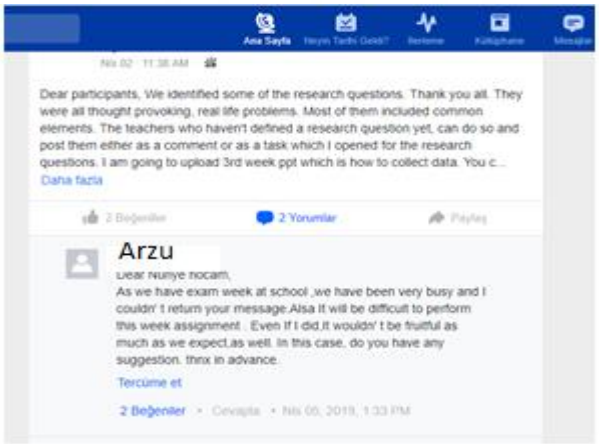


Figure 48. Posts Related to Lack of Time

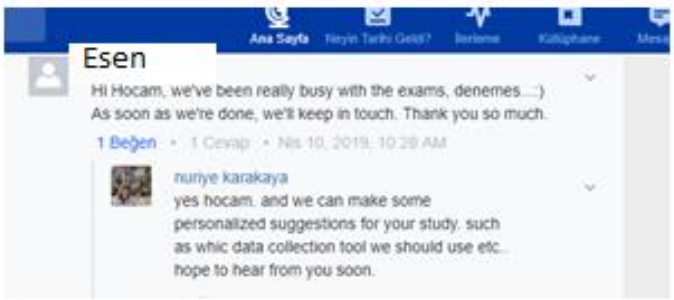


Figure 49. Posts Related to Lack of Time

Fear of Sharing

Aysel expressed that she couldn't share every point in her mind in the Edmodo community. The reasons included her anxiety about being seen as someone who knows little in the field since she doesn't know other teachers. Arzu also made similar remarks on the subject.

> *I hold back myself because I thought of what others will think of me. We don't know each other well. This group was like Facebook but since it is about our field it is more serious. Therefore, I felt the need to behave more deliberate. Therefore, I directed my comments to you (Aysel, IDAS).*
> *I won't comment on the subject since I don't know the people much but I am also member in different communities. Sometimes there is this abstinence in colleagues as if the existing problem is our fault. We think there will be an understanding that we can't do it well. I think it that way as the reason… Sometimes they may not want to share their academic knowledge too (Arzu, IDAS).*

Although online communities provide new possibilities for teachers, it should be noted that the work done within these communities are influenced by the trust levels and comfort levels of the participants in relation to each other. The participants' relationships are some of the most important factors in the success of online communities (Lock, 2006). Although the research mentor in the community can design activities to promote collaboration or contributed to the positive atmosphere in the community, some of the factors cannot be intervened.

No division

There were also teachers who would like to have collaborated in the research with other teachers who has the same interests with them. They would prefer to work on the problem in a collaborative way, devise plans and apply them in their respective contexts. Esen defended that the reason that she couldn't fully benefit from the community was due to the fact that she was the only teacher who had a language class. (She was preparing students to university language departments.) Therefore, the problems that the other teachers faced was a bit different from hers.

> *Definitely we could narrow down the questions. Some teachers talked about motivation, some said speaking problem. We could define them further and bring together the teachers such as special interest groups. For instance, we could bring the teachers who had the same problem together and make the connection possible. Everyone would apply it into their school …. When I examined the results of my friends' studies, I saw they didn't address me. They were for other types of classes. (The classes which have English up to 4 hours a week such as 9th grade). There was not a specific one addressing a language class. If there was one, I would benefit from it (Esen, IDAS).*
>
> *There could be tasks for each group and when they finished the whole of the research could come out (Hakan, ID).*

Theme 8 Opportunities

The theme opportunities summarized the conditions that teacher required for their future studies. Some of their specifications called for a support community and this showed the place of a community in the future research endeavors. Apart from that the teachers also demanded extra time and research's being more common as well as MONE support. The theme is represented in Table 21.

Table 21

Opportunities

Opportunities	***f***
Appraisal	1
Mentor	8
Sources	2
Time	1
Cooperation of other specialists	1
Common	3
MONE support	3
TOTAL	19

Mentor

Importance of the research mentor was a salient theme in the data. The teachers Maide, Yeliz, Mine and Arzu mentioned the importance of a mentor support and leading for their future studies. Maide expressed she would like to have a mentor but this time since she knows the process things would be a bit easier for her. Yeliz would like to have the help of specialists or people who have experience in the data analysis to get the best efficiency from the study. Mine also underlined the importance of a guide in her future work and Arzu highlighted the importance of systematicity. They stated:

> *Rather than the teachers I expect the help of the mentor. The answers I got for my questions in WhatsApp group didn't help me much. I got help when I talked to you on the phone (Mine, IDAS).*

> *Even, I like to continue it better with a mentor in a systematic way (Arzu, IDAS).*

Appraisal

The importance of appraisal was mentioned in the continuation of teacher research and the teachers' researcher identity by Tarık in the following way:

> *Of course, when a person became successful in a thing for instance action research, -he knew himself the students better at the end of it, the problems started to be solved and became successful-. After some time, this person says that I may use it again. ….and after a while in order to be appreciated or to come to better places your chance of writing those (research) increases (Tarık, IDAS).*

Sources

Aysel pointed out the information related to the process and the resources on it. She stated that she would like to learn more about the research to do it better. She explained:

> *I used questionnaire. Apart from that there are other methods I am sure. You also mentioned this in your slides. Maybe more detailed resources. Maybe there are some tools which we don't know but will serve us to collect data in an easy way (Aysel, IDAS).*

Time

Aysel and Sevde talked about the importance of time for their possible studies. If they are provided with the necessary time, they stated they would be more successful they shared the following.

> *Honestly, I spared some time to conduct this study. I would like extra time… and there is analysis too (Aysel, IDAS).*

> *The best opportunity would be time. There were big problems about it. If I have time everything will be better. You need to sit down and work. You really need to invest in it (Sevde, IDAS).*

Cooperation of other specialists /common

Having worked on her topic (discipline problems) Fatma commented that she could work with other specialists in the future to deepen her knowledge on the subject. She stated:

> *A school counselor can give an extensive course, and direct the process (Fatma, IDAS).*

Fatma also suggested it being a more common activity among teacher for the continuation of future studies. She explained:

> *Considering the equality of opportunities, all students should benefit from it. It should be common to all teachers even nationwide (Fatma, IDAS).*
>
> *I hope this reaches to a wider community of teachers (Esen, IDAS).*

MONE Support

Fatma also specified that the approval of school principals and with the support of MONE's dissemination efforts will be very beneficial for the future of these kinds of studies.

4.9. Summary of the Findings

The findings indicated that the teachers had some positive gains after they took part in teacher research training in the professional online community and carried out teacher research in their contexts. Teachers expressed some improvements in their self-confidence to call themselves a researcher. The teachers described themselves researchers in the sense that they searched for information and other ways to make their education better before the study. After the study, they had some awareness related to classroom-based teacher research and their position towards it. The teachers wrote research reports related to their studies, they could test their hypothesis and they could finish research process. Some of the research competencies such as forming a research question, collecting data, analyzing and

interpreting data were reported to be increased after the training and implementation of research. The area in which the teacher felt most confident is forming research questions in our study.

After the teachers completed their research, they came to some realizations related to their classes and could find some answers that they posed initially. They had some resolutions for the future to remedy the problematic areas in which they were informed based on the data and findings of their studies. Even if some of the problems were beyond their powers to exert, they became aware of the situation and at least reported to be able to partially intervene to the problems. The teachers expressed that the most beneficial effect of research for them was to be able to get feedback related to their lessons and could see the classroom live from the viewpoint of their students. The teachers could also get glimpses of other information, related to the lives of their students which are beyond the walls of the classroom and this helped to expand their views and change some of their initial ideas and consequently behaviors.

The teachers also experienced some challenges while they were conducting their research. The challenges included the problems related to workload of teachers and their lack of time. Therefore, the research program had to be re adapted according to the needs of the teachers. Additionally, the teachers had some question marks related to their power over students. They questioned that, since they were the teachers of the course, the questionnaire results might come in line to please them. They tried to tackle the problem that in interviews the students may not feel comfortable in personal questions that necessitate the criticizing of the course and the teacher. Triangulation methods and help from critical friends were sought to come over these challenges. Lastly the fact that understanding of the causes of the problems doesn’t guarantee the solutions, and the fact that some of the solutions were beyond the powers of the teachers (such as crowded classes, lack of lesson hours, lack of facilities) constituted another problematic point related to research.

After the study, some teachers believed that research should be integral part of teaching considering the benefits and the positive gains of it. Some teachers commented the value of its being voluntary since in requires enthusiastic teachers who are genuinely curious and who can make sacrifices (from their free time etc.) for it. Teacher research tends to be more successful when the teachers have the necessary motivation, positive attitudes to professional development, and when they are aware of what research is and what the capacity of research is (Borg, 2010). The teachers reconsidered some of their initial ideas related to their teaching roles and their contexts. Although majority of the teachers haven't experienced radical changes in their beliefs, there were some changes or extensions to it. Additionally, "identifying the beliefs of English teachers, and thereby enabling them to identify and reflect on their ideological position is also valuable because it facilitates a clear description of the research lens" (Pike, 2002 p.34). The teachers appreciated to know more about the personal and family details of the students, the relationships of the students with other students and the students' situation in other lessons. Some of them expressed being more flexible towards discipline problems appreciating other causes and some teachers highlighted the value of collaborating with other teachers for the success of their students. Some of the teachers realized that the students are not quite aware of the importance of English for their careers and took measures to eradicate this impediment towards their students' learning of English.

Online community helped teachers to learn the ideas of research in an organized way under the supervision of a mentor. The teachers expressed feeling the support of others in indirect way such as seeing that they are nor alone in their problems in the classroom. Apart from that the teachers didn't frequently address each other in comments or seek help from each other. Rather they seek help from the mentor in the form of private calls or private messages. Some of the teachers expressed the lack of online live meetings and /or face to face meetings as a negative factor influencing them. The development of complex ideas and the unique nature of face to face discussions were sought by some of the members. Additionally, the relatively short nature of the community (3 months) and the fact that the teachers

didn’t know each other before, caused some problems in mutual interactions. Fear of being criticized was shown among the reasons of not sharing much in the community. However apart from that, the practicality and the organization factor (such as due dates) and even if it is indirect, the sense of being part of a larger group and checking one’s progress in relation to other members’ progress helped teachers in their research experience. They expressed the importance of being part of a community and having the supervision of a researcher for their future studies.

In the study, the teachers and the researcher undertook several roles which helped them to be a part of the community of practice, hence constructed their learning of research. Majority of the members were identified as lurkers who don’t post content themselves but read the contents. Defining as peripheral participants, lurkers also benefitted from the community in several ways. Community kept them on task and they kept track of the steps which they need to follow. Additionally, some of them expressed the desire to be a fuller member in the future. They also announced the community in other communities to gather new participants. These actions show that they also had the sense of group membership. With their experience in the community, they negotiated meaning and their position towards research is constituted.

Researcher undertook the role of content creator, content organizer and research mentor which were indispensable in the research process in the study. She helped teachers pedagogically in research, supported and motivated them. She gave individual promptly feedback and assisted the research process of teachers.

Lastly some guidelines were identified and proposed to design online communities for teacher research. The research journey of 7 in service teachers who have diverse experiences in teaching and who are from various contexts were described in the study. The insights gained from this study may be of use for future online communities which aims to support and assist teacher research. Furthermore,

possible outcomes were listed for the similar groups of participants based on the findings of the study.

CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSION

In this chapter the findings will be discussed with reference to the previous studies in the field. The new insights that this study brings to the fore, the differences and the confirmations of other studies' results by this study will be synthesized and some further implications related to teacher research as a professional development activity in the in-service education of teachers will be drawn.

5.1. Changes in Researcher Identity

Our study aimed to unearth the impact of Teacher research participation on in service EFL teachers' views of themselves as teacher researchers. According to Stenhouse (1975) teachers should study their practice because of their position of the knower of the conditions in his/her class and the knowledge related to students. However, the teachers may be discouraged from research for several reasons. Allison & Carey (2007) specified that teachers feel a hierarchy that keeps them from doing research, not having academic skills, and research expertise they may feel that research is a realm which is for researchers only. Furthermore, the teachers may not have the awareness towards teacher research to be able to conduct it in their practice. Before the study, few of the teachers defined themselves as researchers. They recognized the potential value of teacher research and importance of it for their profession however they also acknowledged they didn't actively take part in teacher research. They did not have the technical knowledge and necessary skills to complete a research. They needed information and guidance in the starting point of research, in research question formation, in data collection, analysis and reporting. They openly expressed their lacking points. Although some teachers expressed that they looked for new information to remedy problems as their personal characteristics, they didn't see themselves as a researcher in the sense that

somebody who does literature reading, systematically collects data, analyses and disseminates it. These were the state in which the teachers were before the study in terms of their views related to themselves being researchers.

It was revealed that the majority of the teachers who participated in this study had some common characteristics. These characteristics were the desire to improve oneself, keep up with the changes in the field as well as to be useful for the students and to search for information to solve problems. This shows that although not in the sense of a person who carries out research and disseminates it (Borg, 2009; Levin & Martin, 2007), they consider themselves as inquisitive and looking for solutions and open for new knowledge.

Another pattern that was observed in teachers were the fact that some of them had the readiness to take part teacher research due to previous encounters. Esen mentioned the benefits and the satisfaction that she derived from one in service training activity which was carried out in her working setting and province. She underlined the fact that she was actively involved and did some tasks and it was the most beneficial form of in-service training. Similarly, Tarık also experienced an in-service training given by academicians from Ankara on new perspectives in ELT. Action research was one of the topics to be studied after the initial seminars but they never started doing it. However, he became familiar and curious about it and it was the triggering experience for him to participate in our study. Additionally, in Sevde's context there were other similar projects that were being done. It eased this participant's participation to our study. These instances show us that for teachers' participation and positive inclination towards teacher research the first step is their familiarity with hands-on in-service training and their awareness of teacher- action research as a first step to researcher identity.

When the teachers were introduced the concepts in relation with research, most of them acknowledged that it was not distinctly different from what they were doing in the routine of their lessons. They were using personal and professional experience to

observe the root of the problem or try to remedy the issue at hand. However, they disclosed that what they were doing to gather data related to their classes and other activities which aimed to solve problems in class were unsystematic, intuitive and- as they would confess after they carried out research - sporicidal and partial. Their awareness related to the possibility of this research genre and the practical methods of data collection were increased via this study.

In the literature, the major reasons for teachers' not doing research is lack of knowledge and self-efficacy in terms of research and not considering research as part of their jobs (Borg, 2009). At the end of the study, the participants' self-confidence related to their command of carrying teacher research is increased (Kitchen & Stevens, 2008). Although not all of them openly expressed or called themselves researchers, many of them indicate that they comprehended the feasibility of it. They expressed that they were really developed in defining the problem and forming research questions. In order to assume a researcher identity, it is of utmost importance to really identify with the question and own it (Postholm, 2009). The teachers who were improved in research question formation and who expressed having it as a part of researcher identity were Arzu, Aysel and Sevde. The researcher guided them in the formation but the problem was theirs, and they took active part in forming it. These results resonate with Zeichner's (2006) study in which teachers developed self confidence in their role as change agent. Their sense of control over their work and their self-respect increased.

Although teachers didn't always easily find answers to their problems in their teacher research processes, their understanding of the problem deepened and cleared. Cochran-Smith & Lytle (1999) defend that teacher research is more about asking questions than answering them. At the same time, research may bring out new set of questions with itself. Yeliz who stated at the beginning of the study that research is not a duty of teacher although it is beneficial, stated that research should be part of teachers' duty at the end of the study.

Additionally, the teachers became more capable at designing and using data collection tools. For instance, Aysel remarked that in the past when she was curious of something, she would prepare a poll with one of two questions. However, as she explains; she understood the importance of drawing the answers with skillfully designed questions which support each other and which uses triangulation features in itself now.

Arzu become more capable at using checklist. In the beginning of the study there was question marks and she sent photos to check is she was doing it right. After the study she reported having understood the value and use of rubrics and checklists in observing behavior and in the future, she should prepare more extensive and more detailed checklists. The teachers became more independent in analyzing data as well.

Yeliz reported that in the beginning she didn't fathom she could interpret the data from Excel. However, she could do it in the study and she is now more self-confident about the topic. Although there was information related to both quantitative and qualitative data collection tools from various sorts in the training in online community, the teachers showed improvements in the one tool which they used in their study. This shows the importance of applied education in teacher research education.

5.2. Changes in the Views on the Importance and Necessity of Teacher Research

The teachers voiced their ideas on the benefits of teacher research before they took part in the study. Their reports reflected the generic idea that "I believe teacher research is beneficial". Some of the teachers who stated that teacher research is beneficial did not or could not specify the perceived benefits. The ones who expressed the expected benefits were the following teachers: Mine, Arzu, Yeliz, Aysel, and Fatma. Mine stated research's effects on staying up to date (Bennett,

1993). Arzu specified its benefits as it helps teachers reach their goals. Yeliz underlined its capacity to bridge theory and practice dichotomy (Reis-Jorge, 2005) and solve problems in class. Aysel alluded to its capacity to help her to discover problems and find solutions as well. Lastly, Fatma commented on the fact that with research, she may see other ideas and other solutions to the problems. The main theme teachers focused on was teacher research's being a tool which could solve problems in class. The research classification of Noffke (1997) includes three uses of research. First improving and understand practice, second producing knowledge, and last one question the general system work for equality. The teachers didn't allude the second and third use of research. Only Tarık mentioned writing research and contributing to the field.

After the study, first of all, the teachers' awareness towards teacher research increased and they reported their positive associations related to its feasibility. They stated that, in the future, they would be more conscious of steps and some of them said, they can conduct teacher research with little guidance.

After the study, the teachers mainly stressed the importance of research as a tool to see student perspective. The teachers highlighted having a broader a more complete view of the classroom. This supported the results of Tabachnick & Zeichner (1999). The teachers (Aysel, Fatma, Mine, Sevde etc.) could specifically see the problems and the statistics in their classes. They could conceptualize their practice in a more informed way. Informed decisions which were driven by the data from classroom were asserted as one of the features of research in literature (Beverly, 1993; Olsen, 1990). Allwright (2005) also defends that attaching only the problem-solving label to the classroom-based research and emphasizing this aspect might be "shortsighted and counterproductive" (p. 353). For these reasons, he emphasizes the effect of understanding quality of life in classrooms as the focus of classroom-based research or as he calls them exploratory practice. At the end of the research studies that the teachers carried out, the teachers' roles as the learners who would like to make sense of classroom life became evident.

The teachers also stated that they could have the chance of self-evaluation. These findings resonate with the earlier studies in terms of benefits of teacher research. Noffke & Zeichner (1987) comment on the increased awareness on the affairs of the classroom as the benefits of teacher research. The teachers' research experience provided them with that. The teachers realized previously unnoticed problems that are caused by their teaching or the students. Yeliz expressed that "I realized that I need to direct my teaching to personal needs. Generally, I taught towards the majority, I needed to focus on individual needs." She also realized that she should be using more variety in her lessons to her surprise. Arzu realized the problems of her students related to not integrating target structures into their English speech, didn't lie in the learning phase, but since the students don't use structures, they can't build up a repertoire. Sevde also realized that she couldn't make students realize the importance of English for their future career. The majority of teachers learned something new related to their class which they missed or did not think before. Their awareness toward their classrooms is increased. Zeichner (2006) draw attention to the research's capacity to help teacher realize the discrepancies between their ideas and realizations in class.

5.2. Changes in Beliefs Related to Teaching

It has been stated in the literature that, the teachers who take part in research promote "new roles, as their self-image changes over time" (Dikilitaş & Yaylı 2018, p. 416). The teachers shared their understanding of a teachers' roles in terms of their professions. They reported their ideas related to teaching and learning. Their reflections revealed what the issues that they attached importance the most were while they were teaching their subject matter. The prominent theme among teachers were the teachers' duty to raise students who are aware of the rights of others, respectful, inquisitive. Sevde prioritized good morals, Fatma teaching of other cultures, Aysel and Yeliz teaching life skills. The majority of teachers believed teachers should be role models to students since they are sensitive and are taking the teachers as examples.

When we scrutinized their daily routines, the teachers disclosed more details related to their ideas of education. Fatma gave importance to discipline, Yeliz aimed to make students love English so that they can continue their learning as a lifelong process. Arzu's goal was to reach each individual and make changes in every one of her students. She also admitted the importance of intrinsic motivation in reaching to each individual. She added that although it is quite difficult to make changes in students who are poorly motivated, it is not impossible to do so. Some of the teachers had some realizations after research and they had changed some of their earlier views related to class, students and the nature of education. Some of the teachers saw teacher research as a means to accomplish their earlier views related to classroom. Some of the teachers strengthened their understanding related to their duties and roles in school.

English teachers' views of their subjects were identified around different models (Goodwyn & Findlay, 1999). When these models are taken as a loose framework to understand the views of teachers in our study, we encounter the manifestation. Adapted from the model, we can state that there are some models that the teachers in our study use as their duty as teachers. Such as viewing communication outside of the school as a goal is one of them. (For instance: Tarık). Some teachers such as Sevde adopted the view of "responsibility of English teachers to prepare children for the language demands of adult life" (Goodwyn & Findlay, 1999 p.30) after they took part in the study (such as importance of English in future careers).

Protherough & Atkinson (1992) identified in their study the changes of styles of teaching among teachers. The change was from "authoritarian" to "facilitator" and partner style. This was also the case in our study. Initially the teachers in the study had already expressed their teaching philosophy as assuming the role of a guide who helps students to discover meaning and construct their own learning. Some teachers expressed a more balanced approach too. Yeliz and Mine also pointed the tolerance and intercultural approaches of English teachers as the way they approach to the education (Protherough & Atkinson, 1992). After the teachers conducted their

teacher research, it is identified that they experienced some changes which was mentioned in Protherough & Atkinson (1992). After the study some teachers became “more conscious to organize activities to meet individual needs” such as Yeliz and Arzu (Protherough & Atkinson, 1992 p. 396). Sevde changed her views towards “helping pupils to understand what they are learning and why” (Protherough & Atkinson, 1992 p. 396). The teachers also become more aware of the keeping records of every student progress in a more detailed way. (Arzu, Aysel, Sevde).

The teachers increased their professional skills. They had changes in their beliefs, and become more aware of the issues concerning their students and their teaching (Noffke & Zeichner, 1987). Fatma declared that it was important for her to solve the disruptive behaviors first in class. After that, she said the teaching comes. In her understanding of the role as a teacher, she needed to make sure that there were no discipline problems in class. When she took part of the study, she saw the other possible reasons for disruptive behavior. These reasons which may be tied to disruptive behavior were related to friends and family along with the classroom dynamics and actually it was the case for some of the students in her class. After realizing this, she stated that she became more aware of these issues. This awareness helped her to be more flexible. She reported realizing there may not be a mold which would hold true to every situation and every class is unique. She reported in the final interview that she changed her views that I am that type of teacher, I do this attitude but appreciate the uniqueness of the situation and be more flexible.

Arzu’s belief related to education could be summarized with these two sentences: “We can reach every student, and it is always possible to teach one time more”. She shaped her education philosophy around these two phrases. Additionally, she appreciates the importance of intrinsic motivation to reach the students. She aimed to investigate the reasons why her students can’t use the target structures that she teaches them in their speech production. She designed speaking lessons in which she used activities which specifically required the use of the chosen target structure

(relative clauses and target vocabulary). She observed each student in their group work, marking each one's performance according to a rubric which was specified beforehand. After the observation, she realized that the production of the target structures was not the main problem in students. Her awareness related to her classroom improved (Noffke & Zeichner, 1987). She developed personal practical theories. She underlined the importance of practice and everyday use so as not to forget the structures and a built-up repertoire of words of structures. She reported that research or checklists can be a good means to check each student's current position and to reach them in the end. Therefore, she expanded her understanding of her role by adding the use of rubrics or checklists to keep track of each student's performance.

Aysel added into her understanding that she needs to collaborate with other teachers in school and parents for her students' success. Her views on teaching schooling and society improved (Noffke & Zeichner, 1987). She studied the effect of motivation and the results showed that there were some problematic issues in the school atmosphere. The peers were affecting each other negatively and other school activities were affecting the motivation of the students too. After she detected the possible causes, she made some resolutions for the future. She aimed to collaborate with other stakeholders (parents and other teachers) for her students' motivation. She also wrote I her reflection that if she had the chance to do the research one more time, she would have included parents too. After the study she appreciated the importance of parents' education level, views towards education and other socio-economic conditions which may be linked to motivation in school and she would like to take active role as a teacher in eradicating the problems in those areas. She became more aware of the transformative power of teachers. Giroux (2002) expressed the duty of teachers as transformative intellectuals who question their roles in the conditions of schools and the larger aims of education. This instance was an example of it.

There were also teachers who could identify the problem, have a chance of self-evaluation but did not change her current beliefs related to how the education should take place. Maide reported working long hours in a week without breaks and the fact that the classes are crowded. She made use of mechanical repetition activities. Reading the passage several times to attain correct pronunciation and she sometimes makes dictation work. She reads and the students write the passage to associate their pronunciation with their spelling. Although, it is just a small representation of her lessons, from the reflections and other data in interviews, it is concluded that reading, solving question, listening and repetition are some of the major activities in class. When she analyzed the data from students, she realized the students demanded more fun activities such as games and videos. Although Maide acknowledge that the students' desires are justified and what should be in classes, due to the physical restrictions the mentioned activities are the best ones to get the best performance. This finding supports the assentation that Zeichner (2003) made: "It is not a form of teacher education that will produce quick fixes for complex and enduring problems of schooling or compensate for the unsatisfactory working conditions." (p. 320).

The mentioned changes in the teachers corresponds the benefits of teacher research which were stated by Noffke & Zeichner (1987):

- development of professional skills and roles
- increase in classroom awareness
- changes in personal beliefs
- development of practical theories
- broadened views on teaching schooling and society.

5.3. Effect of Professional Online Community on Teacher Research

This study investigated the impact of an online professional learning community on the application of teacher research and willingness to continue to teacher research in in-service EFL teachers. The community is designed according to the principles listed in literature. The principles included that the online community should be both task-based and there should be social activities (Yuan & Kim, 2014). Additionally, it was pointed that task-based activities are preferred by teachers (Karakaya & Baser, 2014). Lastly for the efficiency of professional activities specific instruction are necessary (Mitchell, 2013). The community was designed with these principles. There were specifically designed tasks for each week and questions were posted by the mentor to initiate conversation. The teachers benefitted from online community to different extents. The main use of online community among teachers was to see other comments and compare their progress to determine whether they were on the same track. The center of posts and discussions were the research mentor rather than other teachers. This finding was consistent with the finding of Judy Kamalodeen & Jameson-Charles (2016). Additionally, similar to their study, the participants in the study were mostly content consumers and window shoppers.

Additionally, they reported experiencing the sense of community. With the presence and comments of other teachers, they were more self-confident in their research as well as in the initiation process. Although the majority of the teachers didn't share their concerns or problems in the common comments section, they took courage from the ones who did so while defining their research questions and saw that the problems were not specific to them and their classes only. This gave them the necessary propelling source in the study. Aysel underlined community was a motivation source for her to complete the study. Several other teachers also focused on the fact that by seeing others struggle on the same issues, they stopped questioning their skills as a teacher but viewed the problems as normal routine of teaching and heartened to seek solutions with others within the sense of solidarity.

The teachers who reported this benefit were Sevde, Arzu, Yeliz, Fatma and Aysel. Arzu stated that before anybody posted, she though she if she was the only one to experience the stated problem. Fatma also pointed that her problem was common in other teachers as well. Yeliz pointed out the importance of feeling good after seeing she was not alone in her problems. Aysel and Sevde reported checking if she was doing right. They felt the feeling of not being alone. Some of the benefits of online communities which were frequently cited were combatting isolation, feeling sense of comradery and emotional support (Hur & Brush, 2009; Duncan- Howell, 2010). Our study confirmed these needs and benefits of online community in meeting those needs.

Additionally, the teachers revealed that they made use of the mentor support commonly in the professional online community. The teachers stressed that they benefitted from the directions, leading and support of the mentor. Sevde expressed she really profited by the mentor support and that she did not feel any feeling of a hierarchical relationship. The roles of the participants were integral to their learning and becoming the members of researcher community of practice. Arzu stressed that even though she couldn't get much help from other members of community in terms of support in the progress of her research, she expressed benefitting from mentor immensely. Mine and Esen were the teachers who stressed that they couldn't feel the support of other teachers in their technical problems or research leading struggles but, that they benefitted the information and assistance provided by the research mentor. Tarık also mentioned the effect of deadlines which could be provided by a supervisor that helps him to keep on track. The importance of research mentor is indispensable in the research process and it has an important role in the sustainment of future studies. These findings supported the study of Dikilitaş, & Wyatt (2018), and Dikilitaş & Mumford (2016). In addition to these findings the role of researcher as the content organizer was important in the sustainment of the community (Yuan & Kim, 2014). The roles of the teachers varied in the group. There were information seekers, interpersonal communicators, self-reflective participants and lurkers. Each teacher experienced the community of practice based

on their roles and at the end of the study some of the lurkers showed a sense of fuller participant role rather than peripheral participant. This indicated the necessity of time and experience for an activity to be internalized.

When the teachers are asked whether they will continue or would like to continue to do similar kind of research in their classes, there were several teachers who stressed the importance of the mentor support for their future work. Maide and Arzu stressed the importance of a person to whom they can ask questions when they have trouble in their process of research. Arzu also commented on the systematicity that a mentor brings to the research endeavor. Yeliz also demanded the help of a guide for her research to use the time more efficiently and make better sense of her data analysis.

The teachers who stressed the importance of an online community also included Aysel who shared that if she sticks at one point, she may lose the motivation to continue and a support system could help her in the future studies as well. And she would like to have it in her future work too. Sevde also appreciated the effects of a community in information sharing and support. However, she openly expressed that she preferred a face to face community. However, considering the conditions and practicality, she expressed the value of an online community as well. Other teachers who preferred face to face communities but also acknowledged the unique feature of practicality of online community also included Esen and Mine. Mine had technical issues and she stressed the importance of face to face meetings in development of abstract thoughts. Tarık also stressed on that point.

In the study, it was revealed that, the teachers had some reservations in contributing to the content and in making comments in the online community. The reservations concentrated on the point of being seen as inadequate by the other members of the community by some teachers (Aysel, Arzu). This also showed that regardless of the efforts of intervention such as writing the importance of collaboration, designing collaborative activities, and stressing the importance of trust, the group dynamics were formed organically. These finding resonates with Wenger & Snyder's (2000)

ideas that that since the communities are “organic, spontaneous and informal” (p.140), it is difficult to govern or supervise them, but bringing right people together may provide the necessary conditions for communities to thrive.

Additionally, the fact that the teachers didn’t have experience in teacher research and the system is so new, they needed time to adjust to function to their full capabilities. The teachers Mine and Aysel expressed this situation and they asserted that if they experienced the same training and community experience for research, they would be more active in the process having now experience and knowledge about it. Maide as well commented that the next time would be more comfortable in the process. These findings show the importance of introducing teachers to teacher research and online professional development activities. The teachers may need time to fully benefit from the full potential of those tools. These findings support the view that the teachers who experience research before are more likely to do it (Borg, 2010). The findings also point that having experienced research in the community of practice, the peripheral participation of the teachers had gained the potential of having fuller participant roles in the future (Lave & Wenger, 1991).

Aysel also evaluated that since the time for development of the community was short, there couldn’t be this easy-going collegial environment. She speculated one year would be a good time to get accustomed to the other participants in the community to comment on their posts freely and readily.

Additionally, Esen also debated that she felt the need for division for special interests in the community which she couldn’t find. She needed a teacher who taught in a language class similar to her to understand her problems and to work collaboratively. This finding supported one of the suggestions for the sustainment of online communities given by Farooq, Schank, Harris, Fusco, & Schlager (2007). They give advice on to “facilitate member-run subgroups. To grow a large-scale community, provide technologies to help community members create and run subgroups to drive member loyalty”. Other reasons which were given the inactivity

of the community on some aspects were the lack of time (Arzu, Esen, and Sevde) as well.

Tarık and Esen, the teachers who couldn't finish their study, stressed the importance of live meetings which couldn't be carried out in the group. The teachers didn't respond positively to the call of an online live meeting. This was also similar to the finding of the study which asserted that asynchronous aspects were the most frequent uses of online communities (Judy Kamalodeen & Jameson-Charles, 2016).

This study was also important for some teachers since they could find the chance to evaluate EDMODO as a tool to assist English lessons by being students themselves. Tarık and Yeliz expressed the possibility of integrating it into their lessons.

5.4. Reflections of Teachers related to Teacher Research

While conducting research, the teachers were interviewed about their initial thoughts about teacher research. The research mentor contacted the teachers in the middle of study to get information about their processes. She also had the aim to assist them personally if there is need. Finally, the teachers interviewed again. They also handed in their reflections attached to the research reports.

At the beginning of the study, the teachers had some ideas about teacher research and the action part of it. They defined this term as much as they understood without experiencing it personally. The definition of the teacher before research included its being done by teachers (Fatma, Tarık, Hakan, Yeliz), and its being a feedback tool (Aysel, Tarık, Maide). The teachers shared their understandings when they hear the terms basing their ideas to their previous glimpses of research. They didn't carry it out themselves and they needed approbation is their definitions are true.

During the study, the teachers came to realize the challenges and the problems about it. They also reflected on the positive sides and changes in their research identity.

The benefits and positive changes were dealt in their related themes. As for the questioning teacher research, some teachers pointed out the problems in the applicability of it. Some teachers gave us information in the importance of other contextual factors such as time, support in school environment and cooperation of students.

Time was an important factor in the challenges. Other duties of the teachers made it hard for them to keep up with the research process from time to time making them to follow the research steps later than our research plan (Arzu, Sevde). Sevde, Aysel and Yeliz reflected on the time they spent on research and analysis. The teachers pointed the importance of extra time that should be given for carrying out research.

There were also situations which caused data collection process to a temporary halt in some points. Such as general exams or absenteeism of some students (Sevde, Fatma). Arzu had a potential discipline problem in observing a group of students. The other groups which weren't observed at the moment were on the same task too (speaking activity). She managed to have a control in the classroom during her research study. But she later commented that if the population were more crowded, it would have negative effects on the lesson. Esen had to leave the study because her students who were preparing for the university entrance exam saw it as a loss of time in the short run. She also couldn't get support from her friends in the school setting. Although she invited them to this project, they didn't want to take part and the reason she couldn't find people who had her problems (problems in the language department class) she couldn't benefit the project to its fullest capacity. Some of them had problems in the data collection due to the different nature of research. The teacher might be the point of criticism for the problem in the class and the teacher was the one who was collecting the data about it. In that point some arrangements (getting help from another colleague) was exerted (Sevde). In Sevde's school both school principal and the other teachers were supportive of research and other new ideas. She reflected that it was the starting point for her to take part in this research

project. This once again showed us the importance of school and colleague support in research undertaking.

5.5. A Guideline for Online Training for Teacher Research

In this part of the discussion, a guideline is going to be proposed based on the findings of the study. This guideline may be of use for similar online research-educations for teachers. The guideline is based on the relationships of the different components of the online community for teacher research. The components are (a) subject, (b) objects, (c) tools (artifacts) (d) community, (e) rules, (f) roles and (g) outcome (Mwalongo, 2016). In Picture 37, the relationships of the components in the PLC are shown in Figure 50.

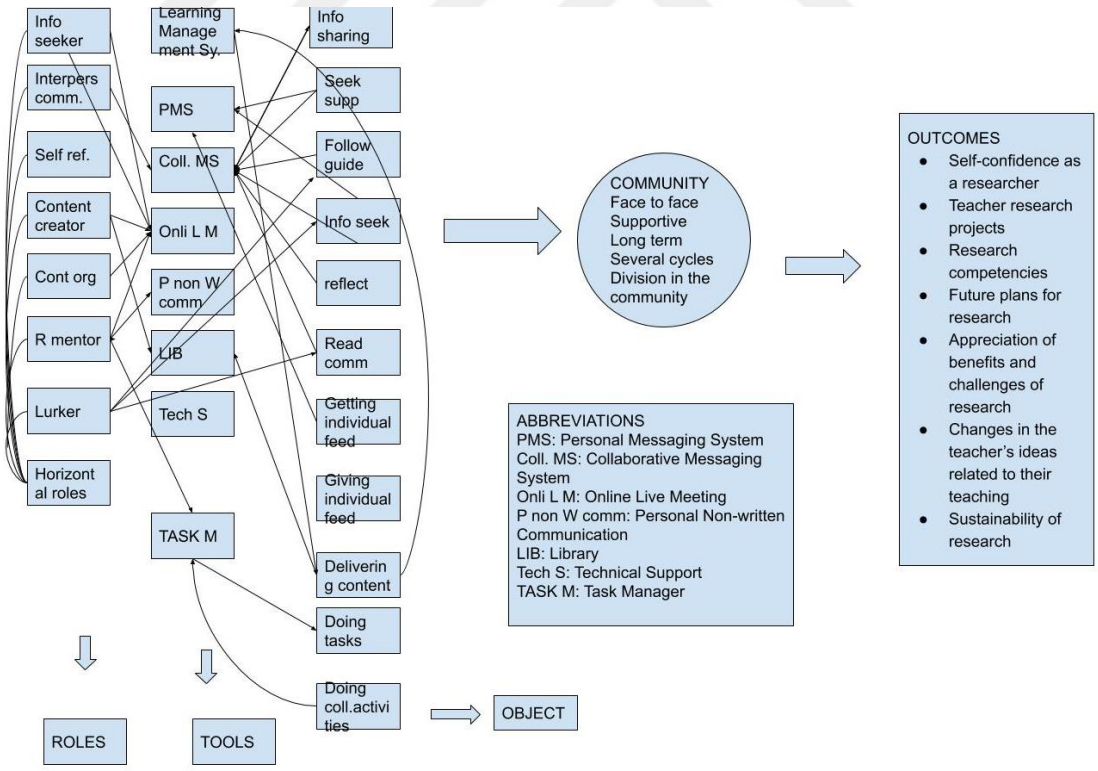


Figure 50. Relationships of the Components in PLC

The components: (a) subject, (b) objects, (c) tools (artifacts) (d) community, (e) rules, (f) roles and (g) outcome (Mwalongo, 2016) were also represented as a list. It is shown in Table 22.

Table 22

Components of PLC

TOOLS	ROLES	RULES	OBJECTS	SUBJECT	COM.	OUTCOME
A learning management system	Information seeker	Privacy	Information sharing	Teachers	Face to face component	Self-confidence as a researcher
Private messaging system	Inter personal Communicator	Netiquette	Seeking support	Research mentor	Division in the community	Teacher research projects
Common messaging system	Self-reflector		Following as a guide		Long-term	Research competencies
Online live meeting tools	Content creator		Information seeking		Several cycles	Future plans for research
Personal non written question-answer tools	Content organizer		Reflecting		Supportive	Appreciation of benefits and challenges of research
Shared library	Research mentor		Reading Comments			Changes in the teacher's ideas related to their teaching
Technical support	Lurker		Giving individual feedback			Sustainability of research
Task manager	Horizontal role division		Delivering information			
Comment section			Doing tasks Doing collaborative activates			
CONTENT (minimum and maximum outcomes)		**TASKS**		**SOURCES OF MOTIVATION**		**PROJECTS**

- Guideline 1: Based on the findings of this study, an online community to enhance teacher research practice among in service English teachers need to have the necessary tools for the success of the teacher research conduct. The existence of management tools such as tools for assigning and keeping track of tasks and keeping track of due dates are integral to keep teachers on task in their busy schedule. Furthermore, common messaging and common comment section is required for the building of the sense of the community, negotiate ideas and learn from each other. However most importantly a private messaging system is necessary for the initial base of teacher research communities since teacher research may bring out some problematic issues related to them which the teachers may not want to share with other or they may have the fear of being criticized as inadequate. The following tools should be integral parts of the community for it to thrive:

<u>Tools</u>

- Learning Managements System

A learning management system which will keep all the content together is highly needed for the online community to enhance teacher research. The content and library were two of the frequently used elements in the research online community. The teachers expressed that the community was beneficial for them since they could follow the material and they could find the necessary content and material readily while preparing to conduct or conducting their research in their environments.

- Private messaging system

Either as an integral part in the community itself or via using other programs or devices, a private messaging system is indispensable in the success of the online community for research. The technical details of the studies of the teachers, the

sensitive information that they don't want to share with the general group on the community, and the fear of being criticized compel teachers to asks questions or write messages privately. The private messaging can transcend between the teachers or between a teacher and the researcher in the community. The idea of being perceived as inadequate by the other members in the community, makes the teachers use this private messaging option. Although the necessary precautions should be taken as to make teachers feel comfortable in asking questions that they don't know, or although they should be assured that trying to deepen their knowledge does not necessarily mean incompetency, it is advisable to inaugurate this private messaging system as well. Especially in the beginning phases of the teacher research training or application, or in the first-time users, the loss of participants can be experienced due to the fact that they cannot address their questions or concerns. In the study, the place of private messaging system was indispensable for the benefit of the completing the research process.

- Common Messaging System

Group messaging opportunities are also important for general concerns in which brainstorming or the help of the community is needed. The negotiations of ideas in the community could be managed via common messaging system. In the sociocultural constructivism ideas, learning takes places via the meaningful negotiations in the group, therefore these tools should be a part of the community. Besides the sense of community can be assured via the common reactions of the participants in the group.

- Online Live Meeting Tool

The teachers in the study expressed the importance and necessity of live meetings to develop and discuss complex ideas which cannot be developed via writing and necessitated the immediate features of conversation. Additionally, some participants expressed that as a personality attribute, they tend to not write

their ideas on comments section or express themselves via writing. Therefore, the necessity of an online meeting tool manifested itself. The teachers' getting to each other could be eased, their sense of participation in a community can be improved via regular online meetings. It should be a part of the online community to enhance and sustain teacher research.

- Personal Non-Written Question Answer-Communication Tools

In the study, the community managed via only online tools. There was no face to face component which was valued by the teachers in the community. The ideas which were presented in the online live meeting tool, namely the necessity of developing complex ideas combining with the ideas of privacy necessitated personal calls between the researcher and the teacher participants of the community. This support, helped teachers not to lose sight of their study, helped in their struggling points and being personalized and goal oriented helped them to complete their study. The importance of personal feedback and the opportunity to reach the research mentor readily was an important asset of communities and a determinant in the success of the completion of the research.

- A shared Library

The library should include guidelines, supplementary articles, possible data collection tools, sample research and other necessary or useful materials to enhance research. Other members in the community should be able to upload materials there too for the benefit of other members in the community.

- Technical Support

A tool for problem solving related to technical aspects in the community should be presented to the teachers. A guideline for how to be members of the community, and how to use the community should also be present. On this online community a pdf document is provided for teacher on how they can sign up for the Edmodo and be a member of our community. Additionally, the problems related to technical issues should be solved via one-to one feedback as well.

- Task Manager

To orient teachers and guide them in the process, organized and systematics tasks should be presented to them. The teachers expressed the benefits of small tasks in the building of research. Additionally, having due dates for the assignments became propelling tools for teachers to stay on task and have goals to complete in the research process. The due dates which are assigned for the tasks should be defined and be visible to the members. There should be a reminder component for the tasks. Lastly there needs to be a tool which enables researcher to see who turned on the assignment, or who viewed the assignment.

- Comments Section

On the whole, the majority of the participants in the community were peripheral participants, who benefitted from the comments written in the section by reading them. Even though, some teachers didn't prefer to share or write their concerns, they could feel the belonging of a group of teachers who had the similar problems to that their own and therefore could relate to the group. They felt less isolated and more self-confident, acknowledging that some of the problems are general and don't stem from their inefficiencies. Therefore, this tool is an elemental property of the community. The teachers could see some common

answers and comments which were on their minds as well and therefore even the ones who didn't prefer to ask questions directly could direct their studies according to the reciprocal communication in the group. The comments of the teachers lay in that direction on that point.

- Guideline 2: The roles in the community should not represent a hierarchical structure. The teachers shouldn't feel that the researcher is the decision maker since researcher is more capable at research. The self-confidence and the agency of teachers in teacher research depend upon their ability to make decisions themselves and to feel that they are a partner in this activity rather than solely a learner.

- Guideline 3: There are different roles in the community and different people manifest different roles. The role of interpersonal communicator is important for the positive relations in the community. Lurkers may also benefit from the community even though they don't actively participate in creating content or commenting. The lurkers may be peripheral participants which will turn into fuller participants in future and they may play a role in annunciate the community to a larger audience. The lurkers also benefit from the community in research engagement. Although there are some steps that the community organizer can take to intervene on the roles to make them more effective in interpersonal communication, this power is quite limited and depends upon the people in the community. Therefore, other measures such as having alternative interaction methods should be taken and the community organizer should keep pursuing their development in research. Additionally, there are several attributes that a research mentor role should possess. The roles which were observed in the community of this study as well as the necessary attributes of research mentor are explained as follows.

Roles

In the community, different teachers assume different roles while participating in the community and completing their research projects. Therefore, in the community, there should be enough opportunities for different roles to be realized. The roles of the teachers which presented themselves were the roles as follows and they are important in understanding the dynamics of the community to make it more effective.

- Information seeker

The communities for professional support for teacher research are the venues in which the teachers try to find answers to their questions and problems related to the research entity and research process. Therefore, they are in the role of learners and information seekers. In the PLC, the teachers directed questions in the comment section and in private messages. The community organization should give promptly and appropriate answers to these questions for the sustainment and the effectiveness of the community. If the community cannot meet the facilities to support the role of information seeker of the teachers, the result manifests itself as the drop out of the teachers. In the community all the teachers were information seekers. They used different tools and displayed different actions to seek information, however it was the salient role that they played throughout the study.

- Interpersonal communicator

The survival of the community and its effectiveness depends in part upon the social interactions of the teachers and the support which they give to each other. This can be assured via interpersonal communication whether it is related to the tasks and other activities or social reasons. The teachers should respond to each other's posts and comments and direct questions to each other. This role was

limited in the community and the teachers voiced the problem in different ways. The reasons of not knowing the members before and the relatively short period in which the study is completed contributed to the abstinence of teacher' interpersonal interactions. Furthermore, fear of being criticized also hindered these roles to emerge. In designing an online community for research, it should be noted that, the teachers may need warm up periods in which they got used to each other and build rapport. In the communities for practice which were designed to support research, the community organizer needs to bring right people together to communicate, post collaborative tasks and reflections to work together. However, it should also be noted that these roles are natural and cannot be mandated by a third person. The efforts to maintain collaboration and interpersonal communication may face challenges such as not wanting to disclose information related to their particular schools, managers or other contextual factors since research presumably necessitates to deal with problematic and controversial areas related to their own schools of teachers. Bearing all those points in mind alternative interaction routes (private means) should be readily available for the effectiveness of the community.

- Lurker

The lurkers are the participants who follow the comments and content but don't make posts and comments. In this study, the number of lurkers were high. However, some of the lurkers completed the steps and finished their research study in their classrooms. The research results and the results of these teachers' interviews indicated that they benefitted from the study in gaining research competencies, self-confidence and benefits of teacher research. These findings imply that lurkers also benefit from the communities as passive participants and community organizers should continue to pursue their development. They have potential to turn into fuller participants in future studies.

- Research mentor-content creator-content organizer

In this study the researcher was the research mentor, content creator and content organizer. These roles are important in sustaining the community and helping teachers to gain the skills necessary to conduct teacher research. The role of the mentor and the support that she gave to the teachers was one of the most cited reasons as what eased the teachers' research process. The teachers highly value the moral support and the positive attitudes towards research. Additionally, it was the researcher who guided the teachers in the application of their teacher research. Based on the findings, research mentor should guide the teachers in applying the information research administration into their research process. The mentor should promptly answer the questions that are posed to her. The research mentor should give constructive feedback to the process of the research. In the study, the researcher tried to prompt teachers to come up with their own problems and she also guided them to choose the suitable methods to study their problem. The mentor tried to assist the teachers by allowing them to make the decisions themselves. The research mentor was also the organizer of the website; therefore, she explained the rules and the working principles of the community. Therefore, she also showed the roles of an acculturator to the online community (Dikilitaş & Wyatt, 2018). The researcher also took the responsibility of finding outlets to disseminate the research of teachers. The teachers voiced the importance of the democratic dialogue between teachers and the researcher. These dynamics are important in guiding a research.

- Guideline 3: An online community can serve the aim for geographically spread participants for the practicality and effectiveness purposes. However, it is advisable that the community to have regular face to face meetings if it is viable. The development of complex ideas, the sense of community and collaboration can be strengthened via face-to face component of an online community. The teachers in the study, voiced the need and importance of face to face meetings and interactions for the success and continuity of their research conduct process.

- Guideline 4: There is an adjustment period for teachers to fully adapt to conduct teacher research and learn the basic of it. Additionally, time is needed for the online community dynamics to settle. Therefore, these sorts of in-pre- service professional training activities should be long term and should have consecutive cycles if it is viable. The teachers who finished their research process reflected their new gained insights and pointed out the aspects that they would have wanted to do differently. New cycles of research will help them to apply their insights into new research and with time, their roles in the community will change to fuller participants. In the research engagement, the previous encounters with research is important for future studies.

- Guideline 5: Division in the community may provide beneficial results for the researchers. The teachers who have the similar conditions and similar research problems may create smaller special interest groups to narrow their focus and contribute each other's research. The teachers in the study voiced this need as an important factor for them to carry out and continue research endeavors.

- It has been observed that the teachers may have a fear of criticism to open up and share their problems. Therefore, a supportive system must be built within the community, some participants who have more experience in the online community may act as catalyzers of interaction and sharing.

Within an online professional learning community for teacher research and which followed the outlined guidelines that were specified and which has the similar participant profiles, it may be expected that the outcomes of increased self-confidence as a researcher and increased research competencies can be gained by the participants. Additionally, a positive outlook of teachers towards future research studies, the teachers' appreciation of benefits and challenges of research and some changes in the teacher's ideas related to their teaching based on the findings of their research and the experiences might be expected as well. The teacher research

projects are the outcomes of the research experience in PLC too. Lastly, PLC and the component of mentor is an important element in the sustainability of research among EFL teachers.

- Guideline 6: The content of the online training is prepared in line with the major steps of research. These steps include: forming a research question, learning about data collection methods, learning about data analysis methods, and learning about reporting the research. The training content should include the major steps and other details can be negotiated with the participants to represent their needs the best way possible. In our study in the first week of the training the teacher participants were provided with the underlying assumptions of teacher research and the definition of teacher research. The content is summarized as follows:

    - 1st week: A) Definition of teacher research, B) Ideas behind teacher research, C) Benefits of teacher research, D) Challenges of teacher research. This week's activities involve asking teachers their motivation to carry out teacher research and give information related to their teaching contexts and their understanding of their roles in their educational settings.
    - 2nd week: A) Research question formation, B) Sample research question formation. This week's activity involves coming up a research question and posting it to the online community. The teachers were also requested to comment on at least one research question posted by others on the website. The first research journal related to the research question formulation was asked from teachers.
    - 3rd week: A) How to collect data, B) Data collection tools, C) Triangulation. This week's activity includes writing second research journal related to the choosing of the appropriate data collection tool in relation with the research question.

- 4th week: A) Analyzing qualitative data, B) Coding, C)Sample coding, D) Presenting, E) Analyzing quantitative data, F) Descriptive statistics, G) T Test, H) Presenting, I) Presenting the research, J) Trustworthiness, K) Ethical Considerations This week's activity involves writing 3rd research journal related to research process in general. The teachers were also requested to complete their research report at the end of their study.

- Guideline 7: The sources of motivation of the participants should be identified for the program to be more effective. The sources of motivation of the teachers in this study included to keep up with the developments in the field, to improve teaching skills, and to solve the problems that exist in their classes.
- Guideline 8: The evaluation of the online training can be done via inspecting the outcomes and the satisfaction of the participants in relation to the training.

  Minimum outcomes include an increased awareness towards the concept of teacher research and realization on the importance of teacher research in providing feedback to understand the classroom life better and get feedback related to the lessons. The teachers also have a general understanding of data collection and analysis. Positive attitudes for future research with the help of a supervisor is also one of the minimum outcomes.

  Maximum outcomes include teachers' mastering research steps such as making a basic literature research, forming research questions, choosing a suitable data collection tool to investigate the problem and to be able to analyze the data. Being willing to share the results with a broader audience to make the study known to others is also one of the expected outcomes. The increase in the self-confidence to carry out teacher research and to be able to define oneself as teacher researcher are among the maximum outcomes. The teachers take a critical stance to their classrooms and as autonomous

intellectuals, take active participation in the construction of knowledge in the field. Via the existing online community, future research studies can be sustained with the collaboration of other members in the group.

The participants should be asked on how competent they feel on those areas and how effective the training and online community is in attaining those outcomes as well.

5.6. Implications

This study has several implications. The implications are for further research and for teacher education practices.

First of all, for further research, this study can be done with more participants for more diverse population. Different conditions and different problems can be encountered this way and it would be more effective to see the effect of this training on a more extensive level. The teachers can form special interest groups with the ones who have similar school conditions and student population out of the bigger group. With more participants the variables such as experience in teaching can be one of the variables to see how this construct interacts with the online training and how it effects it. It is also advisable to do a further study to test the guidelines based on the findings of the functioning of the online community in this study.

It has implications for teacher education practices as well. The low level of satisfaction with the traditional in-service training activities and the changing needs of the society and the teachers necessitate new methods in teacher in-service training. Combined with the aims in 2023 vision plans of education of Turkey, an online in-service training which employs inquiry-based learning and teaching is quite valuable and necessary for more effective in-service training practices. The guidelines proposed in this study will be constructive for similar initiatives. These

kinds of programs should be employed by the Ministry of Education in the training of in-service English language teachers nationwide.

For schools or teacher communities of practice, when they carry out teacher research, it is advisable to give importance to the solidarity among teachers. The place of support and sense of community is important in teachers' research conduct and the success of their research. An online or a face to face community should be an integral part of research practices in schools for research practices. The place of a mentor to whom the teachers can reach when they need is indispensable. The role and the importance of mentor in the future studies of teachers were pointed in the study. Therefore, it should be noted that for teacher research activities continuous support should be provided to teachers. An online community can serve the aim for geographically spread participants for the practicality and effectiveness purposes, and the necessary roles should be established as well as necessary tools and directions should be present in the community as well.

CHAPTER 6

CONCLUSION

With the current understanding of education in today's era, and what we have learned throughout a few decades of studying teacher cognition, how adults learn, and situated nature of learning, we question the practices in in-service training of teachers. With the added emphasis of teachers' role as a decision maker and an intellectual in the profession makes teacher research is indispensable tool in the professional development of teachers. Teaching is a lifelong process and with its whole complexity and unpredictability, it is not feasible to equip teacher with every possible resources and skills before they enter into profession. Therefore, teacher should try, experiment and add new insights into his or repertoire continuously to keep up with the fast pacing developments in the field, and to keep up with the organic nature of education.

The teachers who are playing an important role in the actual everyday experiences of learning and teaching necessitated them to be autonomous individuals who can have an effect on their surroundings in decision making and in the change for the better. Teacher research helps to enlarge the duty of teachers. Cochran-Smith & Lytle (1998) specified these duties as decision maker, consultant, curriculum developer, analyst, activist, school leader. (p.20). The teachers also have "enhanced understandings of the contexts of educational change" (p.20) via studying their practice critically. There has also been a growing literature on benefits of teacher research in the development of teacher. Therefore, this study investigated seven cases to gather insights into the application of teacher research.

A teacher needs to keep up with the evolving era. The technology's role in modern communication and learning combined with the potential of teacher research opened new possibilities in the ways of in-service training of teachers. This study provided

us information in the training and sustainment of teacher research among teachers via an online professional learning community. The practicality, the cost effectiveness, the speed and its being continuous, place online communities in an important position to take over traditional ways of training (Darling-Hammond, Bullmaster, & Cobb, 1995; Ball & Cohen 1999; Darling-Hammond & McLaughlin, 2011). Furthermore, when the teacher is a part of online community, the problem of transferring what is learned in the training to the school setting is alleviated. The education can be applied and the teachers can request assistance while applying the training (conducting research) at the same time.

Therefore, this study was important in providing us information on the practicality of these ideas. The power of the research education and research implementation on teachers' professional development and the place of online community in the application and sustainment of this process were investigated.

The previous encounters and awareness of teachers play a crucial role in their readiness and volunteerism of taking part in research administration. And being voluntary and invested is one of the most important things in research studies which holds the key to success. The teachers who took part in the study reported an increase in their views of themselves as a person who can and does research in their practice compared to the beginning of the study. The most readily observable trait in that respect was the increase in the self confidence in undertaking research. There the noticeable increase in the knowledge and skills in carrying out research as well. However, it is still too early to comment for these teachers that, they will assume the researcher identity and will carry out teacher research regularly on their own. That being said, the teachers reported continuing willingness to make use of research in the future and they were quite positive to research with the support and assistance of a mentor. They also reported feeling more autonomous and knowledgeable and, in the position, to help others in some areas in research administration for the future studies.

The teachers expanded their views on the benefit of teacher research after the study. They came to some realizations related to their classes, they became aware of some of the unnoticed concerns, they could see the student perspective in the matters and they could find the chance of self-evaluation with the help of research studies that they have undertaken. They see the differences between the reality and their aspirations. They changed, expanded or strengthened their beliefs related to the nature of learning and teaching. They also had some expansions in their duties as teachers. (Their duty to make sure that the students' other basic needs should be met in their lives and the importance of English as a language in everyday life rather than just a lesson). The teacher research was beneficial in those aspects.

These benefits were only possible with the training and the support that the teachers got, along their teacher research experience. The teachers who didn't have prior knowledge of the practicalities of teacher research and had firsthand experience of the benefits of it. They were able to do research with the help of the professional online community.

There were lacking points in the community. These issues were pointed by the teachers in the study as well. The reservations of teachers to expose their lacking points freely and asking questions directly to other teacher members of the community were observed and reported by teachers. The fear of being seen inadequate and not knowing the members well were shown among the reasons. The formation and functioning of community (3 months) were also another factor in the development of these group dynamics. The teachers commented if there was more time, the relations could have become more relaxed. On the other hand, via private messages, calls and online community comments which were directed to the mentor, the teachers benefitted from the community in their research training and research conduct. They also indirectly made use of comments that others made or questions that they asked when they have similar problems according to their reports. Furthermore, the online community was the channel in which the teachers from different physical regions were provided the teacher research training materials

which were PowerPoint presentations, videos, sample data collection, analysis and tasks.

The teachers repeatedly alluded the support of a mentor for their continuation of teacher research studies in the future. They also appreciated the practicality of online community which didn't interrupt their normal duties. The fact that they were from different physical regions and schools were managed via the facilities of the online interaction.

All in all, based upon the findings of this study, it is concluded that, teacher research has positive benefits in teachers' getting feedback from classroom, localizing their problems and have a clearer understanding of their problems. Additionally, teachers reported extended understanding in their roles and responsibilities in the learning and teaching activities and in school. Furthermore, their views of themselves as researchers changed in the positive way. Additionally, participating in a professional online community helped teacher research training and research conduct processes during their research administration and education. Support is quite important for the sustainment of teacher research activities. The necessary guidelines for an online professional learning community designed to assist research is proposed to attain the possible effectiveness of communities in the training and application of research with the possible outcomes at the end of the study.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A: Ethics Committee Approval

UYGULAMALI ETİK ARAŞTIRMA MERKEZİ
APPLIED ETHICS RESEARCH CENTER

ORTA DOĞU TEKNİK ÜNİVERSİTESİ
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Sayı: 28620816 / 704

03 OCAK 2019

Konu: Değerlendirme Sonucu

Gönderen: ODTÜ İnsan Araştırmaları Etik Kurulu (İAEK)

İlgi: İnsan Araştırmaları Etik Kurulu Başvurusu

Sayın Doç. Dr. Perihan SAVAŞ

Danışmanlığını yaptığınız Nuriye Karakaya YILDIRIM' ın **"Meslek-içi İngilizce Öğretmenlerinin Mesleki Çevrimiçi bir Grupta Araştırma Deneyimleri: Nitel Çoklu Vaka İncelemesi"** başlıklı araştırması İnsan Araştırmaları Etik Kurulu tarafından uygun görülerek gerekli onay **2018-EGT-210** protokol numarası ile araştırma yapması onaylanmıştır.

Saygılarımla bilgilerinize sunarım.

Prof. Dr. Tülin GENÇÖZ
Başkan

Prof. Dr. Ayhan SOL
Üye

Prof. Dr. Ayhan Gürbüz DEMİR
Üye

Prof.Dr. Yaşar KONDAKÇI (4.)
Üye

Doç. Dr. Emre SELÇUK
Üye

Doç. Dr. Pınar KAYGAN
Üye

Dr. Öğr. Üyesi Ali Emre TURGUT
Üye

APPENDIX B: Invitation to Edmodo

Dear (name of participant)

Edmodo

nuriye karakaya's Class

Join nuriye karakaya's Class on Edmodo

I'm using **Edmodo** in class with students and to keep parents informed! I'll use it to share important updates, assignments, and more. It's free and it takes under a minute to sign up!

Name visit www.edmodo.com or download the Edmodo app and use this username and password to login to your account.

Username: *******
Password: *********

Download the Edmodo app

App Store | Google Play | Microsoft

APPENDIX C: Power Point Component of Weekly Training Week 1.

APPENDIX D: Power Point Component of Weekly Training Week 1 (ctd.)

BENEFITS OF TR(CONTINUED)

- They may have a more meaningful professional development experiences.
- They may find solutions to the problems they encounter while teaching.
- The communication between the teacher and the students may increase.

CHALLENGES OF TR

There are also some of the problems associated with the teacher research and the process of carrying out teacher research.

They are :

- the existing workload of teachers,
- lack of time as well as lack of technical and theoretical knowledge related to teacher research
- difficulty in finding published teacher research examples
- difficulty in research writing and dissemination
- unsuitable school environment such as lack of support from colleagues, students or school principal etc.

THIS WEEK'S ACTIVITIES

- HOW LONG HAVE YOU BEEN TEACHING?
- WHICH GRADES ARE YOU TEACHING?

THIS WEEK'S ACTIVITIES

- WHY DO YOU WANT TO CARRY OUT TEACHER RESEARCH?
- TELL US ABOUT YOUR OWN TEACHING CONTEXT

THIS WEEK'S ACTIVITIES

- DO YOU HAVE A MASTERS OR PHD DEGREES? IF SO PLEASE SPECIFY WHICH ONE OR ONES YOU HAVE.

THIS WEEK'S ACTIVITIES

- TELL US ABOUT YOUR UNDERSTANDING OF YOUR INSTRUCTIONAL ROLE IN YOUR SCHOOL

APPENDIX E: Power Point Component of Weekly Training Week 2

DEFINING TEACHER RESEARCH QUESTIONS

SOME INITIAL THOUGHTS

- In order to come up with a research question we need to reflect upon the issues in our classroom. There are some possible questions to ask to ourselves before we get going with the research question identification process.
- «What do you feel passionate about?
- What do you feel curious about?
- What new approaches to learning or teaching are you interested in trying?
- What will make you a more effective teacher?

INITIAL THOUGHTS (CONTINUED)

- What needs of your students are not being met?
- Why are some of your students not achieving in the same way as others?
- Why are your students behaving the way they do?
- What language skills would you like your students to improve?
- What gaps are there between your current teaching situation and what you would like to see happening?
- What do you want your students to know, understand, or do better than they currently do?» (Burns, 2009 p.24)

EXAMPLE RESEARCH TOPICS

Here some examples which were chosen as research topics in some previous teacher research studies:

- Poor student motivation to learn English
- Difficulty in getting students to speak English in class
- Classroom management issues as a result of having large classes
- Having to deal with different levels of ability within the same class
- Problems with discipline
- Lack of parental involvement in pupils' learning. Hayes, D. (Ed.). (2014 117

ACTIVITY

Please try to come up with a research topic that you want to explore in this project.

ACTIVITY

Let's stop for a moment in order to explore our teaching philosophies. Please tell us about your own philosophy related to the research topic that you have chosen. It is important to know your teaching philosophy consciously and understand how it relates to how you understand the topic at hand. Additionally, it is important to base our conclusions to the data that we collected rather than on our personal beliefs.

APPENDIX F: Power Point Component of Weekly Training Week 2 (ctd.)

SAMPLE RESEARCH QUESTION FORMATION

Question formation	
Research topic	Difficulty in getting students to speak English in class
Research question	• What are the reasons that my students are unwilling to participate in group discussion activities? • Is there a difference in their participation when speaking activities differ? • If there is a difference, what are the reasons for it?

- These questions attempt to:
- «A. Clarify and understand the main issue
- B. Give a sense of direction to the research process
- C. Assist the teacher find answers in her own context before leaping into action» (A Handbook for Exploratory Action Research p. 38)

RESEARCH QUESTION FORMATION

«A good research question should be important for learners. A good research question benefits your students by informing your teaching and the curriculum, by providing new insights about students and their learning, by broadening and deepening your perspectives, or by improving practice» (Pine, G. J., 2008 s. 239)

- While coming up with a research question we should be careful that:
- It shouldn't be biased
- It should be of interest to us and our students.
- It shuldn't be too broad or narrow.
- It should be answerable by our data collection.
- It should be measurable.
- It shouldn't be answerable simply with yes or no. It should be more complex.

ACTIVITY

Please come up with a research question based on the guides given in this week. (This question may be reformulated on the way as the project goes along)

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

ACTIVITY

Please give feedback to at least one of the teacher research questions posted by teachers on the website.

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

RESEARCH JOURNAL1

- Please write your research process in the group. (About 300-450 words) How did you come up with your research question? Why was this question important for you? How did you develop it? Which factors or who helped you to develop it into a well formulated research question?

EXTRA READING: TIPS FOR DOING TEACHER RESEARCH

«1. Integrate your research into normally occurring teaching and learning activities.
2. Make 'small-scale but high quality' your motto.
3. Look for ways to make teacher research a collaborative activity.
4. Find a 'critical friend' who can help you think things through.
5. Focus on a practical issue which is of immediate relevance to your work.
6. Ensure that your plans are feasible given the resources available.
7. Look for opportunities to talk to colleagues about the work you are doing.
8. Do research to help you become a better teacher.
9. Become familiar with basic issues in collecting and analysing research data.
10. Do some background reading related to the topic» (Borg , 2017 P.173).

APPENDIX G: Power Point Component of Weekly Training Week 3

APPENDIX H: Power Point Component of Weekly Training Week 3 (ctd)

DATA COLLECTION TOOLS (CTD)

- Example of observational checklists (taken from Burns, 2010 p.64).

Student: MP	Date: 15/6 Time: 10.00-10.30 Task: silent reading	Date: 22/6 Time: 2.00-2.30 Task: vocabulary game	Date: 14/6 Ela Time: 9.30- 10.30 Task: Grammar exercise
Interrupts neighbour's work	■ ■	■	■ ■ ■ ■
Attempts to get other students' attention	■		■ ■
Teases neighbour physically Ho.	■ ■	■	■

DATA COLLECTION TOOLS (CTD)

Interview:

There are several types of interview. Structured interviews and semi structured interviews are some of them. They are used to gather more in dept information from participants. In structured interviews the questions are determined beforehand and the format is quite controlled. In semi structured interview there are some basic questions but the answers of the interviewee determine the interview process and the following questions. In interviews it is important not to interrupt the participants or direct them.

DATA COLLECTION TOOLS (CTD)

Survey

- When there are more participants and less time, surveys are one of the methods to be used in data collection. The participants answer the questions by writing. There are two main types of items in surveys. They are closed ended items and open ended items.
- Examples of closed ended items
- Likert scale

Applied linguists are genuinely nice people.

Strongly disagree ■ **Disagree** ■ **Neither agree nor disagree** ■ **Agree** ■ **Strongly agree** ■

(taken from Dörnyei, Z., & Csizér, K. 2012, s77)

- Semantic differential scale

- Listening comprehension tasks are:
- difficult ___:___:___:x___:___:___:___ easy
- useless ___:___:___:___:___:___:x___ useful

(taken from Dörnyei, Z., & Csizér, K. 2012, p77)

- True false items

Whenever I see an unknown word, I look it up in the dictionary. T__/F__

- Multiple choice items

I study English…….

(a) by reading English novels

(b) by studying grammar items

(c) by memorizing new words

- Rank order items

Please rank the activities we do from most important to the least. (the most imprtant is 3 the least important is 1)

Speaking ____

Grammar exercise ____

Reading ____

APPENDIX I: Power Point Component of Weekly Training Week 3 (ctd.)

- Open ended questions
- They are specific open questions that are generally followed by why question

- Which strategies do you use when learning English?
- _____

- Clarification questions

If you rated the our lesson you are using as "poor" or "very poor," please briefly explain why. Write your answer here:

_____

FIVE KEY STRATEGIES FOR PRODUCING ITEMS THAT WORK:

«• Aim for short and simple items. Whenever possible, questionnaire items should be short, rarely exceeding 20 words.

• Use simple and natural language. As a rule, in questionnaire items we should always choose the simplest way to say something.

• Avoid ambiguous or loaded words and sentences. Any element that might make the language of the items unclear, ambiguous, or emotionally loaded needs to be avoided.

• Avoid negative constructions. Items that contain a negative construction (i.e., including "not," "doesn't," or "don't") are deceptive because, although they read OK, responding to them – especially giving a negative response – can be problematic.

• Avoid double-barreled questions. Double-barreled questions are those that ask two (or more) questions in one, while expecting a single answer (e.g., Is the relationship with your parents good?).»

(taken from Dörnyei, Z., & Cesar, K. 2012 p.78)

- Classroom artefacts

- «They are syllabus guidelines, lesson plans, textbooks, readers, students' written texts, exercises, illustrations, maps, dictionaries etc…» (Burns, 2010 p.91)

TRIANGULATION

- It means to use more than one type of data to strenghten the evidence. For instance conducting an interview along with observation. You can strenghtne you survey data with a post interview or you can collect classroom artefacts.

ACTIVITY

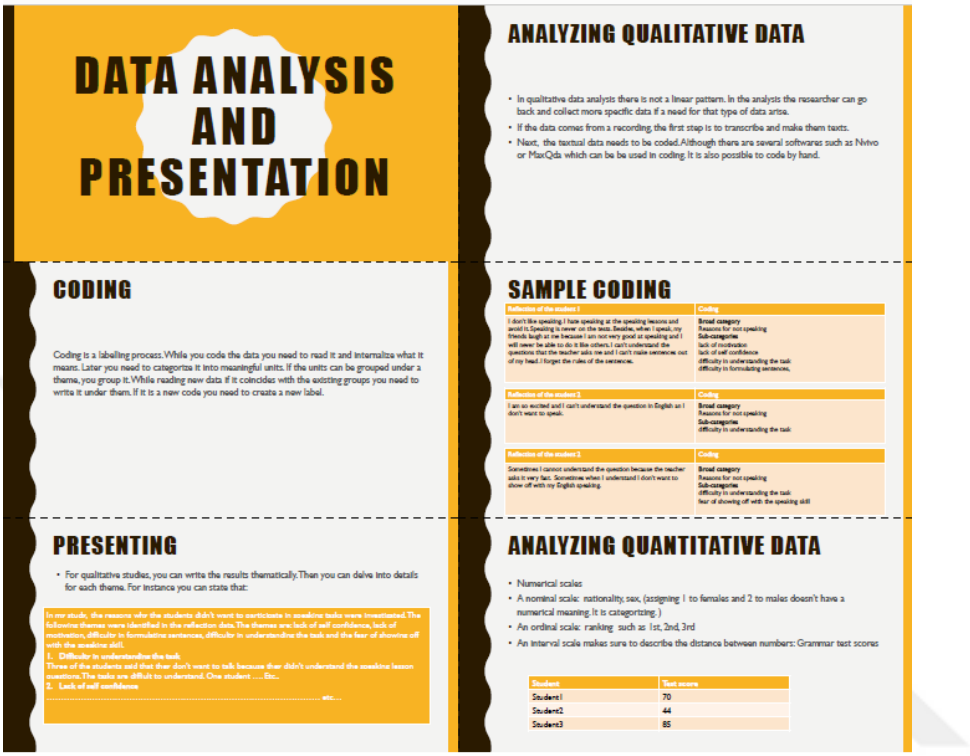
- Please brainstorm and write which data collection tools and methods can be used in your classroom contextfor your research. Comment at least one of the teachers' chosen data tools in the group.

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

RESEARCH JOURNAL2

- Please write your thinking process in the group. (About 300-450 words) How did you decide on your research method? How did you develop it? Which factors or who helped you in this process?

APPENDIX J: Power Point Component of Weekly Training Week 4



DATA ANALYSIS AND PRESENTATION

ANALYZING QUALITATIVE DATA

- In qualitative data analysis there is not a linear pattern. In the analysis the researcher can go back and collect more specific data if a need for that type of data arise.
- If the data comes from a recording, the first step is to transcribe and make them texts.
- Next, the textual data needs to be coded.Although there are several softwares such as Nvivo or MaxQda which can be be used in coding. It is also possible to code by hand.

CODING

Coding is a labelling process.While you code the data you need to read it and internalize what it means. Later you need to categorize it into meaningful units. If the units can be grouped under a theme, you group it.While reading new data if it coincides with the existing groups you need to write it under them. If it is a new code you need to create a new label.

SAMPLE CODING

Reflection of the student 1	Coding
I don't like speaking. I hate speaking at the speaking lessons and avoid it. Speaking is never on the seats. Besides, when I speak, my friends laugh at me because I am not very good at speaking and I will never be able to do it like others. I can't understand the questions that the teacher asks me and I can't make sentences out of my head. I forget the rules of the sentences.	**Broad category** Reasons for not speaking **Sub-categories** lack of motivation lack of self confidence difficulty in understanding the task difficulty in formulating sentences,

Reflection of the student 2	Coding
I am so excited and I can't understand the question in English as I don't want to speak.	**Broad category** Reasons for not speaking **Sub-categories** difficulty in understanding the task

Reflection of the student 3	Coding
Sometimes I cannot understand the question because the teacher asks it very fast. Sometimes when I understand I don't want to show off with my English speaking.	**Broad category** Reasons for not speaking **Sub-categories** difficulty in understanding the task fear of showing off with the speaking skill

PRESENTING

- For qualitative studies, you can write the results thematically.Then you can delve into details for each theme. For instance you can state that:

In our study, the reasons why the students didn't want to participate in speaking tasks were investigated.The following themes were identified in the reflection data.The themes are: lack of self confidence, lack of motivation, difficulty in formulating sentences, difficulty in understanding the task and the fear of showing off with the speaking skill.

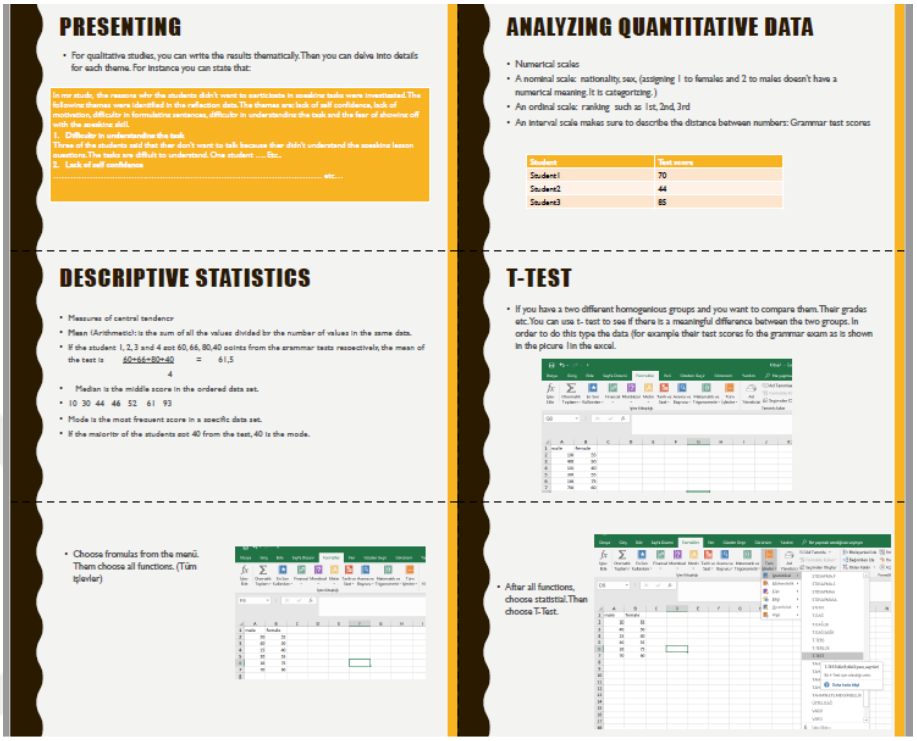
1. Difficulty in understanding the task
Three of the students said that they don't want to talk because they didn't understand the speaking lesson questions.The tasks are difficult to understand. One student .... Etc..
2. Lack of self confidence
..... etc...

ANALYZING QUANTITATIVE DATA

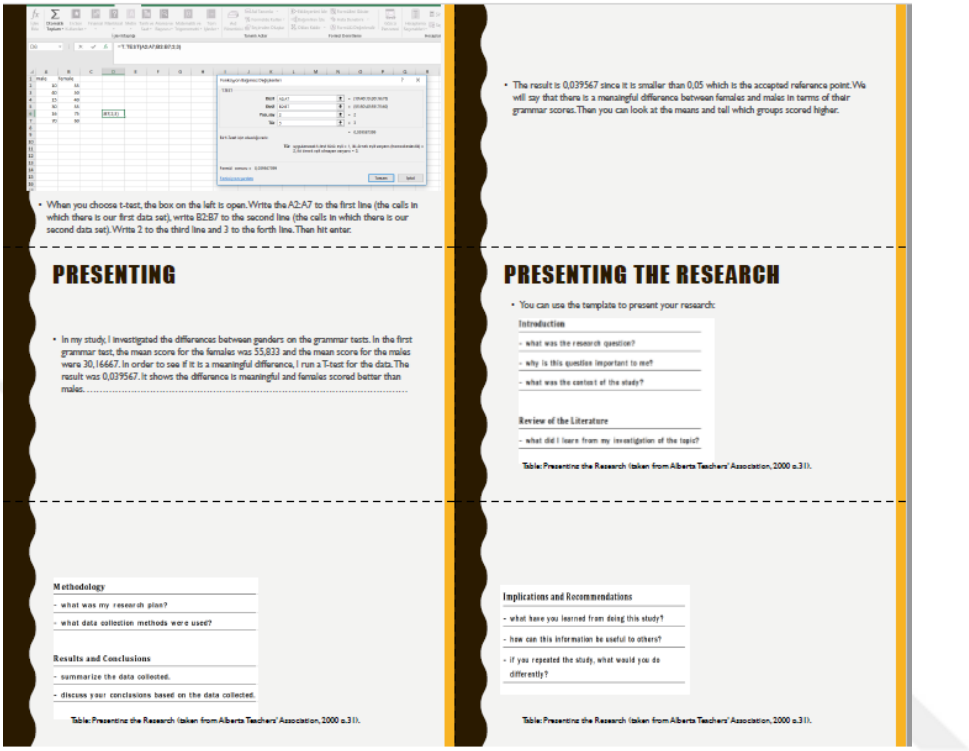
- Numerical scales
- A nominal scale: nationality, sex, (assigning 1 to females and 2 to males doesn't have a numerical meaning. It is categorizing.)
- An ordinal scale: ranking such as 1st, 2nd, 3rd
- An interval scale makes sure to describe the distance between numbers: Grammar test scores

Student	Test score
Student1	70
Student2	44
Student3	85

APPENDIX K: Power Point Component of Weekly Training Week 4 (ctd.)



APPENDIX L: Power Point Component of Weekly Training Week 4 (ctd.)



APPENDIX M: Power Point Component of Weekly Training Week 4 (ctd.)

Methodology

- what was my research plan?
- what data collection methods were used?

Results and Conclusions

- summarize the data collected.
- discuss your conclusions based on the data collected.

Table: Presenting the Research (taken from Alberta Teachers' Association, 2000 a.3D.

Implications and Recommendations

- what have you learned from doing this study?
- how can this information be useful to others?
- if you repeated the study, what would you do differently?

Table: Presenting the Research (taken from Alberta Teachers' Association, 2000 a.3D.

TRUSTWORTHINESS

- There are several ways to ensure trustworthiness in your research.The first one is to triangulate the data which means gather data from more than one source.
- Secondly by using membercheckcing (confirming your interpretations with the research participants whether you got them correctly) you can strenghten the trustworthiness.
- You should be able to base your every interpretation to the existing data without using hunches or personal opinions.
- You can get help from aother colleague in interpreting the results.

ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

- First of all we should inform the students and make the participation as a voluntary activity.
- You should aim for the benefit of the class and the students.
- You should be aware of the fact that since you are the teacher of the classroom, the students may not easily voice the problems that exist in the lessons. Therefore you should make sure you will not get offended by negative criticism and the responses of the students won't affect their grades or them in any negative way.
- You should be careful about the conflict of interest.

RESEARCH JOURNAL 3

- Please write your research process in the group. (About 300-450 words) How did you decide on your data analysis method? How did you develop it? Which factors or who helped you in this process? Are there any ethical concerns in your study? How are you planning to present your study?

RESEARCH REPORTS

- Please share your final research reports on the site.

APPENDIX N: Informed Consent Form

Araştırmaya Gönüllü Katilim Formu

Bu çalışma ODTÜ İngiliz Dili Eğitimi Bölümü öğrencilerinden Nuriye Karakaya Yıldırım Tarafından ODTÜ İngiliz Dili Eğitimi Bölümü öğretim üyelerinden Doç. Dr. Perihan Savaş tarafından yürütülmektedir. Bu form sizi araştırma koşulları hakkında bilgilendirmek için hazırlanmıştır.

Çalışmanın Amacı Nedir?

Katıldığınız araştırmanın amacı, öğretmen araştırmasını bir mesleki gelişim aracı olarak incelenmesini amaçlamaktadır. Aynı zamanda bu araştırmanın öğretilmesi ve uygulanasını kolaylaştırıp desteklemek amacı ile oluşturulan çevrimiçi profesyonel topluluğun da araştırmanın eğitimi ve uygulanmasına ne gibi katkıları olduğu incelenmek istenmektedir.

Bize Nasıl Yardımcı Olmanızı İsteyeceğiz?

Araştırma boyunca sizin için oluşturulmuş çevrimiçi mesleki bir topluluğun iyesi olmanız beklenmektedir. Araştırmaya katılmadan önce öğretmen araştırması hakkındaki görüşleriniz için bir mülakata alınacaksınız. Daha sonra öğretmen araştırmasını uygulamanızı kolaylaştırmak için kurulan çevrimiçi mesleki toplulukta bu öğretmen araştırması için uygulamalı bir biçimde eğitim alacaksınız. Eğitim devam ettirirken bir tane ve bitirdikten sonra bir tane daha mülakata katılıp, bu sürecin nasıl geçtiği, bir öğretmen ve araştırmacı olarak size neler kattığı hakkında sorular cevaplayacaksınız.

Katılımınızla ilgili bilmeniz gerekenler:

Bu çalışmaya katılmak tamamen gönüllülük esasına dayalıdır. Herhangi bir yaptırıma veya cezaya maruz kalmadan çalışmaya katılmayı reddedebilir veya

çalışmayı bırakabilirsiniz. Araştırma esnasında cevap vermek istemediğiniz sorular olursa boş bırakabilirsiniz.

Bu araştırmanın sonuçları bilimsel ve profesyonel yayınlarda veya eğitim amaçlı kullanılabilir, fakat katılımcıların kimliği gizli tutulacaktır.

Araştırmayla ilgili daha fazla bilgi almak isterseniz:

Çalışmayla ilgili soru ve yorumlarınızı araştırmacıya nuriyekarakaya@gmail.ccom adresinden iletebilirsiniz.

Yukarıdaki bilgileri okudum ve bu çalışmaya tamamen gönüllü olarak katılıyorum.

(Formu doldurup imzaladıktan sonra uygulayıcıya geri veriniz).

İsim Soyad Tarih İmza

---/----/-----

APPENDIX O: Debriefing Form

Araştırma Sonrası Bilgilendirme Formu

Öncelikle araştırmamıza katıldığınız için teşekkür ederiz.

Katıldığınız araştırmanın amacı, öğretmen araştırmasını bir mesleki gelişim aracı olarak incelenmesini amaçlamaktadır. Aynı zamanda bu araştırmanın öğretilmesi ve uygulanasını kolaylaştırıp desteklemek amacı ile oluşturulan çevrimiçi profesyonel topluluğun da araştırmanın eğitimi ve uygulanmasına ne gibi katkıları olduğu incelenmek istenmiştir.

Bu amaçla, ilk olarak sizle öğretmen araştırması hakkındaki ilk görüş ve bilgileriniz anlamak amacıyla bir mülakat yapılmıştır. Daha sonra çevrimiçi grupta haftalık öğretmen araştırma eğitimi verilmiş olup, siz uygulamalarınız devam ettirirken sürecin nasıl işlediğine dair ikinci bir mülakata katılmanız istenmiştir.

Son olarak eğitim bitiminde bu sürecin mesleki anlamda ve öğretmen araştırma gerçekleştirme konusunda kattıkları ile yaptığınız bu araştırma türünü daha iyi yürütmek amacı ile kurulan çevrimiçi profesyonel topluluğun araştırma sürecine etkilerinin sorulduğu son bir mülakata katılmanız istenmiştir.

Eğer araştırmayla ilgili sorularınız varsa araştırmacıya sorabilir veya perihans@metu.edu.tr adresinden Doç. Dr. Perihan Savaş'a ya da nuriyekarakaya@gmail.com adresinden Nuriye Karakaya Yıldırım'a (araştırmacı) ulaşabilirsiniz.

APPENDIX P: Welcome Message

Welcome to all

This online Professional learning community is created in order to stay connected while conducting teacher research. Our aim is to support each other and make research process easier for each other. Although some of the main content is going to be uploaded by me (facilitator), this community belongs to us together and each member of the community can contribute to the content by their unique experiences, context related insights and with other contributions.

In order to benefit from this online community to the fullest possible way, all of us are invited to:

Share any possibly helpful resources for teacher research.

Share our thinking process.

Share our problems we encounter while conducting our research

Share any good ideas which worked for us

Respond to questions that are posed by other teachers

Get and give support to each other in our research undertaking process

Develop ideas with other members

Please don’t abstain from asking questions and asking for help anytime you need. It is encouraged to interact with each other in this community therefore don’t be afraid to share points that you struggle with (adapted from Sessums, 2009).

APPENDIX R: Themes of the Study

TR professional Benefits	***f***
Keep up advances	4
Feedback	1
Ground for decision	3
Job satisfaction	6
See other solutions	1
Be aware of problems and possible solutions	7
Bridge between practice and theory	2
Teacher realizations after doing research	34
TOTAL	58

Researcher identity	***f***
Place of research	32
Self confidence	9
Research competencies after TR	19
Positive thoughts for future studies	10
Reserved positive thoughts for future studies	3
Voluntary nature of TR	5
Necessity of added duty of TR	5
Lacking research skills	6
TOTAL	89

APPENDIX S: Themes of the Study (ctd.)

Concerns Related to TR	***f***
Problems of application process	20
Things that research can't change	2
TOTAL	22

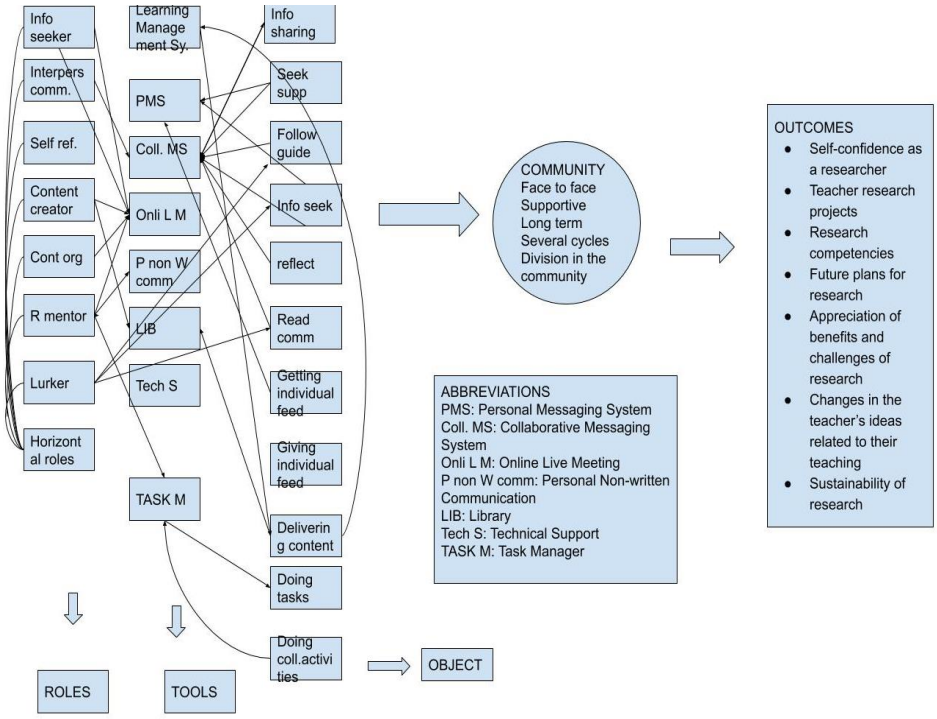
Benefits of PLC	***f***
For future	6
Mentor Support	6
Awareness of Edmodo	3
Long term	1
Practical	6
Sense of community	11
A route	2
Sources	5
Private messages	1
See comments	13
TOTAL	54

APPENDIX T: Themes of the Study (ctd.)

Disadvantages /Lacks of PLC	***f***
Short time	1
Experience in TR	6
Face to Face	9
New System	2
Technical Problems	1
Lack of Live Meeting	4
No division/ small groups	4
Lack of time	2
Fear of sharing	5
TOTAL	34

Opportunities	***f***
Appraisal	1
Mentor	8
Sources	2
Time	1
Cooperation of other specialists	1
Common	3
MONE support	3
TOTAL	19

APPENDIX U: Relationships of the Components in PLC



APPENDIX V: Curriculum Vitae

PERSONAL INFORMATION

Surname, Name: Karakaya Yıldırım, Nuriye
Nationality: Turkish (TC)
Date and Place of Birth: 6 March, 1990, Amasya
Marital Status: Married
Phone: +90 (318) 357 42 42/4386
Email: nuriye.karakaya@gmail.com

EDUCATION

Degree	Institution	Year of Graduation
PhD	METU English Language Teaching	2019
MA	METU English Language Teaching	2015
BA	METU Foreign Language Education	2012
High School	Sinop Anadolu Teacher Training High School	2008

WORK EXPERIENCE

Year	Place	Enrollment
2012-Present	Kırıkkale University	Language Instructor

FOREIGN LANGUAGES

Advanced English, Fluent Spanish

PUBLICATIONS

Karakaya, N., & Başer Z., Online Professional Learning Communities for English Teachers' Professional Development in Turkey: A Comparison of Rural and Urban Teachers' Perceptions, TTED Newsletter, The Newsletter of IATEFL Teacher Training and Education Special Interest Group, Special Issue, Mugla TTEd & YLE SIGs Conference Proceedings, pp 4-7

Karakaya, N., & Hatipoğlu, Ç. (2017). Attitudes of EFL Teachers In Turkey Context Towards Teaching English Varieties in Their Lessons. Journal of Educational & Instructional Studies in the World, 7(3).

Yıldırım, N. K. (2018, June). A Critical Analysis of Oral Interviews. In Proceedings of the 12th METU International ELT Convention (p. 57). Cambridge Scholars Publishing.

INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCES

FLTAL: Foreign Language Teaching and Applied Linguistics Conference, May 2014, Paper Presentation: “Noun Phrase Accessibility Hierarchy in the Acquisition of English Relative Clauses by Turkish and Polish Speakers”, International Burch University, Sarajevo, Bosnia Herzegovina

TEPE: Teacher Education from a Global Perspective Conference, May 2016, Paper Presentation: Teacher’s Voices on Teacher Research as a Professional Development Tool, Valetta, Malta

Understanding Multilingualism, June 2018 Paper Presentation: Translaguaging Practices in a Writing Class and Attitudes Towards Translaguaging, Warsaw, Poland

NATIONAL CONFERENCES

8th International Congress on New Trends in Education ,2017, Paper Presentation "Should We or Should not We Teach Varieties of English in EFL Classes: Views from Turkey", Antalya

V. International Eurasian Educational Research Congress, 2017, Paper Presentation, "EFL Learners' Intercultural Awareness: A Case Study at a Public University", Pamukkale University, Denizli

9th ELT RESEARCH CONFERENCE, 2016, Paper Presentation, "English Teacher Opinions on Research Engagement for Professional Development: A Multiple Case Study of Teachers with and without "Teacher Research" Experience", Canakkale 18 Mart University

9th ELT RESEARCH CONFERENCE, 2016, Paper Presentation, "Vocational College Students' Perspectives on English Language Education at a State University", Canakkale 18 Mart University

12th ODTU ELT Convention,2015, Paper Presentation and "Conference Proceeding": "Oral Interviews and Guided Role Play Activities in Assessing Speaking", ODTÜ
IATEFL TTED SIG Conference,2013 Paper Presentation "Online Professional Learning Communities for English Teachers' Professional Development in Turkey: A Comparison of Rural and Urban Teachers' Perceptions", Muğla Sıtkı Koçman University

BOOKS - BOOK CHAPTERS

Karakaya N. (As Language Specialist), (2017). *Progress: Preparatory Class Student's Book*: Milli Eğitim Bakanlığı Yayınları

Karakaya N. (As Language Specialist), (2017). *Progress: Preparatory Class Workbook*: Milli Eğitim Bakanlığı Yayınları

Karakaya N. (As Language Specialist), (2017). *Progress: Preparatory Class Teacher's Book*: Milli Eğitim Bakanlığı Yayınları

APPENDIX Y: Turkish Summary/Türkçe Özet

GİRİŞ

Sürekli, bağlamsal ve demokratik öğretmen mesleki gelişiminin dil eğitiminin başarısı, öğretmenlerin mesleki memnuniyeti ve bunun yanı sıra öğrenci refahındaki önemi inkâr edilemez. Özellikle güçlü öğretmen mesleki gelişiminin, öğretmeni uygulamaları değerlendirebilen ve devam eden pratik deneyimlerden sistematik bir şekilde bilgilerini yapılandırabilen aktif bir aktör olarak kabul etmesi gerektiği tartışılmaktadır. Darling-Hammond ve McLaughlin (1995) 'e göre, mesleki gelişimin etkili olması için, uygulama üzerine yansıtma fırsatlarını eleştirel bir biçimde içermeli ve bu uygulama ile yakından ilgili öğretmen araştırmasına da yer vermelidir.

Cochran-Smith ve Lytle (1990), öğretmen araştırmalarının önemini öğretmenlerin uygulamaları hakkında seslerini duyurabilmenin tek yolu olarak ifade ederek güçlendirmektedir. Cochran-Smith ve Lytle (2009), bu araştırmayı "çocuklara sağlanan eğitim fırsatlarının niteliğini ve miktarını belirleyen bilgi ve güç odağını" demokratikleştirmenin bir aracı olarak görmektedir (s.11). Bu haliyle, araştırmaya dayalı öğretmen mesleki gelişim etkinliklerinin yeri İngilizce öğretimi alanında önem kazanmıştır.

Ek olarak, eğitimde tüm paydaşların hesap verebilirliği öğretmenlerin veri odaklı ve bilinçli kararlar vermelerini zorunlu kılmaktadır (Beverly, 1993). Öğretmen araştırma hareketinin dünya çapında uygulamaya yön vermek için öğrenci verilerini kullanmanın artan önemi ve hesap verebilirlik konularındaki uyumluluğu (Campbell ve Levin, 2009) sınıflardaki araştırma faaliyetlerini ön plana çıkarmaktadır.

Dahası, Giroux'un (2002) "birer entelektüel olarak öğretmenler" duruşu, öğretmenlerin özgür bir toplum yaratmada, etik ve politik benlik ile sosyal düzen

oluşturmalarında önemli bir rol üstlenmesi gerektiğini ve öğretmenlerin de araştırmacı olarak hareket etmeleri gerektiğini söylemektedir.

Bu bağlamda öğretmenler uygulamalarını sorgulayabilmeli ve kendilerini daha geniş bir bağlamla ilişkilendirerek kendilerini bu bağlama yerleştirebilmelidir. Bu nedenle, son birkaç on yıl boyunca, öğretmenlerin kendi mesleki gelişmelerinden sorumlu birincil bireyler olarak gelişimlerini sağlayacak araştırma faaliyetlerini üstlenmesi ve uygulamaya yansıtması, eğitimde amaç olmuştur (Yan, 2017).

Bununla birlikte, öğretmenlerin bilgi veya araştırmaya katılımlarının eksikliği nedeniyle suçlandıkları dile getirilmektedir. Diğer yandan da öğretmenlerin araştırmanın erişilemezliği ve araştırmalarda öğretmenlerin fikir ve gerçek deneyimlerinin eksik olduğu gerçeğinden şikâyetçi oldukları dile getirilmiştir (Dikilitaş, Smith ve Trotman, 2015).

Problemin Arka Planı

Her ne kadar öğretmen araştırmasının kazanımları artan oranlarda dile getirilmiş olsa da sınıf temelli araştırma faaliyetleri, öğretmenler tarafından her zaman çok önemli bir mesleki gelişim aracı olarak seçilmez veya algılanmaz. Bunun nedenleri arasında bilgi eksikliği, zaman ve motivasyon eksikliği ya da sınıf araştırmasının sınıfın acil ihtiyaçları ile ilgisini görememe (Gutierez ve Kim, 2017), öğretmen izolasyonu ve yetersiz gibi görülme korkusu yüzünden soru sormadan çekinilmesi gibi durumlar sayılabilir (Cochran-Smith, M. ve Lytle, 1992). Öğretmenler, öğretmenlik hazırlıkları sırasında meslekte araştırma yapmak için eğitilmiş olmayabilir (Bartels, 2002). Ek olarak, öğretmen araştırması ve raporlama öğretmenler için akademik yazma konusunda yetkin olmayabileceklerinden ve araştırmayı akademi ile ilişkilendirip öğretmenlerin temel görevi olarak görmediklerinden korkutucu görünebilir (Rathert ve Okan, 2015).
Öte yandan öğretmenler, bu araştırmanın ne anlama geldiğini ve bunun altında yatan fikirlerin neler olduğunun farkına varırlarsa, öğretmen araştırmalarından

profesyonel olarak yararlanabilirler. Bu araştırma öğretmenlere tanıtılmalı ve öğretmen araştırmasının öğretmen mesleki gelişimine sağladığı gerçek faydaları araştırmak için araştırma yönetimi boyunca öğretmenlere gerekli eğitim ve yardım sağlanmalıdır. Öğretmen araştırması, başarılı bir öğretmen profesyonel gelişimi formunun gerekli özelliklerini taşır. Öğretmen araştırmasının özellikleri aşağıdaki gibi ifade edilebilir:

• "Öğretmenleri, öğrenme ve gelişme sürecini aydınlatan somut öğretme, değerlendirme, gözlem ve yansıtma görevleri ile diyaloğa sokmalıdır.
• Katılımcı odaklı araştırma, yansıtma ve deneylere dayanmalıdır.
• Eğitimciler arasında bir bilgi paylaşımını içeren ve bireysel öğretmenlerden ziyade öğretmenlerin uygulama topluluklarına odaklanmayı içeren şekilde işbirlikçi olmalıdır.
• Öğretmenlerin öğrencileriyle olan çalışmalarına bağlı olmalı ve bunlardan türetilmelidir.
• Sürdürülebilir, sürekli ve yoğun olmalı ayrıca modelleme, koçluk ve başka yollarla uygulama sorunlarının çözülmesi ile desteklenmelidir.
• Okul değişiminin diğer yönleriyle bağlantılı olmalıdır" (Darling-Hammond ve McLaughlin, 1995, s. 598).

Çalışmaya, öğretmenlerin deneyimleriyle, onların günlük uygulamalarına dahil edilen bir profesyonel gelişim aracı olarak öğretmen araştırmasının potansiyelini vurgulamak için ihtiyaç duyuldu. Öğretmen araştırmasının doğasını, yararlarını ve sürdürülebilirliğinin koşullarını anlamak, onu öğretmenler için daha yaygın bir mesleki gelişim etkinliği yapmak açısından önemlidir.

Araştırmanın Amacı

Araştırma katılımına yönelik engelleri ortadan kaldırmak için, öğretmenlerin araştırma çabalarında desteklenmesi son derece önemlidir. Her şeyden önce, öğretmenlere öğretmen araştırmasına katılmaları için fırsatlar verilmelidir. Bu

araştırma türü ve arkasındaki felsefe, uygulayıcılara tanıtılmalıdır. Konuyla ilgili farkındalıklar, uygulamalı deneyimler ile arttırılmalıdır. Öğretmen araştırma projelerinde öğretmenlerin deneyimlerini belgelemek ve öğrenme sürecini anlamak öğretmen araştırmalarının öğretmenlik mesleğinde daha etkin bir mesleki gelişim biçimi haline getirmek de oldukça önemlidir.

Vygotsky'nin sosyal yapılandırmacılık teorisine göre, öğrenme sosyal ve iş birliğine dayalı bir faaliyet olarak gerçekleşir ve anlam gruptaki etkileşimler yoluyla yaratılır ve toplanır (Schreiber ve Valle, 2013). Benzer şekilde, Cochran-Smith ve Lytle (1992) "öğretmen araştırmasının tanım gereği meslektaşlar arasında sürekli ve sağlam bir entelektüel değişim için fırsatlar gerektiren iş birliğine dayalı bir sosyal bir faaliyet olduğunu" savunmaktadır (s. 301). Teknolojideki ilerlemeler ve hayatlarımızı düzenleyiş biçimimizin değişmesiyle, öğretmenler mesleki gelişimlerine faydalı olabilecek ve öğretmen araştırma faaliyetlerini destekleyebilecek grup desteğine çevrimiçi araçlarla erişilebilir. Bu sadece zaman ve mekân sorunlarını ortadan kaldırmakla kalmaz, aynı zamanda araştırma ile ilgili konularda ihtiyaç duyulduğunda yardımın kullanılabilirliğini de arttırır. Bu nedenle, bu çalışma, öğretmen araştırmasının öğretmen mesleki gelişimi üzerindeki etkisini ve öğretmen araştırmasının tanıtımı için tasarlanmış bir çevrimiçi toplumun öğretmenlerin araştırma katılımına nasıl yardımcı olduğunu araştırmayı amaçlamaktadır. Araştırma soruları şu şekildedir:

1. Öğretmen araştırmasına katılımın;
a. Meslek içi İngilizce öğretmenlerinin kendilerini öğretmen araştırmacıları olarak görmelerine ve
b. Meslek içi İngilizce öğretmenlerinin, öğretmen araştırmasının profesyonel gelişim aracı olarak önemi ve gerekliliği hakkındaki görüşlerine etkisi ne olacaktır?
2. Öğretmen araştırmasına katılımın meslek içi İngilizce öğretmenlerinin eğitim rollerini ve eğitim bağlamlarını anlamadaki etkisi ne olacaktır?
3. Öğretmen araştırması öncesi boyunca ve sonrasında öğretmenlerin yansıtmaları nelerdir?

4. “Çevrimiçi Profesyonel Öğrenim topluluğunun öğretmen araştırması” nın uygulanması ve meslek içi İngilizce öğretmenlerinin öğretmen araştırmasına (TR) devam etme istekliliği üzerindeki etkisi nedir?

Çalışmanın Önemi

1980'lerden bu yana, öğretmen öğreniminin, eğitim alanındaki en önemli konulardan biri olduğu vurgulandı ve kavramsallaştırıldı (Cochran-Smith ve Lytle, 1999). Öğretmen öğrenmesi ile ilgili en dikkat çekici üç kavram, Cochran-Smith & Lytle, (1999) tarafından “uygulama için bilgi, uygulamadaki bilgi ve uygulama bilgisi” olarak özetlenmiştir. İlki üniversitedeki akademisyenlerin ürettiği bilgileri öğretmenin sınıfta uygulamasını anlatmaktadır. “Uygulamadaki bilgi”, öğretmenlerin öğretmesi gereken pratik bilginin çalışma ortamlarında ve uygulamalarındaki yansımalarında yer aldığını kabul eder. “Uygulama bilgisi”, öğretmenlik bilgisinin “öğretmenler kendi sınıflarını ve okullarını araştırma alanları olarak gördükleri zaman, aynı zamanda başkalarının ürettikleri bilgi ve teoriyi kasıtlı sorgulama ve yorumlama için üretken materyal olarak ele aldıklarında üretildiğini” varsaymaktadır. Cochran-Smith ve Lytle, 1999 s. 250).

Son kavram, öğretmenlerin anlık kullanımları için bilgi üretebilmeleri ve yerel bağlamlarını daha geniş gerçeklere bağlayabilmeleri bakımından oldukça önemlidir. Bu nedenle, öğretmen olarak araştırmacı fikri öğretmenlerin uygulamalarını sorgulamaları için öne çıkmaktadır.

Teorik Çerçeve

Bu çalışma, teorik çerçeve olarak sosyal yapılandırmacılık duruşunu benimsemiştir. Bu görüş, gerçekliğin, deneyimlerin öznel anlamları aracılığıyla inşa edildiğini savunmaktadır. Bu görüşte araştırmacının amacı, çeşitli katılımcıların durum hakkındaki görüşlerinden anlamın derinliğine bakmaktır (Cresswell, 1998).

Görüşlerin oluşturulmasında katılımcıların, yakın çevrenin ve içinde bulunulan geniş bağlamdaki deneyimlerin yeri önemlidir. Yabancı dil öğretmenlik eğitiminde öğretmenlerin öğretmenlik eğitiminde edindikleri bilgi ve becerileri doğrudan ders anlattıkları sınıfa aktardıklarını savunan daha önceki yaklaşımların uygulamada çeşitli sorunları vardır. Öğretmen öğrenmesi en iyi, öğretmenin aktif aktör olduğu ve anlam sürekli müzakere edilerek kavramsallaştığında meydana gelir. Bu müzakere içindeki diğer aktörler öğretmenin kendisi, öğrenci, dersin konusu, iş ortamı ve bağlamdır (Johnson, 2006). Bu nedenle, araştırmada, öğretmenlerin biliş ve anlayışı, okulların bağlamı ve mevcut deneyimlerinin araştırma ile ilişkisi açıklanmaktadır.

Çalışmanın tasarımında öğretmenler bir çevrimiçi toplulukta araştırma eğitimi almışlardır. Ek olarak, kendi okulları bağlamında bir araştırma yapmaları beklenmiştir. Sosyokültürel bakışa ek olarak, bu topluluğun işlevi en iyi uygulama toplulukları ile anlaşılır. Wenger (2000), uygulama topluluklarının sosyal öğrenme sistemleri olduğunu açıklamaktadır. Bu sistemlerde insanlar hem sosyal hayata katılmakta hem de eserler üretmektedir. "Aktif ve dinamik bir anlam, müzakere yoluyla pratik ve bu iş ile meşgul kişiler tarafından üretilen bir şeydir" (Wenger, 2000 s.2). Buna paralel olarak, Lev Vygotsky tarafından bu duruşta ortaya atılan ve daha sonra Engeström tarafından geliştirilen Etkinlik Teorisi, (a) öznenin, (b) amaçların, (c) araçlarının (eserler) (d) topluluğun, (e) kuralların, (f) iş bölümü ve (g) sonucun etkileşimlerine odaklanır (Mwalongo, AI, 2016).

Bu çalışmada,

• özneler, profesyonel öğrenme topluluğunu kullanan öğretmenler ve araştırma danışmanı olarak tanımlanır

• amaç, öğretmen araştırmalarına katılımın desteklenmesi amacıyla profesyonel öğrenme topluluğu kullanımıdır.

• araçlar, materyal paylaşımı tartışmaları vb. gibi profesyonel öğrenme topluluğunun varlıklarıdır.

• topluluk, profesyonel öğrenme topluluğundaki bütünsel bir birim olarak öğretmenler ve danışmandır. Öğretmenin kendisi, öğretmenler ve danışman aynı hedefe ulaşmak için etkileşime girerek bir topluluk oluştururlar.
• kurallar, toplumu organize etme kurallarıdır. Bunlar toplumu kullanmanın kurallarıdır.
• roller, topluluğa katılan kişilerin görevlerini oluşturur.
• sonuç, toplumda öğretmen araştırma katılımının teşvik edilmesi anlamına gelir.

Öğretmen Araştırması

Öğretmen araştırması "bir uygulayıcının K-12, yükseköğrenim veya sürekli eğitim kapsamındaki sınıf-okul- programlar ile diğer resmi eğitim ortamlarında kendi işi hakkında sistematik, kasıtlı ve özeleştirel sorgulama içeren, tüm uygulayıcı sorgulama biçimleri" olarak tanımlanmaktadır (Cochran -Smith ve Lytle, 1999 s.22). Öğretmenlerin kendi uygulamalarında kendileri tarafından yapılır. Öğretmenlerin mesleki uygulamaları, araştırmalarının yeri ve odağı olduğundan, araştırma ve uygulama birbiriyle yakından ilişkilidir ve "sorgulama ile uygulama arasındaki sınırlar bulanıktır" (Willegems et al. 2017 s. 232). Öğretmen araştırması aynı zamanda öğretmenlerin çalışma ortamlarında uygulamayı geliştirmek için çalışma ortamlarında yürütülen bir eylem araştırması biçimi olarak tanımlanmaktadır (Hammersley, 1993). Crookes'a (1993) göre, eylem araştırmasının temel faktörü, öğretmenin araştırma sürecine dahil olmasıdır.

Carter ve Halsall (1998: 73-74) öğretmen araştırmasının temel özelliklerini şu şekilde tanımlamaktadır:

- Sistematik olarak toplanmış ve açıkça tanımlanmış bir amaç için analiz edilen verilere dayandırılmıştır;
- Bazen dış eleştirel arkadaşların desteğiyle olsa da öğretmenler tarafından üstlenilir;
- Genellikle işyerinde olmak üzere mesleki faaliyetlere odaklanır;
- Amacı, faydalı değişime yol açmak, nihayetinde, öğrencinin ilerleyişini, başarısını ve gelişimini iyileştirmektir, bu da tam olarak okulun kendisini geliştirmenin amacıdır (aktaran Borg, 2010 s. 393).

Çevrimiçi Profesyonel Öğrenme Toplulukları ve Araştırma Katılımı

Öğrenme topluluklarına katılım göreceli olarak uzun bir süre gerektirir ve öğretmenlerin günlük yaşamlarına uyumludurlar. Bu özellikler, öğretmenlerin mesleki yaşamlarında uzun vadeli değişiklikler ve gelişmeler yaratabilen iyi bir profesyonel gelişim aracı olmak için onları iyi adaylar haline getirmektedir (Lock, 2006).

Wenger (2002), uygulama topluluklarını "bir konuyla ilgili bir endişeyi, bir dizi sorunu ya da tutkuyu paylaşan ve sürekli olarak etkileşime girerek bu alandaki bilgi ve uzmanlığını derinleştiren bir grup insan" olarak tanımlamaktadır. Conrad'ın (2005 s. 2) öğrenme topluluklarının çevrimiçi bileşenine odaklanması, tanımlamaya aşağıdaki uzantıyı ekler:

Topluluk, çevrimiçi öğrenenler için, güvenli bir iklim, güven ve saygı atmosferi, entelektüel değişim için bir davet ve benzer amaçlar içeren bir yolculuğu paylaşan benzer düşünen bireyler için bir buluşma yeri sağlayarak ev konforunu oluşturur.

Toplulukta açılma ve paylaşma isteği de destekleyici olması için en önemli şartlardan ikisidir. Bu, kişilerarası dinamiklerin buna izin verdiği ve üyelerin eşit statüde olduğu, ortak çalışma ortamı yanı sıra güven ve saygının olduğu bir toplulukta mümkündür (Vangrieken ve ark. 2017). Wenger (1998), insan bileşeni ve topluluk kültürüne kolayca müdahale edilemediğinden ve bu özelliklerin toplumun olgunluğuyla bağlantılı olabileceğinden (toplulukları teşvik etmek ve desteklemek mümkün olsa da), tasarlanabilir birimlerde gerçekleştirilmesinin kolay olmadığını iddia etmiştir (Hur, 2007'de gösterildi). Bununla birlikte, topluluklar kendi kendini örgütleyen kuruluşlar olsalar da başarılı bir öğrenme topluluğu tasarlarken altyapı ve uygulama desteği kullanılabilecek fikirlerdir (Wenger ve Snyder, 2000).

YÖNTEM

Çoklu Vaka Çalışması Tasarımı

Vaka çalışmaları, bir konunun doğal bağlamında birden fazla kaynak aracılığıyla derinlemesine analiz edilmesi için uygundur (Hancock ve Algozzine, 2006). Flyvbjerg (2006), vaka çalışmalarının konudaki gerçek uzman olmadaki önemini vurgulayarak vaka çalışmalarının önemini vurgulamaktadır. Kurala bağlı bağlamsal bilginin de gerekli olduğunu söylemeye devam ederek, bu bilginin ancak başlangıç seviyesinde yardımcı olabileceğini belirtmektedir. Tüm ilişkileri ve deneyimin gerçek özünü anlamak için, onu gerçek hayattaki işleyişinde yaşamak gerekir. Bu nedenle, araştırmacıların vaka çalışmaları yapması ve "çok sayıda ayrıntı" toplaması önemlidir (Flyvbjerg, 2006, s.223). Örnek olay incelemesinde konu "sınırlı bir sistem içinde bir veya daha fazla vaka aracılığıyla incelenmiştir" (Creswell, 1998 s. 73). Çalışma tek bir vakadan fazlasını içerdiğinde, çoklu vaka çalışması olarak adlandırılır. Çoklu vaka çalışmasında:

"Çalışılacak her durumun kendi sorunları ve ilişkileri vardır. Vakaların anlatacakları hikayeler vardır ve bunlardan bazıları çoklu dava raporuna dahil edilir, ancak asıl anlaşılmak istenen olay, bu vakalarda ortak olarak sergilenen fenomendir. Vakalarla bu olayın farklı durumlarda nasıl işlediğini daha iyi anlaşılmaya çalışılır" (Stake, 1995 p.6).

Bu çalışmada her öğretmen bir vaka olarak ele alınmıştır. Vakalar, bir kişi veya kurum olarak seçildiklerinde en iyi anlaşıldığı şeklinde belirtilmiştir (Stake, 2013). Olayların işleyişi bize ayrıntılarını ve bilgilerini sağlar ancak işlevler ve olaylar bir vaka olarak seçilmez. Bu nedenle çalışmada sınırlı bağlamı olan her öğretmen bir vakayı temsil eder. Her öğretmenin farklı bir bağlamı ve öğretmen araştırma projesine katılmak için farklı nedenleri vardır. Onların farklı bağlamları, öğretmen araştırmasının farklı şekillerde gerçekleşmelerine sebep olacak ve bunun uygulama üzerindeki etkisine ilişkin görüşler sağlayacaktır. Her vaka, çalıştığımız kişiyi

tecrübe etmemiz için yaşam durumlarında bize farklı detaylar sunacaktır. Her durum benzersizdir; bizim çözmemiz gereken bir hikâyedir. Her bir vakayı ayrıntılı olarak anlamamızın yanı sıra, vakaların kaçınılmaz olarak karşılaştırılması, farklı bağlamlarda meydana gelebilecek olguyu anlamamıza katkıda bulunacaktır. Birden fazla vakadan daha verimli bir şekilde faydalanabilmek için, vaka sayısının 4'ten az olmaması gerektiği tavsiye edilir. Aynı zamanda, 10 vakadan daha fazlasının, onlarla verimli bir şekilde ilgilenememe nedeni ile uygun olmadıkları önerilmektedir (Stake, 1995). Bu nedenle çalışmamızda vaka sayısı 7 olarak tanımlanmıştır.

Stake (1995), odağın vakanın ötesinde olduğu zaman, çalışmanın araçsal durum çalışması olduğunu göstermektedir. Amaç bu çoklu vaka çalışmasında fenomeni anlamak olduğundan, tek bir vakanın kendisi bir araçtır. Benzer şekilde, çalışmanın amacı öğretmen araştırmasına katılımın öğretmenler üzerindeki etkisini ve çevrimiçi topluluğun öğretmenlerin araştırma davranışı üzerindeki etkisini cevaplamak olduğundan, her vaka bu genel soruyu cevaplamak için önemlidir. Bu nedenle eldeki bu çalışma, araçsal bir vaka çalışmasıdır.

Stake (1995), bireysel vakaları çoklu vaka çalışmasına seçmek için bu üç kriteri izlemenizi önerir. Kriterler şunlardır:

• “Vaka fenomen ile alakalı mı?

• Vakalar bağlamlar arasında çeşitlilik sağlıyor mu?

• Vakalar karmaşıklık ve bağlamlar hakkında bilgi edinmek için iyi fırsatlar sunuyor mu “(Stake, 1995 s.23)?

Vakaların Seçimi

Bu çalışmada, Türkiye'nin farklı bölgelerinden toplam 7 İngilizce öğretmeni, kartopu örneklemesi kullanılarak katılımcı olarak seçilmiştir. Araştırılan konu öğretmen araştırma deneyiminin öğretmenler tarafından keşfedilmesi olduğundan, öğretmenler fenomenle olan ilgileri nedeniyle seçilmiştir. Stake (2010) bunu şöyle açıklar

“Genelde işlerin nasıl yürüdüğü makro yorumudur. Belirli bir durumda nasıl çalıştığı mikro yorumlamadır. Her ikisi de nitel araştırma yönetimini kullanır, ancak çoğu zaman nitel araştırma mikro yorumlamaya neden olur” (s. 39).

Bu bağlamda, odak noktası, bir çevrimiçi topluluktaki araştırma ilişkilerini anlamak için bireysel öğretmenlere odaklanmaktır. Ek olarak, vakalar arasındaki ortak temalar ve genelden sapan olaylar, çevrimiçi PLC katılımının öğretmen araştırması üzerindeki etkisi ve öğretmen araştırmasının bir profesyonel gelişim aracı olarak öğretmenler üzerindeki etkisine dair genel anlayışımıza katkıda bulunacaktır.

Vaka 1 Mine

Mine Erzurum'da bir devlet lisesinde çalışıyor ve 20 yıldır İngilizce öğretmektedir. 18 yıldır Erzurum'da öğretmenlik yapıyor. Erzurum Atatürk Üniversitesi'nden mezun oldu. Doktora derecesi veya yüksek lisansı yok. Mine bir öğretmenin öğrettiği konuya bakılmaksızın, öğretmenin toplum kurallarını öğretmesi, kişinin milletine ve ülkesine sevgi duyması gerektiğini öğretmesi gerektiğine inanmaktadır. Ona göre öğretmenler, öğrencilerin kendinden farklı olanları anlamalarında, onlara tolerans göstermelerinde ve saygı duymalarında, öğrencilere rehberlik etmeli ve yardımcı olmalıdır. Öğrenciler ayrımcılığa karşı olmalıdır ve bunu sağlamak öğretmenin görevidir. Ona göre bir öğretmenin görevi çevremizdeki dünyayı ve akıl yürütmemize karşı olan şeyleri nasıl sorgulayacağınızı öğretmektir. Bir öğretmen öğrencileri için kapıları açar ve onlara nasıl çalışılacağını ve araştırılacağını öğretir. Öğretmen onları daha iyi olmak için motive eder.

Vaka 2 Aysel

Aysel, Türkiye'nin Doğu bölgesindeki kırsal bir bölgede öğretmendir. İlk olarak İngilizce öğretmeni olarak işe başladığından beri 3 yıldır burada öğretmenlik yapmaktadır. Ondan önce 1 yıl özel bir kurumda çalışmıştır. Yüksek lisans ya da

doktora derecesine sahip değildir. Öğretmenlerin görevleri hakkında ise öğretmenlerin sadece öğrenciler için değil aileleri için de rol modelleri olması gerektiğine inanmaktadır. Öğretmenlerin içinde çalıştığı toplumda saygı duyulduğunu ve arandığını belirtmektedir.

Vaka 3 Arzu

Arzu öğretmenlikte 17 yıllık bir deneyime sahiptir. Halen merkez Türkiye'de 12. sınıflara İngilizce öğretmektedir. Çalışmamızdaki çevrimiçi topluluğun aktif bir katılımcısıdır ve öğretmen araştırması hakkında oldukça isteklidir. Yüksek lisans ve doktora derecesine sahip değildir. Çalışmaya katıldığı sırada öğrettiği konu "Geçmiş olaylar hakkında konuşma ve geçmiş olayları anlatma" idi. Mesleğinde ve ana dalında bir fark yaratabilmesi için daha az öğrenciye ve daha esnek bir müfredata sahip olması gerektiğine inanmaktadır. En büyük endişelerinden birini de şu sözleriyle açıklanmıştır:

> *"Her zaman bölgemdeki yeni ve farklı öğretim yöntem ve tekniklerini yakalamak istiyorum. Bunun dışında, çoğu zaman öğrencilerimin konuşma becerilerini geliştirme konusunda çaresiz hissediyorum" (Arzu, çevrimiçi topluluk verileri).*

Vaka 4 Sevde

Sevde, orta Türkiye'de bir öğretmendir. Bir köy okulunda çalışmaktadır. Eğitim anlayışı, öğretmenlerin rehber olması görüşü etrafında şekillenir ve ona göre öğrencilerin eğitimlerinde daha fazla sorumluluk almaları gerekir. Öğrenciler, öğretmenin tanıttığı veya öğrenmeleri için onlara rehberlik ettiği içeriği keşfetmeli ve bunu kendileri bulmalıdır. Sevde bu çalışmada yer almak istedi çünkü İngilizce öğretmede daha iyi olmak istemektedir. Ayrıca, öğrencilerine İngilizceyi daha çok sevdirmeyi hedeflemektedir. Bu araştırma faaliyetini hem kendisini hem de öğrencilerini motive etmek için bir fırsat olarak görmektedir. Yüksek lisansa ya da

doktora derecesine sahip değildir. Sevde öğretimindeki asıl problemini şöyle açıklamaktadır:

> *"Benim için asıl sorun, bazı öğrencilerin motive olmasına rağmen, bazı sınıfların da motive olmaması. Tüm sınıflarda eğlenceli bir şekilde öğretmeye çalışıyorum ama bazı öğrenciler İngilizce öğrenmek istemiyor. Bunun ana nedeni (sebebi) sınavlar biliyorum ama onlar da sistemimizin bir gerçeği. Peki ne yapmalıyım? Lütfen yardım edin" (Sevde, çevrimiçi topluluk verileri).*

Vaka 5 Fatma

Fatma 27 yaşında ve 5 yıldır öğretmenlik yapıyor. Yarım aydır şu anki okulunda görev yapmakta. Yüksek lisans ya da doktora derecesi bulunmamaktadır. Öğrencilerin kendi öğrenmeleri için sorumluluk almaları gerektiğine inanıyor, ancak en başta davranışsal problemlerle uğraşması gerektiğini düşünmekte. Ayrıca, başarı için ön koşul olarak gördüğü İngilizceyi sevmelerini sağlamaya çalışmaktadır. Öğrencilerinin öğrenmelerinde nasıl daha fazla sorumluluk almalarını sağlamaya çalıştığına dair bir örneği bir alıntı ile şöyle vermiştir:

> *Derste bir bilinmeyen kelime gördüklerinde, Türkçe 'sini derhal söylememeyi tercih ediyorum. Sebebi araştırmaya yönlendirmek ve araştırmayı teşvik etmek için öğrencinin önce kelimeyi sözlükte araştırmalarını ya da interneti ve görselleri kullanmalarını istiyorum. Hazır bilgi vermek istemiyorum. Ayrıca bu davranışımın nedenlerini de onlarla paylaşıyorum. Bunun benim amacım olduğunu ve soruyu cevaplayamayacağımı belirtiyorum. Alıştılar ve bu yöntem işe yarıyor. Etkilerin kalıcı olmasını istiyorum. Yönlendirmek için rehberlik etmek istiyorum. Bu benim amacım. (Fatma, 1. görüşme verileri)*

Vaka 6 Maide

Maide 33 yaşında ve 4 yıldır öğretmenlik yapmaktadır. Şu anki okulunda 2 yıldır öğretmenlik yapıyor. Maide yüksek lisans veya doktora derecesine sahip değil.

Maide'nin çalıştığı okulda, okul ve sınıflar kalabalıktır ve Maide'nin ders yoğunluğu fazladır. Bazen aralıksız 7 saat ders yaptığını belirtmektedir. İşini öncelikle bir akademik eğitimciden çok bir yaşam becerileri eğitimcisi olarak tanımlar. Öğrencileri eğitmenin, öğretmen konuya hâkim ve öğretmeye istekli olduğu sürece başarıldığına inanmaktadır. Ancak, ona göre her şeyden önce ülke ve topluma yararlı olan iyi ahlaklı bireyler yetiştirmek önemlidir. Ahlaki olarak gelişmiş öğrencilerin, akademik konularda da kolayca ustalaşabileceklerine inanmaktadır. Kendisi bunu şöyle ifade eder:

> *Ben asıl eksik noktanın bu olduğuna inanıyorum. Saygı konusunda hiçbir fikri olmayan öğrencilerin, genel gerçeklerde ve akademik alanlarda başarılı olabileceğine inanmıyorum (Maide, 1. görüşme).*

Vaka 7 Yeliz

Yeliz, 7 yıldır öğretmenlik yapan 29 yaşında bir öğretmendir. Şu anki okulunda 3,5 yıldır öğretmenlik yapıyor. Yüksek lisans ya da doktora derecesine sahip değildir. Kendisini hoşgörülü bir öğretmen olarak tanımlar. İngilizcenin, sevilmeden öğrenilemeyecek bir konu olduğuna inanıyor. Dolayısıyla, yüksek derecede sabırlı ve hoşgörülü olmaya çalıştığını belirtti. Öğrencilerinin yaşayarak öğrenmelerini istiyor ve içerikten önce öğrenmenin yollarını öğretmeyi hedefliyor. Öğrencilerini, yaşam boyu öğrenmeleri için eğitmeyi amaçlar. Ayrıca öğretmenlerin öğrenciler için önemli örnekler oluşturduklarına inanıyor. Öğrencilerin öğretmenleri kıyafetlerden davranışlara kadar rol modeli olarak aldıklarını gözlemlemektedir. Bu nedenle, ona göre bir öğretmenin ahlaki değerleri ve adaleti ile örnek davranış sergilemesi gerekir. Daha sonra eğitim kısmının geldiğini belirtiyor. Ayrıca, bir İngilizce öğretmenin öğrencilere açık fikirli olmayı ve diğer kültürlere açık olmayı öğretmesi gerektiğini ve dünya görüşlerini de buna göre şekillendirmelerini öğretmesi gerektiğini ekliyor. Yeliz'in öğretmen araştırmasının konusu motivasyondur. Öğrencilerinin motivasyon seviyelerini ve motivasyon eksikliğinin olası sebeplerini görmek istemektedir.

Profesyonel Çevrimiçi Topluluğun Diğer Katılımcıları

Çalışma verilerinin toplandığı kişiler arasında topluluğa katılan ancak araştırmayı tamamlamadan araştırma sürecini bırakan öğretmenler de vardır. Bu öğretmenler hakkında bilgi edinmek, onların durumları ve katılımları, öğretmenlerin yaşamlarındaki öğretmen araştırmasının gerçek doğasının anlaşılması açısından önemlidir Ek olarak, çalışmayı bırakma nedenleri ve çevrimiçi topluluğun kullanımıyla ilgili deneyimleri de eldeki olguya biraz daha ışık tutabilir. Bu nedenle, çalışmayı bırakan öğretmenler de veri kaynağı olarak kullanılmıştır. Bu tanıma uyan katılımcılar arasında Tarık, Esen, Hatice Armağan ve Hakan yer almaktadır

Tarık

Tarık öğretmenlikte 5 yıllık bir deneyime sahiptir. Lisede 9-10-11 ve 12. sınıflarda görev yapmaktadır. Öğretmenlik araştırması yapmayı kendini profesyonel anlamda geliştirmek istediğinden istemektedir.

Esen

Esen 43 yaşında ve 20 yıllık bir öğretmendir. Şu anda çalıştığı okulda 8 senedir öğretmenlik yapmaktadır. Öğretim felsefesini öğrenci merkezli olarak tanımlamaktadır. Klasik yöntemlerden uzak, sürdürülebilir yöntemler kullanarak öğrencilerde fark yaratmayı hedeflemektedir.

Esen'in sınıftaki problemi şu şekildedir: "Dil sınıfı öğrencilerinin dilbilgisi konusunda gerçekten iyi olmalarına, okuduğunu anlama, yazma vb. konularda iyi olmalarına rağmen konuşmada yeterince iyi değiller" (Esen, çevrimiçi topluluk verileri).

Hatice

Hatice 2000'den beri öğretmendir. Yüksek Lisans veya doktora derecesine sahip değildir. Günlük öğretim çalışmaları şunları içeriyor:

“İngilizcenin temel yapıları, bazı gramer kuralları, günlük konuşmalar, kolay hayatta ihtiyaç duydukları sözcükleri (öğretme), cümleler ve kısa paragraflar yazma veya diyaloglar okuma. Biraz şarkı veya hikâye dinleme. (Hatice, topluluğa giriş verileri)

Armağan

Armağan araştırma sorusunu Edmodo grubuna şöyle yazdı:

“Ortaokul öğrencileri hedef dili kullanmak istemiyor. Genelde Türkçe konuşmaya çalışıyorlar. Konuşma becerilerini nasıl geliştirebiliriz?”

Hakan

Hakan 12 yıllık bir öğretmendir. Şu anki okulunda 5 yıldır öğretmenlik yapıyor. Derslerini etkileşimli dersler olarak tanımlamaktadır ve öğrencilerinden derslerinde konuşmalarını ister. Ağır gramer temelli dersleri desteklememektedir. Bununla birlikte, liselerde dil bölümü sınıflarında, sistem biraz farklılıklar gösterir. Burada sınavları çözme ve öğrencileri üniversite sınavına hazırlama üzerine odaklanılır. Ona göre, İngilizce öğretmeninin görevi, öğrencilerin İngilizce dilini kullanabileceği alternatif yerler olmadığından öğrencilerin konuşabileceği bir ortam sağlamaktır.

Araştırma ortamı

Ana araştırma ortamı, öğretmenlerin ve araştırmacıların üye oldukları çevrimiçi bir topluluktur. Topluluk Edmodo ’da yer almaktadır. Edmodo, öğretmenlerin ve öğrencilerin bir araya geldiği bir öğrenme yönetim sistemi olan sosyal bir platformdur. Güvenli bir şekilde iletişim kurmak, materyal paylaşmak, ödev vermek ve ödev yapmayı mümkün kılar. Eğitimcilerin ödev, sınav ve anket oluşturmalarını ve bu faaliyetlere son tarih koymalarını sağlayan yönetim araçları vardır. Öğretmen ödevleri öğrencilerle etkileşimli olarak değerlendirebilir ve öğrencilere ödevleri

bildirebilir. Öğretmenler öğrencilere geri bildirim verebilir ve öğrenciler öğretmen notlarına cevap yazabilirler. Öğrenciler bu web sitesi aracılığıyla akranlarına ve öğretmenine mesaj gönderebilirler. Ayrıca paylaşılan içeriği, genel notları veya web sitesinde yayınlanan soruları birlikte görebilirler.

Veri Toplama Araçları

Creswell (1998) ve Yin (2003), vaka incelemelerinde veri toplamanın geniş ve zengin olması gerektiğini, bu nedenle farklı ve çoklu bilgi kaynakları kullanmanın önemini vurgulamaktadır. Bu çalışmada, kullanılan veri toplama araçları, her bir katılımcıyla ilk ve son olmak üzere iki kez yapılan mülakatları, araştırma katılımcılarının tuttuğu araştırma günlüklerini, katılımcıların araştırma planlarını, katılımcıların yazılı araştırma raporlarını ve araştırmacı alan notlarını (internet sitesindeki etkileşimlere dayanarak) içermektedir. Yin (2018) tarafından vurgulanan dokümantasyon ve kayıt tutmanın önemi, araştırmacı alan notlarında kendini göstermektedir. Bu tür bir dokümantasyon, çalışmaların tekrar edilebilmesini mümkün kıldığı için de önemlidir.

Veri Analizi

Glaser ve Strauss'un (1967) sürekli karşılaştırmaya dair açıklamaları bize birkaç adımda kodlamanın daha ince detaylarını göstermektedir. Bu çalışmada bu metot kullanılmıştır. "Her kategoriye uygulanabilir olayların karşılaştırılması" olan ilk adımda (s. 105) araştırmacı olayların gerçekleştiği gruplar (vakalar) arasında bir karşılaştırma yapar. Örneğin, araştırmacı bir kategori için bir olayı kodlarken, aynı kategori için kodlanmış önceki olaylar ile karşılaştırma yapılması gerekir. Açıklamalara paralel olarak, araştırmacı önce görüşme verilerini Word dokümanlarına aktarmıştır. Uyumsuzluk olup olmadığını veya birbirlerini destekleyip desteklemediklerini görmek için aynı kişiden gelen farklı veri kaynaklarını karşılaştırırken, çalışmanın transkripsiyonunu, yansımasını ve katılımcıların araştırma raporlarını birkaç kez okumuştur. Her katılımcı için

yansıtma günlükleri ve araştırma raporu bir Word belgesinde birleştirildi. Bunları takiben söz konusu kelime formatındaki veri kaynakları MAXQDA yazılım programına aktarılmış ve burada analiz edilmiştir.

BULGULAR

Bu bölüm, öğretmenlerin araştırma yapılmasını desteklemek amaçlı kurulmuş uygulamalı bir çevrimiçi topluluğa katılımın öğretmenlerin kendilerini araştırmacı olarak görmeleri ve öğretmen araştırmasının profesyonel bir araç olarak gerekliliğini üzerindeki görüşlerine etkisini gösteren bulguları tasvir etmektedir. Ayrıca bu çevrimiçi topluluğun öğretmenlerin gelecekte araştırma yapmaya devam etmek konusundaki isteklilikleri üzerine etkileri de göz önüne serilmiştir. Sonuçlar, farklı veri kümelerinden elde edilmiş ortak temalar olarak düzenlenmiştir. Öğretmenlerin yansıtmaları öğretmenlerin son araştırma raporuna eklenmiştir. Öğretmenlerin son araştırma raporu "katılımcı araştırmasının adı" olarak etiketlenmiştir. Birinci yazan Word dosyası, ilk görüşmeyi ifade ederken, ikincisi son görüşmeyi ifade eder. Başlangıçta, her vaka temaların bu vakadaki önemini gösterecek şekilde listelendi. Bunu takiben, karşılaştırmalı vaka analizinden elde edilen sonuçlar araştırma sorularına cevap verecek temalar halinde sunulmuştur.

Çoklu Vaka Sonuçları

Araştırma Sorusu: Öğretmen araştırmasına katılımın meslek için İngilizce öğretmenlerinin kendilerini araştırmacı olarak görmeleri üzerindeki etkisi nedir?

Tema 1. Araştırmacı Kimliği

Bu çalışmadaki öğretmenler araştırmanın asıl uygulayıcıları oldular. Çevrimiçi uygulama topluluğundaki rollerinin bir parçası olarak planlama sürecinde yer aldılar; araştırmayı yaptılar ve sonuçları yorumladılar. Bu da onları araştırmanın meşru katılımcıları yaptı (Megowan-Romanowicz, 2010). Bu deneyim, öğretmen araştırmacılarının kendi haklarındaki görüşlerini etkiledi. Bu konuyla ilgili aşağıdaki temalar belirlenmiştir.

Tablo 1

Araştırmacı Kimliği

Araştırmacı Kimliği	***f***
Araştırmanın yeri	32
Özgüven	9
TR sonrası araştırma yetkinlikleri	19
Gelecekteki çalışmalar için olumlu düşünceler	10
Gelecekteki çalışmalar için çekinceli olumlu düşünceler	3
TR'nin gönüllü doğası	5
TR ek görev zorunluluğu	5
Araştırma becerilerinin eksikliği	6
GENEL TOPLAM	89

Tema 2 TR Mesleki Yararları

Bazı öğretmenler açık olarak ya da yansıtma yorumları yoluyla öğretmen araştırmasının yararlı olduğunu ifade etmişlerdir. Faydaları farklı yönleriyle belirlemişlerdir.

Tablo 2, bu temanın sıklığını ve alt kodlarını göstermektedir.

Tablo 2

TR Mesleki Yararları

TR Mesleki Yararları	***f***
Gelişmeleri takip etme	4
Geri bildirim	1
Karar için zemin	3
İş memnuniyeti	6
Diğer çözümlere bakma	1
Sorunların ve olası çözümlerin farkında olma	7
Uygulama ve teori arasındaki köprü	2
Araştırma yaptıktan sonra öğretmen farkındalıkları	34
GENEL TOPLAM	58

Tema 4 TR ile İlgili Endişeler

Öğretmen araştırması sürecinde bazı endişeler, öneriler ve sorular ortaya çıkmıştır. Bunlar TR ile ilgili endişeler teması altında derlenmiş ve bize süreçle ilgili çeşitli bilgiler vermiştir. Bu temanın alt kodları Tablo 3'te verilmiştir.

Tablo 3

TR ile İlgili Endişeler

TR ile İlgili Endişeler	*f*
Uygulama sürecindeki sorunlar	20
Araştırmanın değiştiremeyeceği şeyler	2
GENEL TOPLAM	22

Araştırma Sorusu: Öğretmen araştırmalarına katılımın Meslek içi İngilizce öğretmenlerinin eğitim rollerini ve bağlamını anlamadaki etkisi nedir?

Tema 5 Rollerin anlaşılması

Çalışmanın bir başka sorusu ise: "Öğretmen araştırmasına katılımın, EFL öğretmenlerinin eğitim rollerini ve bağlamlarını anlamaları üzerine etkisi nedir?" idi. Bunu görebilmek için, çalışmanın başında öğretmenlerin rollerini nasıl anladıklarına dair sorular soruldu. Bu konuda meydana gelen farklılıklar, öğretmenlerin yansıtmalarında son görüşmelerde tespit edilmeye çalışılmıştır. Bu soruyu aydınlatabilecek kodlar, rollerin anlaşılması teması altında derlendi.

Öğretmenlerin katıldığı araştırma başından sonuna kadar üç ay sürmüş, nispeten kısa süreli bir çalışmadır. Bu zamanın büyük bir kısmı, kavramların, veri toplama yollarının ya da analizin teknik yönlerinin eğitimi için harcanmıştır. Öğretmenler, araştırma yetkinlikleri ve derslerine yönelik farkındalıklarının artması, derslerin öğrenciler tarafından nasıl algılandığı hakkında farkındalıklarının artması konularında ve ders ve öğrencilerin yaşamlarındaki problemleri fark etme açısından gelişti. Bunların bir sonucu olarak, bazı öğretmenler öğretim rolleri hakkındaki ilk anlayışlarını güçlendirdi. Bazıları yeni anlayışlar kazandı. Öğretmenler sınıfa yaklaşmanın yeni yollarını öğrendi ve sınıfları hakkında ve öğrencilerin ilişkileri,

konusunda yeni bilgiler keşfetti (Lattuca, 2002). Araştırma yönetmede bu işe yeni başlayanlar olarak bir rol kazandılar. Sürecin sonunda, araştırma becerilerini geliştirmiş oldular. Bu deneyim, kendi rollerini yeni bir ışık altında görmelerine yardımcı oldu. Buna ek olarak, araştırma yaptıktan sonra sınıfları ile ilgili fark ettikleri şeyler ile beraber öğretmen olarak rollerini bazı alanlarda da genişlettiler. Bu yönler öğrencinin günlük yaşantısına daha fazla dahil olma gerekliliği, aileleri ve diğer koşullar hakkında daha fazla bilgi sahibi olma gerekliliği, daha esnek olma gerekliliği, İngilizceyi günlük hayata entegre etme gerekliliği, öğrencilerin İngilizcenin kariyer açısından faydalarından daha fazla haberdar olmalarını sağlamak için rehberlik edilmesi gerekliliğidir. Son olarak öğretmenler, öğrenci geri bildirimlerinin değerini takdir etmiş ve ilk elden dönütleri alarak öğrencilerin ders yürütmeleri konusundaki görüşlerini görmüştür.

Tema 6 PLC'nin Faydaları

Çalışmamız aynı zamanda çevrimiçi bir Mesleki Öğrenme topluluğunun (PLC) öğretmen araştırmasının uygulanması üzerindeki etkisi ve bu topluluğun İngilizce öğretmenlerinin öğretmen araştırmasına (TR) devam etme isteklerindeki yerine ışık tutmayı amaçladı. Bu soruya cevap vermek için, ilgili kodlar “PLC'nin faydaları”, “PLC'nin dezavantajları” ve “fırsatlar” temaları altında gruplandırılmıştır. Fırsatlar, öğretmenlerin öğretmen araştırmasına devam etmek istediklerinde sahip olmak istedikleri fırsat ve koşulları ifade eder. Öğretmenin belirttiği yön ve destek gerekliliği çevrimiçi veya başka bir topluluk tarafından sağlanabilir.

Çevrimiçi topluluğun etkileri öğretmenlere soruldu ve olumlu yorumlar ve cevaplar PLC'nin yararları teması altında derlendi. Bu temanın alt kodları Tablo 4'de verilmiştir. Tablo 5’te ise PLC’nin dezavantaj ve eksiklikleri yer almaktadır.

Tablo 4

PLC'nin Faydaları

PLC'nin Faydaları	***f***
Gelecek için	6
Danışman Desteği	6
Edmodo Bilinci	3
Uzun vadeli	1
Pratik	6
Topluluk duygusu	11
Bir rota	2
Kaynaklar	5
Özel mesajlar	1
Yorumlara bakma	13
GENEL TOPLAM	54

Tablo 5

Dezavantajlar / PLC Eksiklikleri

Dezavantajlar / PLC Eksiklikleri	***f***
Kısa zaman	1
TR'de Tecrübe	6
Yüz yüze	9
Yeni sistem	2
Teknik problemler	1
Canlı Toplantı Eksikliği	4
Bölünme yok / küçük gruplar yok	4
Zaman eksikliği	2

Tablo 5 (devamı)

Dezavantajlar / PLC Eksiklikleri

Dezavantajlar / PLC Eksiklikleri	***f***
Paylaşma korkusu	5
GENEL TOPLAM	34

Tema 8 Olanaklar

Bu tema, öğretmenlerin gelecekteki çalışmaları için gerekli olan koşulları özetledi. Öğretmenlerden bazıları bir destek topluluğunun gerekliliğinin altını çizdi ve bu durum gelecekteki araştırma çabalarında bir topluluğun önemini gösterdi. Bunun dışında öğretmenler fazladan zaman istediler ve araştırmaların yaygınlaşabilmesi için MEB desteği istediler. Bu tema Tablo 6'da gösterilmektedir.

Tablo 6

Olanaklar

Fırsatlar	***f***
Kıymet takdiri	1
Danışman	8
Kaynaklar	2
Zaman	1
Diğer uzmanların iş birliği	1
Ortak	3
MEB desteği	3
GENEL TOPLAM	19

TARTIŞMA

Bu bölümde, bulgular bu alandaki önceki çalışmalara atıfta bulunularak tartışılacaktır. Bu çalışmanın ön plana çıkardığı yeni görüşler, bu çalışma ile diğer çalışmaların sonuçlarının farklılıkları sentezlenecek ve öğretmenlerin hizmet içi eğitiminde mesleki gelişim faaliyeti olarak öğretmen araştırması ile ilgili bazı çıkarımlar yapılacaktır.

Öğretmen Araştırmasını Kolaylaştıracak Çevrimiçi Eğitim İçin Bir Kılavuz

Tartışmanın bu bölümünde, çalışmanın bulgularına dayanarak bir kılavuz önerilecektir. Bu kılavuz, öğretmenler için benzer çevrimiçi araştırma eğitimleri için kullanılabilir. Kılavuz, öğretmen araştırması için çevrimiçi topluluğun farklı bileşenlerinin ilişkilerine dayanmaktadır. Bileşenler (a) özne, (b) amaçlar, (c) araçlar (eserler) (d) topluluk, (e) kurallar, (f) roller ve (g) sonuçtur (Mwalongo, 2016). Bunlar Tablo 7 de gösterilmektedir.

Tablo 7

PLC'nin Bileşenleri

ARAÇ	ROL	KURAL	AMAÇ	ÖZNE	TOPLULUK	SONUÇ
Bir öğrenme yönetim sistemi	Bilgi arayan	Bilgi arayan	Bilgi arama	Araştırmacı	Yüz-Yüze Bileşen	Öğretmen araştırmacı olarak kendine güven
Özel mesajlaşma sistemi	Kişilerarası İletişimci	Ağ görgü kuralları	Destek arama	Araştırma Danışmanı	Toplulukta Bölünme	Öğretmen Araştırması projeleri
Ortak mesajlaşma sistemi	Kendini Yansıtıcı		Rehber olarak takip etme		Uzun süreli	Araştırma yeterlilikleri
Çevrimiçi canlı toplantı araçları	İçerik üreticisi		Bilgi arama		Birden fazla döngü	Araştırma için Gelecek Planları

Tablo 7 (devamı)

PLC'nin Bileşenleri

ARAÇ	ROL	KURAL	AMAÇ	ÖZNE	TOPLULUK	SONUÇ
Kişisel yazılı olmayan soru-cevap araçları	İçerik düzenleyici.		Yansıtma		Destekleyici	Araştırmanın yararları ve zorluklarını takdir etme
Paylaşılan kütüphane	Araştırma Danışmanı		Yorumları Okuma			Öğretmenlerin öğretimleri hakkındaki görüşlerinde değişimler
Teknik Destek	Uzaktan İzleyen		Bireysel dönüt alma			Araştırmanın sürdürülebilirliği
Görev Yöneticisi	Yatay rol dağılımı		Bilgi iletme			
Yorun Bölümü			Görevleri yapma, İşbirlikçi aktiviteleri yapma			
İÇERİK (minimum ve maksimum çıktılar)		**GÖREVLER**		**MOTİVASYON KAYNAKLARI**		**PROJE**

- Kılavuz İlke 1: Bu çalışmanın bulgularına dayanarak, öğretmenlerin hizmet içi öğretmen araştırması pratiğini geliştirmeye yönelik oluşturulan çevrimiçi bir topluluğun, öğretmen araştırma eğitimi başarısı için gerekli araçlara sahip olması gerekir. Görevleri atama ve takip etme, son tarihleri takip etme gibi yönetim araçlarının varlığı, öğretmenleri zaten yuğun olan günlük ders programlarında araştırma için verilen görevleri yapmalarını sağlamak için çok önemlidir. Ayrıca, topluluk duygusunun oluşturulması, fikirlerin müzakere edilmesi ve birbirlerinden öğrenmek için ortak mesajlaşma ve ortak yorum araçları gerekir. Bununla birlikte, özel bir mesajlaşma sistemi, öğretmen araştırması topluluklarının temelinde gereklidir, çünkü öğretmen araştırması, öğretmenlerin başkalarıyla paylaşmak istemediği konuları veya

yetersiz olarak eleştirilme korkusunu açığa çıkaran bazı başka durumları ortaya çıkarabilir.

- Kılavuz İlke 2: Topluluktaki roller hiyerarşik bir yapıyı temsil etmemelidir. Araştırmacı (danışman) araştırma konusunda daha bilgili olduğundan öğretmenler araştırmacının karar verici olduğunu düşünmemelidir. Öğretmen araştırmasında öğretmenlerin özgüvenli olması öğretmenlerin bu aktivitede sadece bir öğreniciden ziyade, birer ortak karar verici olduklarını hissetmelerine bağlıdır. Toplulukta farklı kişiler farklı roller üstlenir. Kişilerarası iletişimcinin rolü, toplumdaki olumlu ilişkiler için önemlidir. Uzaktan izleyenler, içerik oluşturma veya yorum yapmaya aktif olarak katılmasalar bile topluluktan yararlanabilirler. Uzaktan izleyenler gelecekte tam katılımcılara dönüşecek çevresel katılımcılar olabilirler ve topluluğu daha geniş bir kitleye duyurmada rol oynayabilirler. Bu kişiler ayrıca araştırma faaliyetlerinde topluluktan faydalanmaktadır. Araştırma ile önceki karşılaşmalar gelecekteki çalışmalar için önemlidir. Topluluk organizatörünün, kişilerarası iletişimde daha etkili olmaları için rollere müdahale etmek için atması gereken bazı adımlar olsa da bu konuda müdahale oldukça sınırlıdır ve topluluktaki insanlara bağlıdır. Bu nedenle, alternatif etkileşim yöntemlerine sahip olmak gibi diğer önlemler alınmalı ve topluluk organizatörü uzaktan izleyenlerin gelişimlerini takip etmeye devam etmelidir. Ek olarak, bir araştırma danışmanının sahip olması gereken bazı özellikler vardır. Bunlar pedagojik destek vermek, duygusal destek vermek ve kişilerin topluluğa kültürel uyumunu sağlamaktır.

- Kılavuz İlke 3: Çevrimiçi bir topluluk, pratikliği ve etkililiği ile coğrafi olarak farklı yerlere dağılmış katılımcılara öğretmen araştırması gerçekleştirmek amacı ile hizmet edebilir. Ancak, bu çalışmanın sonucuna göre, eğer imkanlar dahilinde ise belli aralıklarla topluluğun düzenli yüz yüze görüşmeler yapması önerilir. Karmaşık fikirlerin gelişimi, topluluk duygusu ve iş birliği, çevrimiçi topluluğun yüz yüze bileşeni ile

güçlendirilebilir. Araştırmada yer alan öğretmenler, yüz yüze görüşme ve etkileşimlerin araştırma yürütme sürecinin başarısı ve devamlılığı için gerekliliği ve önemini dile getirmişlerdir.

- Kılavuz İlke 4: Öğretmenlerin öğretmen araştırması yapmak ve bu araştırmanın temellerini öğrenmeye tam olarak uyum sağlamaları için bir uyum dönemi vardır. Ek olarak, çevrimiçi topluluk dinamiklerini çözmek için zamana ihtiyaç vardır. Bu nedenle, bu tür hizmet içi mesleki eğitim faaliyetleri uzun vadeli olmalı ve eğer uygunsa ardışık döngülere sahip olmalıdır. Araştırma sürecini tamamlayan öğretmenler yeni edindikleri anlayışları yansıtmış ve araştırmayı tekrar yapsalar farklı şekilde olmasını isteyebilecekleri yönlere dikkat çekmişlerdir. Yeni araştırma döngüleri, görüşlerini yeni araştırmalara uygulamalarına yardımcı olacak ve zamanla, toplumdaki rolleri tam katılımcıya dönüşecektir.

- Kılavuz İlke 5: Topluluktaki bölünme, araştırmacılara faydalı sonuçlar sağlayabilir. Benzer şartlara ve benzer araştırma problemlerine sahip öğretmenler, odaklarını daraltmak ve birbirlerinin araştırmalarına katkıda bulunmak için daha küçük özel ilgi grupları oluşturabilir. Araştırmadaki öğretmenler bu ihtiyacı araştırmalarını yürütmeleri ve sürdürmeleri için önemli bir faktör olarak dile getirmişlerdir.

- Kılavuz İlke 6: Öğretmenlerin sorunlarını açıp paylaşmalarında eleştirilme korkusu olabileceği görülmüştür. Bu nedenle, topluluk içinde destekleyici bir sistem kurulmalıdır, çevrimiçi toplulukta daha fazla deneyime sahip bazı katılımcılar etkileşim ve paylaşımın katalizörü olarak hareket edebilir.

Öğretmen araştırması yapılmasını kolaylaştırmak için oluşturulan bir çevrimiçi profesyonel öğrenme topluluğu içinde, belirtilen benzer katılımcı profillerine sahip katılımcıları olan ve ana hatlarıyla belirtilen ilkeleri izleyen bir eğitimde, katılımcı öğretmenlerde araştırma yapmada özgüven artışı, araştırma yeterliliklerinin artması,

gelecekteki araştırma çalışmalarına yönelik olumlu bakış açısı kazanma, olası sonuçlar olarak beklenebilir. Ayrıca öğretmenlerin araştırmanın yararlarını ve zorluklarını takdir etmeleri gerçekleşmiştir. Araştırma bulgularına ve araştırma sürecinde edinilen bilgi ve deneyimlere dayanarak öğretmenlerin öğretimleri ile ilgili fikirlerinde bazı değişiklikler olduğu görülmüştür. Öğretmen araştırma projeleri PLC'deki araştırma deneyiminin sonuçlarıdır. Son olarak, PLC ve danışman bileşeni, EFL öğretmenleri arasında araştırmanın sürdürülebilirliğinde önemli bir unsurdur.

SONUÇ

Günümüz mevcut eğitim anlayışı ve birkaç on yıl boyunca öğretmen bilişi ile ilgili öğrendiklerimiz, yetişkinlerin nasıl öğrendiği ve öğrenmenin doğası hakkındaki bilgilerimiz öğretmenlerin hizmet içi eğitim uygulamalarını sorgulamamıza neden oldu. Öğretmenlerin meslekte birer karar verici olarak rol almasının üzerindeki artan vurgu ve entelektüel olmanın öneminin anlaşılması ile öğretmen araştırması öğretmenlerin mesleki gelişiminde vazgeçilmez bir araçtır. Öğretim hayat boyu süren bir süreçtir ve öğretimin karmaşıklığı ve öngörülemezliği ile öğretmeni mesleğe girmeden önce mümkün olan tüm kaynak ve becerilerle donatmak mümkün değildir. Bu nedenle, öğretmen, alandaki hızlı gelişmelerine ve eğitimin organik yapısına ayak uydurmak için sürekli olarak kendi deneyimlerine veya repertuarına yeni bilgiler eklemeyi denemelidir.

Sonuç olarak, bu çalışmanın bulgularına dayanarak, öğretmen araştırmasının öğretmenlerin sınıftan geri bildirim alma, sorunlarını bulma ve problemlerini daha iyi anlamalarına yardımcı olduğu sonucuna varılmıştır. Ek olarak, öğretmenler öğrenme ve öğretme etkinliklerinde ve okuldaki rolleri ve sorumlulukları konusunda anlayışlarının genişlediğini bildirmiştir. Bununla birlikte, profesyonel bir çevrimiçi topluluğa katılmak, öğretmenlerin araştırma eğitiminde ve araştırmayı uygulama süresince öğretmenlere yardımcı olmuş ve öğretmen araştırması faaliyetlerinin

sürdürülmesi için desteğin oldukça önemli olduğunu açığa çıkarmıştır. Son olarak bu çalışmada araştırmaların desteklenmesi için tasarlanan çevrimiçi bir profesyonel öğrenme topluluğunun araştırma eğitimi ve bu araştırmanın uygulanmasında etkinliği sağlamak için gerekli bazı yönlendirici ilkeler önerilmiştir.

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