A QUALITATIVE CASE STUDY OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHERS' VIEWS TOWARDS TEACHER RESEARCH AS A PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT TOOL

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Approval of the Graduate School of Social Sciences

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ABSTRACT

A QUALITATIVE CASE STUDY OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHERS' VIEWS TOWARDS TEACHER RESEARCH AS A PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT TOOL

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This study investigated the current situation in relation to teacher research as a professional development tool among practicing English teachers in Turkey in their respective educational contexts. The perceptions of in-service ELT teachers on teacher research as a professional development tool and its sustainment among practitioners were studied in a qualitative case study design. Eighteen in- service EFL teachers from primary school, high school and university settings were recruited in the study. Initially, the participants completed an open ended questionnaire related to their previous experiences and perceptions of teacher research as a professional development tool. Following the surveys, a semi structured interview was utilized for in depth information. The results of the study indicated that teacher research has the potential to be an effective professional development tool among practitioners. Teacher research was found useful in helping to solve context specific classroom problems, raising awareness in teaching, promoting teacher autonomy, strengthening collaboration among colleagues and serving teachers as a feedback channel into the student perceptions. The attitudes of the teachers towards teacher research were mostly positive however; the challenges in the application of teacher research constituted the reasons for teachers' abstinence from using this tool. The prominent challenges included the lack of information related to the philosophical underpinnings of this tool, lack of technical

knowledge to apply teacher research and the physical problems such as limited resources, time and heavy workload. Based on the results of the study several implications have been drawn to make teacher use more prevalent among EFL teachers. School support notably is important in this asset.

Keywords: In-service EFL teacher professional development, teacher research as a professional development tool, benefits and challenges of teacher research

ÖZ

İNGİLİZCE ÖĞRETMENLERİNİN BİR MESLEKİ GELİŞİM ARACI OLARAK ÖĞRETMEN TARAFINDAN YAPILAN ARAŞTIRMALARA KARŞI GÖRÜŞLERİNİN NİTEL DURUM İNCELEMESİ

Karakaya, Nuriye
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Bu çalışma öğretmen tarafından yapılan araştırmaları bir mesleki gelişim aracı olarak incelemektedir. İngilizce öğretmenlerinin, bir mesleki gelişim aracı olarak öğretmen araştırmasına karşı olan algıları ve bu öğretmenler arasında bu aracın kullanımının devam ettirilebilmesinin yolları nitel durum incelemesi yöntemi ile araştırılmıştır. Çalışmada ilköğretim, lise ve üniversite seviyelerinde çalışan on sekiz İngilizce öğretmeni yer almıştır. Öncelikle katılımcılar öğretmen araştırmasına dair önceki deneyimleri ve bu araştırma türüne yönelik algılarıyla ilgili açık uçlu bir anket doldurmuşlardır. Anketi takiben konu ile ilgili daha geniş kapsamlı bilgiye ulaşılmak için mülakat kullanılmıştır. Sonuçlar öğretmen tarafından yapılan araştırmaların etkili bir mesleki gelişim aracı olmak açısından bir potansiyeli olduğunu göstermektedir. Öğretmen tarafından yapılan araştırmalar, sınıftaki problemlere duruma uygun çözümler getirme, eğitimsel etkinliklerde farkındalığı artırma, öğretmen özerkliğini destekleme, meslektaşlar arası işbirliğini artırma ve öğrenci bakış açılarını yansıtarak bir geri dönüt aracı olma özelliğini taşıma açılarından yararlı bulunmuştur. Öğretmenlerin bu araştırma türüne yönelik tutumlarının çoğunlukla olumlu olmasına rağmen, uygulama sürecindeki zorluklar öğretmenlerin bu araştırma türünü tercih etmemelerine sebep olmaktadır. Bu konudaki belirgin zorlukları bu araştırma türünün altında yatan felsefi fikirlerin bilinmemesi, bu araştırma türünü uygulayacak teknik bilgiye sahip olmama ile

sınırlı kaynaklar, zaman ve iş yükü fazlalığı gibi fiziksel problemlerdir. Bu çalışmanın sonuçlarına dayanarak öğretmen tarafından yapılan araştırmaların yaygınlaştırılması için çeşitli sonuçlar çıkarılmıştır. Bu bakımdan okul desteğinin yeri ayrıca önemlidir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Hizmet içi İngilizce Öğretmenleri Eğitimi, öğretmen tarafından yapılan araştırma, öğretmen tarafından yapılan araştırmaların yararları ve zorlukları

To the teachers who feel teaching in their hearts

and

To my sister Nuray Karakaya

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

PLAGIARISM iii
ABSTRACT iv
ÖZ vi
DEDICATION viii
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS ix
TABLE OF CONTENTS xi
LIST OF TABLES xiii
LIST OF FIGURES xiv
LIST OF ABBEVIATIOS xv
1. INTRODUCTION 1
1.1. Statement of the Problem 3
1.2. Research Questions 5
1.3. Significance of the Study 5
2. REVIEW OF LITERATURE 7
2.1. ELT Teacher Professional Development 7
2.2. Shift in Second Language Teacher Education 13
2.3. ELT Teacher Professional Development in Turkey 18
2.4. Teacher Research as a Professional Development Tool 21
3. METHODOLOGY 39
3.1. Introduction 39
3.2. Research Design 39
3.3. Research Questions 39
3.4. Research Setting & Participants 43
3.5. Data Collection Instruments 63
3.6. Data Collection Procedures 66
3.7. Pilot Studies 70
3.8. Standpoint of the Researcher 72
3.9. Trustworthiness 74
3.10. Data Analysis 78
4. FINDINGS 81

4.0. Introduction 81
4.1. Research Questions 83
4.2. Previous Experience in EFL Teacher Professional Development 83
4.3. Teacher Research Awareness 92
4.4. Benefits of TR 96
4.5. Difficulties of Teacher Research 107
4.6. Motivation for Teacher Research 113
4.7. Opinions of Teachers of Teacher Research 117
4.8. Teacher Needs to Conduct Teacher Research 124
4.9. Summary of the Findings 138
5. DISCUSSION 142
6. RECOMMENDATIONS 150
7. CONCLUSION 153
REFERENCES 156
APPENDICES
A 163
B 164
C 166
D 167
E 170
F 172
G 185
H 188
I 204

LIST OF TABLES

TABLES

Table: 2. 1. Summary of the Studies on Teachers as Researcher 37
Table: 3.1. Demographic Profile of the Participants..... 45
Table: 3. 2. Overview of the Survey 64
Table: 3.3. Interview Schedule 69
Table: 3 .4. Trustworthiness..... 75
Table: 4.1. Themes emerged in relation to the Portrait of the Case..... 82
Table: 4.2. Professional Development Activities..... 85
Table: 4.3. The Teachers Who conducted TR (ETR) and the Others (ITR)87
Table: 4.4. The Most Effective PD Activities..... 89
Table: 4.5. Themes in relation to TR 92
Table: 4.6. Codesin relation to TR Awareness 93
Table: 4.7. Codes in relation to Benefits of TR for Teachers 97
Table: 4.8. Codes in relation to Benefits of TR for Students..... 100
Table: 4.9. Codes in relation to Instructional Benefits 104
Table: 4.10. Codes in relation to Concerns Related to TR 107
Table: 4.11. Codes in relation to Problems Related to Application..... 109
Table: 4.12. Codes in relation to Motivation for TR 114
Table: 4.13. Codes in relation to Opinions of Teachers of TR as a Professional Development Tool..... 117
Table: 4.14. Codes in relation to Future TR Projects..... 122
Table: 4.15. Codes in relation to Features of Good TR 124
Table: 4.16. Codes in relation to Technical Needs of Teachers for TR..... 125
Table: 4.17. Codes in relation to Motivational Needs of Teachers for TR 130
Table: 4.18. Codes in relation to Environmental/school Culture Needs of Teachers for TR..... 131
Table: 4.19. Suggested Topics for TR by the Participants..... 135

LIST OF FIGURES

FIGURES

Figure: 3.1. Graphic Design of the Cases 42
Figure: 3.2. The Schools in the Study 44
Figure: 3.3. The Amount of Time Spent in Schools 67
Figure: 3.4. Data collection Procedures 68
Figure: 3.5. The Teachers Who Took Part in Interviews 68
Figure: 3.6. Constant Comparative Method of Data Analysis 79

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

The terms used throughout the paper are listed below:

EFL: English as a Foreign Language

TR: Teacher Research

ETR: Experienced in Teacher Research

ITR: Inexperienced in Teacher Research

PD: Professional Development

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Systematic teacher professional development component is the requirement of all successful education policies. Professional development of teachers is often cited "as a key lever for moving education off dead center towards a better future" (Vrasidas & Zembylas, 2004, p. 326). The reason for this proposition is the equally increased need for more qualified teachers as the standards of education is increased and the fact that the positive changes in curriculum and testing cannot be possible without the teachers' implementation them to their teaching. The teachers' professional development is also crucial for them to keep up with the changing roles of teachers in the educational system (Berne & Wilson, 1999). Additionally the general agreement in literature points out that learning to teach is a lifelong process, and it does not stop after graduating from the education programs of the universities. In literature there are several studies which show the importance of continuing teacher development for teachers. The study of Smith and Ingersoll (2004) supported the fact that beginning teachers who participated in induction and mentoring activities in their first year of teaching were less likely to drop their profession (as cited in Herrington & Kervin 2006). Having teachers who continue professional development also affects the students' achievement positively (Yoon & Duncan, 2007).

Richards & Farrell (2005) also list the gains of professional development as:

- Understanding how the process of language development occurs
- Understanding the kinds of decision-making that occur during lessons
- Reviewing one's own theories and principles of language teaching

- Determining learners' perceptions of classroom activities
- Developing an understanding of different styles of teaching
- Understanding how teachers' roles change according to the kind of learners they are teaching (as cited in Yurtsever, 2012 p.667).

Teacher development is especially important for EFL language teachers in Turkey. According to the 2012 English Proficiency Index of Education First (EF), Turkey' ranking is 32 among 52 countries falling into the low proficiency category (Bıyık, 2013). Although, it has been discussed to reform and revitalize the quality of English language instruction at national level, "there has always existed a big gap between ideal policy and actual classroom practices." (Kırgöz, 2011, p. 167). The importance of English for the county, rising demands for high quality education and increase in the number of students place challenges into English teaching. Empowering teachers and providing them with efficient teacher development are highly necessary for the EFL teachers to cope with challenges (Kırgöz, 2011). For these reasons, teacher professional development should be an integrated part of the profession itself.

There is not an agreement on the form of professional development to attain the best gain. Vrasidas and Glass (2004) specified that professional development can take a variety of shapes such as: collective or individual development; continuing education; pre- and in-service education; group work; team curriculum development; peer collaboration; and peer support (as cited in Vrasidas & Zembylas, 2004). Richards and Farrell lists "reflective writing through the use of teaching journals; reviewing audio or video recording of real time classroom instruction; and conducting teacher research" as activities which promote teacher growth (as cited in Çelik, Çepni, & İlyas, 2013, p. 1861). However traditionally, one of the most popular forms of teachers' professional development has mainly consisted of short term or one-time in-service programs conducted by outside authorities (Atay, 2008).

The expected results are rarely achieved out of formalized professional development activities such as workshops, training sessions and seminars for the reasons that the in-service programs are generally short term, they aren't defined on the basis of teachers' selection of problems, they are "superficial and fragmented, the commitment to and belief in serious professional development is quite limited" (Ball & Cohen, 1999, p. 5). Dissatisfaction with the professional development programs as described above and the ineffective dissemination technique which includes an outside expert to inform the teachers, caused alternative ways for teacher professional development to arise. "Inclusion of elements in teacher education courses to encourage participants to be learners and initiators of research has gained wide acceptance within the teacher education community" (Jorge, 2007, p.402). The features of teacher research which permit teachers to direct and be responsible of their own professional development makes it a worthwhile professional development tool to investigate.

1.1. Statement of the Problem

The studies related to second language teaching (Johnson, 2006; Kumaravadivelu, 2003) emphasize the shift in second language teacher education and the changing roles of teachers. This in shift in Second Language Teacher Education (SLTE) was parallel to the changes in the intellectual traditions of human learning. It changed from behaviorist to cognitive and then to social (Johnson K. , 2006). In behaviorist view, the teachers are portrayed as technicians, who are given little importance and seen as merely channels of the knowledge generated by experts. They didn't question validity and suitability and the necessities of the context. The teachers as reflective practitioners are portrayed as not only transmitters of knowledge but also problem solvers, who can adjust

education according to the needs of the specific group, who can look at past mistakes and improve them. The role of teachers as transformative intellectuals on the other hand ascribed teachers the role of combining their educational philosophies with the wider social issues (Kumaravadivelu , 2003). Teachers' roles are highlighted as knower, thinker and most importantly researcher and a change agent in this paradigm. Since they produce knowledge, in the light of this new understanding the teachers are assumed to have found the chance to make their voices heard in the academic circles. Practically; however, there are several issues to be considered before teacher research can become a common practice among teachers.

Organizational and institutional factors (Borg, 2009; Hahs-Vaughn & Yalowitz, 2009) teachers' personality (Akbari, 2007), teachers' different qualities such as background, experience etc… (Hahs-Vaughn & Yalowitz, 2009) are found to affect teachers' engagement in teacher research. The future direction of the teacher research principally depends on our knowledge of the context specific needs of teachers in relation to research. Therefore, it is worthwhile to investigate the teachers' current situation with the teacher research as a professional tool in Turkish context. The different conceptualizations of teacher research, teachers' own interpretations and awareness of this research type, their motivations and the problems that the teachers face in conducting teacher research constitutes the basis of this study. The aim of this qualitative case study is to understand the experiences, attitudes of ELT teachers towards teacher research as a tool of professional in Turkey. In this way, the study will contribute to our understanding of how the teacher research comes to life in several settings in Turkey context. It will be possible to understand the potential of teacher research as a professional development tool for ELT teachers, the problems in the application process and the suggestions for the improvement of teacher research from teachers' voices.

1.2. Research Questions

For the purpose of this study, the following questions were addressed:

1. What is the current situation in relation to teacher research as a professional development tool among practicing English teachers in Turkey in their respective educational contexts based on the perceptions and experiences of 18 EFL teachers in six different institutions?
    a. What are the views of in-service ELT teachers on teacher research as a professional development tool?
2. How can teacher research be sustained among English teachers' particular educational contexts?
    a. What are the important factors for involving and sustaining teacher research among English teachers?

1.3. Significance of the Study

It is indispensable to have an understanding of how teachers develop in order to perform their profession if the effectiveness of foreign language education is to be increased. Since teacher research constitutes a part of teacher development and it has a growing importance in the area of teacher development, it is worth to know more about it, and what the opinions of the teachers about the feasibility of teacher research are. "There are a limited number of studies of teacher research programs that address both the conditions under which the research was conducted and its influence on teachers, classrooms, pupils and schools"(Zeichner, 2006, p. 304).Additionally, there is little knowledge on how the teachers view this research type as a professional development tool (Byrnes, 2009). Having a clear picture of the demands of the English language teachers from several contexts in Turkey in order to implement teacher research as a form of

teacher professional development can fill the gap in the area and necessary designs can be implemented. As a result, the use of teacher research can be increased among the circles of practitioners.

CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The review of literature for this study is presented in two major sections. In the first section, the goal is to uncover the discussions made so far upon the importance of English Language teacher professional development and reflective teacher paradigm. The second part mainly focuses on the implications of teacher research on teachers' professional development.

2.1.ELT Teacher Professional Development

Having been an integral component of all levels of national education, English language teaching constitutes an important part of the education system in Turkey. Kırkgöz (2005) and Kızıltepe (2000) explain the place of English in Turkey via the reasons for learning it. In the international level, Turkey's enthusiasm for learning English is a result of English's being a tool to achieve economic competitiveness, and in the national level, knowing English represents better education and a more prestigious job (as cited in Kirkgöz, 2009). English enables people "to pursue international communication and keep up with developments in many fields" (Kirkgoz, 2007).The significance of English is also stressed in accessing to the information necessary for social development(Richards, 2008).

The status of English, both in Turkey and in the world places high demands on English language teaching. This area has been the focus of several reforms in the world. These reforms were initiated by internal and external factors. Internal factors include evolution of understanding in the

field of language education and teacher education. External factors are the globalization of the English language and the standardization efforts such as Common European Framework (Richards, 2008).

The role that the teachers play in the success of educational policies and in the reforms of these policies was phrased as "teacher is the focal point of reform studies for development of education systems" (Kavak & Baskan, 2009). They were also identified as the most important resource in schools by the 2005 OECD report. The same report and Yoon & Duncan (2007) also stress that the teachers are the most important decisive agents in the school variable to effect student achievement. Since teachers constitute such an important part of education, it is of utmost importance to understand the mechanisms that control and steer the teacher professional development process. The professional development of teachers is as important as the teachers in the educational system themselves.

Professionalism is approached via two different dimensions by Leung (in press). He states that the first dimension is institutionally prescribed professionalism. Along with the views of educational ministries' views on teaching, there is also another dimension which comprises of teachers' own interpretation of teaching and their reflection on these values (As cited in Richards, 2008). Professional development for teachers is viewed as "the key for improving the education" (Ball & Cohen, 1999 et al). It is not only necessary for the organizational change and educational reforms (Borko, Elliott, & Uchiyama, 2002), but also for teachers to keep up with new methods and techniques in their own field (Turhan & Arıkan, 2009), and for their individual growth. Thomas Carpenter (1989) and Deborah McCutchen (2002) underline the importance of continuing training for better student performances (as cited in Musset, 2010). Latham & Vogt (2007, p. 165) suggest that professional development schools "significantly and positively affected how long teachers remain in education." Teacher professional development contributes to the

development of teachers' abilities to examine teaching from the perspective of learners as well (Hammond, 2000).

Teacher development is defined by Richards & Farrell (2005) as activities and practices which serve long-term goal and growth of teachers' understanding of teaching and of themselves as teachers. They define the aims of professional development as:

- Understanding how the process of language development occurs
- Understanding how teachers' roles change according to the kind of learners they are teaching
- Understanding the kinds of decision-making that occur during lessons
- Reviewing one's own theories and principles of language teaching
- Developing an understanding of different styles of teaching
- Determining learners' perceptions of classroom activities

(Richards & Farrell, 2005, p.4 cited in Yurtsever, 2013, p.667)

Teacher development and teacher training were distinguished from each other in 1990s with the definition of teacher training as the "entry-level teaching skills linked to a specific teaching context" and teacher development as "longer-term development of the individual teacher over time" (Richards, 2008, s. 160). In the scope of this paper the latter is going to be dealt with. Zeichner (2006) specifies that under the best conditions, preservice teacher education can only prepare teacher to begin teaching. Pre service teaching should equip the students to learn from their practice and they should be supported for continuos learning through their careeers. The focus on the lifelong learning in the contemporary understanding of teaching profession is voiced in various contexts as the

most important principle of teaching (Çakır, 2013; Snow et al. 2006 cited in Karakaş, 2012; OECD 2010 report; Johnson, 2006 cited in Richards, 2008; Atay, 2006).

The terms teacher development and professional development is used to refer the same concept in the literature (Thornbory, 2006 as cited in Er, Ülgü, & Sarı, 2013). These activities include dissemination conferences, workshops (preparation to new subject-matter content), school-based activities (study groups, courses), personal teacher development (individual activities outside of schools) (Musset, 2010). Partly according to their duration (Ozer, 2008 cited in Bayar, 2014) the professional development activities are classified as: traditional and non-traditional professional development activities. However, more important than this criterion, traditional form of professional development is distingushed from the constructivist models of professional development in that in the former knowledge transmission is one way and in a top-down process. These programs are conducted by outside experts who inform teachers (Cullen, 1997 cited in Yurtsever, 2013). The traditional professional development activities include short workshops and conferences etc., whereas non traditional pressional development activities consist of mentoring, coaching, peer observation etc.(Bayar, 2014). In constructivist models such as peer coaching, mentoring, and self-directed gathering knowledge, teachers are more participative and the development is conducted in a bottom up process (Robert, 1998 cited in Yurtsever, 2013). Professional development methods such as "action research, mentoring, collaborative work, peer coaching, critical development teams and professional development through writing offer extended learning opportunities for teachers" (Byrnes, 2009, p. 26). In the 1960s, traditional knowledge-transmission activities were the common forms of professional development activities. They were decided from outsiders focusing on the gaps in the individual teachers' knowledge leaving the neeeds of the school out (Musset, 2010). Therefore, the traditional in service training

activities for the professional development of teachers were criticized in several aspects. The concerns include that these in-service programs aren't defined on the basis of teachers' selection of problems, they are "superficial and fragmented, the commitment to and belief in serious professional development is quite limited" (Ball & Cohen, 1999, p. 5). They aren't effective in improving the skills of teachers (Boyle et al., 2004 cited in Bayar, 2014). They also view teachers as lacking certain skills and the programs aimed to fix these deficits (Adams, 2009). Effective professional development should present major changes in beliefs, knowledge and practices. It is more complicated than learning new strategies or tips for teaching devised by others (Putnam & Borko, 1997). Birman et al. (2000) specified that traditional professional development activities do not provide enough time for the teachers to allow for this kind of change (as cited in Bayar, 2014). Additionally, these in service activities aren't in line with how the teachers learn (Borko, 2004).

The study conducted as a part of the Cheche Konnen Project allows us to see the differences between the traditional and non-traditional professional development activities. A group of science and English teachers did not enact the curriculum the way intended after a series of workshops, however when they constructed a community of practice and met every other week they adopted a discourse to think about their professions and they started to critique on their own teaching (Wilson & Berne, 1999).

The problem of teacher-learning which was traditionally conceived as related to the effectiveness of delivery gave way to the efforts to understand the social nature of teacher learning. Abdal- Haqq (1995, p.1) identified the following features for what makes a successful and effective professional development that it:

- Is on going
- Includes training, practice and feedback; opportunities for individual reflection and group inquiry into practice; and coaching or other follow up procedures
- Is school based and embedded in teacher work
- Is collaborative by providing opportunities for teachers to interact with peers
- Focuses on student learning, which should in part, guide assessment of its effectiveness
- Encourages and supports school based teacher initiatives
- Is rooted in the knowledge base for teaching
- Incorporates constructivist approaches to teaching and learning
- Recognizes teachers as professionals and adult learners
- Provides adequate time and follow-up support
- Is accessible and inclusive (as cited in Wilson & Berne, 1999 p. 175).

Borko (2004) as well, defined the key elements that make up professional development system as the professional development program; the teachers, who are the learners in the system; the facilitator, who guides teachers as they construct new knowledge and practices; the context in which the professional development occurs (p.4). She also compiled research investigating these elements into three phases. Phase 1 consisting of an individual professional development program at a single site. The program, teachers and their relationships were studied in this type of research excluding facilitator and context. The studies under this category unearthed that the teachers should know their subject areas well and should be able to understand student thinking and guide it. The research also provided evidence to the effectiveness of the professional learning communities using socio cultural conceptual frameworks. Phase 2 adds the element of facilitator to investigate and the studies under this category concluded the importance of facilitator. The facilitators should be able to build a community where the inquiry is valued. Finally, in the phase 3 context is also needs to be studied. She specified there weren't studies to be classified as the phase 3 studies.

Alternative professional learning contexts are discussed for a better education. One of those alternative professional developments is professional learning communities. One of the most important characteristics of those communities is collaborative work of teachers and other community members (Adams, 2009). Choi & Morrison (2013) studied how a five-year hybrid (online and face-to-face) professional development program helped teachers to adapt their practice to meet the needs of language minority and immigrant students. The teachers formed online and school based professional development communities and experienced mentors assigned them some designs to implement and then they provided the teachers with immediate feedback. The positive changes in teacher perceptions and classroom practice were observed in the study. "Using a social constructivist paradigm, research-based content was introduced by the university instructor, collaboratively processed with colleagues, implemented in real-life classrooms and collaboratively debriefed" (Choi& Morrison, 2013, p. 417).

2.2. Shift in Second Language Teacher Education

The reason for the pursuit for alternative professional development contexts lie in the fact that positivistic paradigm that had long been dominant in teacher education, started to lose its feasibility against the complexities of the teaching processes and the teacher learning. In the past the teachers were considered to gain the knowledge for teaching from others in terms of workshops or theoretical readings and easily transfer those to their teaching environment. The effects of teacher cognition and socio-cultural theory are now noticeable in SLTE (Richards, 2008). Due to the contribution of teacher cognition to SLTE, more is known about how teachers learn. Teacher cognition "helped capture the complexities of who teachers are, what they know and believe, how they learn to teach, and how they carry out their work in diverse contexts throughout their careers"

(Johnson, 2006, p. 236). In socio-cultural theory, social activities, social life and context are important in human learning (Johnson, 2006).Therefore; the problems related to the split of learning experience and location in applied linguistic model in SLTE (Britten, 1985 cited in Wright, 2010) can be handled differently in socio cultural theory.

Constructivist models of professional development take reflective practices as basis (Yurtsever, 2013). In the methods era the teachers had the primary role to implement the language teaching methods formulated in the academia. They didn't have much influence in the formulation process or a critical stance in the implementation phase (Akbari, 2007). In what is called post methods era, the teaching methods which were coined by the field experts for teachers to put into practice were met with skepticism (Kumaravadivelu, 2003). The methods were "prescribed by native theoreticians for a variety of unknown contexts" (Pishghadam, Zabihi, & Kermanshahi, 2012, p. 892). The pedagogy however should be local, sensitive to the lived experiences of the students and the society. This reality brought theory practice dichotomy.

Janagarajah (2012) mentions the gap between the practices of the local teachers in Sri Lanka and the expectation of TESOL experts in his auto ethnographic study. He mentions that at the end of the in service training, Janagarajah made a demo lesson for the field experts. He was criticized for code switching and he was asked which approach he had just used in the lesson. He pointed out that the names of the approaches were a blur to him (and many other teachers) and had no place in the lives of the teachers in the context. The approaches which were unrelated to each other did not find a place for themselves in this specific context. The experts on the other hand did not understand the needs of the local teachers and students. The teachers for instance devised an approach which they called "English for Library Purposes" which was not familiar to the experts in the field.

Kumaravadivelu (2001) underlines that, the division of theory and practice is harmful for the profession. “Theory and practice mutually inform, and together constitute, a dialectical praxis, an affirmation that has recently influenced L2 teaching and teacher education as well” (p. 540). He also points that this distinction between theory and practice partly affected reflective teaching movement and action research. During the postmodern era of ELT, the teachers were started to be seen as reflective, critical, participatory and transformative rather than consumers of knowledge (Pishghadam, Zabihi, & Kermanshahi, 2012). Reflection could be put broadly according to the main ideas derived from Dewey (1933) and Schön (1983) as:

> A tentative interpretation of given elements which comprises examination, exploration, introspection and analysis of all attainable consideration which will define and clarify the problem in hand (as cited in Radulescu, 2012 p. 999).

The benefits of reflection are expressed by CC1head (1988) as; it makes self-directed professional growth possible and the teachers take on an active roles in their professional development, theory and practice could be reconciled, and critical evaluation makes practice better (as cited in O’Sullivan, 2002). However reflection should not be interpreted as only evaluating the effectiveness of the theories created by experts by judging their usefulness in practice and make the practice better. There are several levels of reflection. Van Manen (1977) categorized them as technical rationality, practical reflection, and critical reflection (as cited in Akbari, 2007). According to Zeichner (1981) they are technical–rational, situational–institutional and moral–ethical levels (as cited in O’Sullivan, 2002). In technical rational level, the aim is to be able to implement the given professional knowledge effectively, in the situational- institutional level there is also room for evaluating the assumption and goals. In the last one however, the teachers needs to do ethical analysis as well as putting the analysis of personal action within the larger social and political context (O’Sullivan, 2002). What Kumaravadivelu (1999) suggests is the level of

reflection that the teachers should use is theorizing from practice and practicing what is being theorized.

The teachers should be equipped with the knowledge attitude and skill to construct their own context sensitive theory (Kumaravadivelu, 2001). In her study Radulescu (2011) discusses the significance of teaching reflection to the teacher at the earlier points of their professional development for them to be more receptive to the reflective practices throughout their careers. The assumption that the beliefs and background of the student affect teaching behavior and the perception of education steered the study. The aim was to bring these beliefs to the conscious level. When the students know their beliefs they accept them and an action towards it can be taken by them. In the study the students reflected on their past learning experiences and their teaching. The reflections of the students lacked the depth. They were heavily descriptive without critical aspects, reasons or comments. The students commented that their previous learning included information transfer models and they couldn't find chance to reflect on their teaching before. At the end of the study the students reported having benefitted from reflection in terms of being more self-aware about their lacking points and complexity of teaching. They expressed that this experience guided them to be continuous explorers of their own teaching and be more informed while adapting their teaching to different contexts.

O'Sullivan's (2002) study also provides us insights related to the process that the teachers incorporate reflective practice to their works. The researcher was assigned to hold an in-service program to guide the teachers to implement the reforms in Naimbian context. She aimed to use the action research and its cycles in her INSET program. The research focused on the development of a reflective approach. Initially the efforts to help teachers to be reflective didn't yield successful outcomes. The teachers weren't comfortable and accustomed to ask questions and also to

the innovative methods in teaching. The researcher also commented that the professional foundation of the teachers was inadequate to reflect on. They also didn't have any prior training to use reflection as a way of improving their practice. The researcher used a gradual system to develop reflective practices of teachers. She prepared demo lessons herself and provided the teachers with structured observation forms. She also made teachers look at their demo lessons from different perspectives via guiding them and making it possible for them to question their practices. At the end of the training, the teachers were able to analyze effectiveness and give reasons for their evaluations. She called her approach as structured reflective approach and at the end of the training the teachers reached what she called 'basic technical awareness'.

Lieberman (1995) characterized reflection as an effective professional development tool. He suggested teacher-research as an appropriate means of achieving it (as cited in Levin & Rock, 2003). Velez-Rendon (2002) also defends that "a research-based" approach to language teacher education is encouraged according to the principles of this stance. However, reflection alone which is not sytematic or intentional isn't included as teacher research (Cochran- Smith& Lyte, 1999 cited in Borg, 2013).

Reflective practices also are targets of criticism. The first concern is dwelling upon past in a retrospective manner and not using imagination and critical analysis (Akbari, 2007). Moreover; the type of reflection that is advocated is not moral ethical and emancipatory type (Birmingham, 2004 et al., cited in Akbari, 2007). In this sense it doesn't contribute to the education. Zeichner and Liston (1996), evaluated this situation as the teachers who didn't question the goals, values and the context in which the education takes place isn't engaged in reflective teaching. According to Braun and Crumpler (2004) reflection can increase the sense of self efficacy of teachers however Korthagen and Wubbles (1995) assert that

there is no guarantee that reflective practice will result in the increase of student success. Akbari (2007) criticizes the personality of the teachers which is an important element in reflection is missing in the literature of reflective practice. Lastly, Fendler (2003) warns about the danger of repetition and rediscovering what is already known via reflective practice. He also suggests that reflection could be used as a way of justifying inner voices of teachers (as cited in Akbari, 2007). Zeichner (2009) similarly attracts attention to the point that states that action research can be used as a tool to justify activities in classrooms which don't benefit the students. All in all Akbari (2007) tries to point out as well as its benefits to teachers such as being less dependent to outside and empowering aspects, it should be put in mind that teaching is not solely a practical activity denying theoretical foundation. He points that rather than rejecting theory reflection aims to promote practical knowledge to the level of theory.

2.3. ELT Teacher Professional Development in Turkey

In Turkey the responsibility for teacher education was given to the universities by the Higher Education Council (Yüksek Öğretim Kurulu) in 1981(Çakıroğlu & Çakıroğlu, 2010). Since this time, Higher Education Council (HEC) carried out several changes in the light of studies done by Initial Teacher Education Component of Ministry of Education to increase the quality of teacher education(YÖK, 1998a:14 cited in Kavak & Baskan, 2009). In 1997 English teaching has undergone several changes. English teaching started to be given at the grades 4 and 5 in the single stream of primary education which was comprised of 8 years. After 1997 reform the teacher development endevaour gained pace. Ministry of National Education MNE established the In-service English Language Teacher Training and Development Unit (INSET). This unit was responsible for organizing seminars, and conducting in-service training workshops.

MNE also collaborated with the associations such as The English language Teachers' Association in Turkey, (INGED), the British Council (BC) and the United States Information Agency (USIA) Since Turkey wanted to be a part of European Union, there were also component of project preparing for teachers such as Socrates, Comenius, Erasmus (Higher Education), Grundtvig (Adult Education), Minerva (New Technologies), Lingua and Leonardo da Vinci (Kirkgoz, 2007). In 1997 one of the major components of new reform was the 'Cooperation between Education Faculty and Practice School Programme'. The teachers were required to teach in school via this component (Kavak & Baskan, 2009). The challenges related to school practice program could be summarized as "building meaningful cooperation with schools, developing coherent links between the campus-based and school-based strands, training mentor teachers, and recognizing them as an integral part of the campus-based program" (Richards, 2008, p. 166).

In 2006 CHE made some changes in the curricula of the educations faculties. The aim was to be "responsive to the changing demands and needs of the social, educational and political domains; and local, national and international requirements" (Karakaş, 2012, p. 2) Karakaş (2012) argues that the current program is established on the applied-science model. Wallace (1999) explains the three models of professional education as Craft, Applied Science and Reflective Model. In the first model the trainees learn the job by imitating their experienced mentors. Applied science model is based on the conveyance of theoretical scientific knowledge to the trainees and expect them to apply this knowledge to real life situations. Lastly reflective model emphasizes on the experiential knowledge. The effectiveness of the courses depends on the evaluation and the reflection of the trainees (as cited in Çopur, 2008). Karakaş (2012) calls attention to Day's (1991) ideas on the problems of transferring the "know hows" into practice effectively. Day's (1991 cited in Karakaş

2012) and Doyle's (1990 cited in Seferoğlu, 2007) suggestion to overcome this problem is to add a reflective practice component to the program.

In service training of teachers are regulated by MNE. Teachers must attend in-service training programs by laws such as the Civil Servants' Law No. 657 (Devlet Memurlari Kanunu, 1965, a.214) and the National Education Principal Law No.1739 (Milli Egitim Temel Kanunu, 1973, a.48) (as cited in Özer, 2004). Similar to the world literature, "in Turkey the common understanding of in-service teacher development is a series of topically unrelated workshops" (Daloğlu, 2004, p. 677). Daloğlu suggests that since the topics aren't determined by the teachers, the individual problems aren't addressed in this series and the teachers cannot benefit from INSET activities. Basing the INSET activities on the assumption that the teachers lack certain skills or knowledge to teach effectively is another reason for the failure of the INSET programs. Rather than this view the teachers should be approached as active learners who are involved in the in service training actively participating and reflecting.

The study conducted by Bayar (2014) with 16 teachers revealed that the teachers in Turkey context listed the following criteria to be met in INSET activities in order for them to be effective. The criteria are: match to existing teacher needs, match to existing school needs, teacher involvement in the design and planning of professional development activities, active participation opportunities, long-term engagement and high quality instructors. Another study conducted with 148 English teachers in Turkey points out that in participating in workshops and service training program, doing research and mentoring effect teachers positively in their professional development, following professional journals, and observation isn't as much effective though (Çakır, 2013).

The study conducted by Daloğlu (2004) carries several of the characteristics which were listed as a professional development practice to

be effective. In the study, the professional development program was launched at a school in Turkey setting for English language lessons for the aim of improving instructional materials. The need was jointly decided by the students, teachers, administrators and parents. It was long term, involved active participation of teachers and it was school embedded. The problems related to materials were identified as there were some differences in materials between classes and there were repeated parts in the materials across grades. Following this the teachers formed working groups. The teachers attended in meetings with a specialist and they also had discussion groups afterwards. The materials were prepared in the light of the characteristics of learner centeredness, multiple intelligences, interactiveness, and mixed ability classes. Then the materials were put into a source bank in the school, piloted and evaluated by the teachers. At the end of the program the teachers were interviewed and filled a questionnaire about the practice. The study suggests that the teachers immediately benefitted from the outcomes in terms of materials. The student participation increased. The attitudes of the teachers towards professional development positively affected. The confidence of the teachers as professionals increased.

2.4. Teacher Research as a Professional Development Tool

2.4.1.1. Overview

Lyte and Cochran Smith (1990, 1999) defined teacher research as systematic, intentional and self-critical inquiry by teachers about their own work (as cited in Borg, 2006; Ritchie, 2006; Adams, 2009; Borg, 2013). The research which fits into this definition has also been called as practitioner research, action research; collaborative inquiry, critical inquiry, self-study and teacher research (Roulston et al., 2005). However in the literature review process for this study, the most frequently

encountered labels related to practitioner initiated research have been the terms action research and teacher research. These two terms which were sometimes used interchangeably were differentiated by Ritchie (2006) as the necessity of the presence of an action according to the results of action research which may not be the case for teacher research. Check & Schut (2014) focused on the fact that teacher research was used as a general term which includes many methodologies and situations, and they listed several features of teacher research which distinguish it from cyclical action research:

1. Teacher research is not necessarily cyclic in nature.
2. Teacher research allows for but does not necessarily require a team element—one teacher can conduct practitioner inquiry in his or her own classroom, for his or her own benefit.
3. Teacher research does not necessarily require a specific action or improvement as an outcome—it can produce a change in a teacher's perceptions, attitudes, or thinking that will eventually result in particular changes, but the immediate result of a practitioner inquiry project need not be a set of specific actions(p.264).

Action research or teacher research is a type of L2 classroom research. Classroom research is defined by Allwright and Bailey (1991) as a cover term including research studies that are related to classroom language learning and teaching (as cited inMcKay, 2009).For the present study, the focus was the fact that the research was conducted by teachers, and the broad term teacher research was used to cover all the terms inherent to teacher initiated research. All the research activities done by teachers related to their L2 teaching and the students' learning was considered as teacher research in the study.

The teachers were pronounced as the best people to conduct research on their own practices by van Lier, 1994 (as cited in Banegas, Pavese, Velázquez, & Vélez, 2013). The teachers' unique position as insiders in practice for problem solving, and the ideas related to the importance of practitioner generated knowledge for the knowledge base in education (Zeichner, 2006) made teacher research an important tool for educational

reforms likewise for teacher professional development. There has also been emphasis on the collaborative teacher research in the literature. Johnson (2004) underlines the importance of assistance of others in learning. One can develop their higher functions and with the assistance of others. As a result, they can reach the self- regulated stage. This shows the importance of being participants in communities.In line with this arguments, Burns (1999) states that teacher research could be strengthened via the contribution of other teachers. Collaborative teacher research is quite important in changing the isolated nature of teaching. Additionally, the changes are more likely to occur as a result of collaborative action research in the institutions rather than individual teacher research. In this section the teacher research as a form of professional development, along with its historical roots and theoretical base is going to be presented.

2.4.1.2. A Brief History of Teacher Research

"Action research" which is recognized as the ancestor of teacher research (Borg, 2013) was coined as a term by Kurt Lewin around 1940s. Rather than relying on de-contextualized, statistical method focused research; Kurt Lewin aimed to improve the conditions in society by involving the participants in the formulation, implementation and evaluation of research (Somekh & Zeichner, 2009). "He is also credited for providing action research with its own method, which is composed of a 'circle' of planning, acting, and fact finding about the result of an action"(Sanderse, 2013, p.6). Although Kurt Lewin is credited as the founder of action research, the immersion of action research in educational field was with another scholar. The major of Lewin was psychology and he was mainly concerned in freeing minority groups with the implication of action research. It was the Stephen Corey who introduced action research to the field of education and teachers. It was after then, as Noffke (1997) elaborated, the action

research became popular for teacher professionalism and knowledge building (as cited in Sandretto, 2007).

Arhar et al. (2001) suggested that the origins of teacher research went back to Aristotle (as cited in Ritchie, 2006). In his works Aristotle differentiates two types of knowledge: "sophia" and "phronesis" respectively. While "sophia" constitutes the theoretical and logical facet of the knowledge, "phronesis" is the practical wisdom (Phronesis, 2014). However Aristotle supports that "phronesis is not simply a skill (technē), as it involves not only the ability to decide how to achieve a certain end, but also the ability to reflect upon and determine good ends consistent with the aim of living well overall"(Phorenis, 2014, p. 1). Aristotle's (this) approach shares similarities with action research (Eikeland, 2008, p.34).

This research tradition is also inspired by the works of anthropologist John Collier, who is interested in social justice, (Check & Schut, 2014) and John Dewey, who advocated that the theory could only be measured according to its effectiveness in practice, and the teachers should do the duty of a researcher to investigate effectiveness of theories (Hammersley, 2006). Stenhouse (1975) who saw the success of education in the development of curriculum by working with teachers as researchers also contributed to teacher research's development in the educational field (Somekh & Zeichner, 2009). Stenhouse saw teaching as a process contributing the improvement of teachers' way of teaching with their own efforts (as cited in Hammersley, 2006).

Kemmis (1980) sees the World War Two as an important factor in understanding the rise of action research. He states that:

> "(The war) galvanized views about democratic decision making processes and participation in those processes by those affected by. The decisions, about the rights of individuals and cultural and ethnic minorities to have their views heard and their special needs considered, and about tolerance for different views."(p.7)

In 1950s there was a strong teacher research movement in America. Hodgkinson (1957) explained that it was the natural outcome of progressivism in education. In 1960s and 70s Elliott (1991) pointed that teacher research emerged in Britain independent from America, due to the curriculum reforms in the schools in Britain (as cited in Hammersley, 2006 p.425). But in the area of education the years 1953-1957 were the beginnings of decrease in the interest in action research (Kemmis, 1980). Kemmis stated that scholars like Corman (1957) questioned this type of research for it resembled teaching; also scholars like Hodgkinson (1957) criticized it for lacking the scientific features of a research and being methodologically poor and time taking (as cited in Kemmis, 1980). In these days, the teacher research came into prominence again. According to Cochran- Smith & Lyte (2006) there are several reasons for the reviving interest in teacher research. The first reason includes the aim of professionalizing teaching. In this view, teacher research plays the role of a form of teacher development tool (Darling &Hammond, 2007 et al.); another reason is to challenge the university dominance in producing knowledge (Cochran-Smith & Lyte, 1990 et al.). Lastly for social change and justice purposes, teacher research started to be used as a popular tool in our day (Kincheloe, 1991 et al.).

In the historical evaluation of teacher research, according to Zeichner and Somekh (2009), there are further names to be mentioned. The names of Carr and Kemmis (1986) should be acknowledged, since they located action research into the critical theory thus strengthening the ideas of Lewin's social justice among people and freedom from the constraints of power and status. Elliott (2007) is also important for his contributions in developing a comprehensive theory of teacher professional knowledge and teacher professional development through action research.

2.4.1.3.Benefits and Sustainability of Teacher Research

Teacher research provides several benefits for teachers and educational context depending upon its different conceptualizations. Hammersley (2004) talks about three different conceptualizations. They are, being a way of solving classroom problems, a tool of professional development and lastly as a movement of social reconstruction (as cited in Borg, 2013). The social orientation of teacher research assigns it the duty to change inequitable social conditions (Borg, 2013).

Teacher research helps teachers to "develop critical reflection skills, a questioning stance, a systematic investigation of practice, and a desire to improve teaching and learning" (Ritchie, 2006, p. 125). It is believed that teacher research affects the culture and productivity of schools positively. The knowledge produced by schools can be useful for other educators, policy makers and teacher educators. Additionally, it raises the status teaching in the society; and the teachers' voices are heard. It improves classroom practice and contributes to the social reconstruction in the society. (Zeichner, 2006) Zeichner (2006) states that at the end of the Wisconsin School District Classroom Action Research Program, the teachers reported developing confidence in their ability to influence the circumstances in classes. Their sense of control over their work and their self-respect increased. They implemented a more variety of techniques in their teaching and they listened to the students more.

Kincheloe (2003, pp. 18–19), list the benefits of teacher research as that through research teachers can:

- appreciate the benefits of research;
- begin to understand in deeper and richer ways what they know from experience;
- be seen as learners rather than functionaries who follow top down orders without question;

- be seen as knowledge workers who reflect on their professional needs and current understandings;
- explore the learning processes occurring in their classrooms and attempt to interpret them(as cited in Borg, 2006, p. 22).

Teacher research promotes critical self-appraisal of teachers (Nixon, 1987), and renew the enthusiasm for teaching (Yaylı, 2012). Hahs-Vaughnand Yanowitz (2009) lists the benefits of teacher research in his study as increase in content and pedagogic knowledge of teachers, connection between theory and practice (Kirkwood & Christie et al.),and providing more meaningful professional development experiences (Cochran & Lytle, 1999 et al.). Zeichner (2006) sums up the benefits in literature as the following: teacher research reconciles the differences between the teachers' aspirations and realizations (Elliott, 1980) and promotes collegial interaction among teachers (Selener, 1997 et al.).

The motivation for doing teacher research lies in these benefits. Noffke (1997) points out that the teacher do teacher research on the grounds of understanding and improving their practice better, producing knowledge, and lastly contributing to the equity and justice in society (as cited in Zeichner , 2006).

The teachers are in a position to observe the direct result of the teacher research due to their connection to the research setting. This advantage assures the quality in teacher research (Steward, 2006). Teaching settings have more importance to the teacher research than to be the assurance of quality. It also affects the teachers research engagement in the first place. "Teacher research as a form of professional development that requires time, resources, and support" (Adams, 2009, p. 13). The schools are in important position to provide this support for teacher research. Research culture and favourable attitudes toward teacher research are important determinants in conducting teacher research (Gao & Chow, 2011). There are several conditions to be met for teachers to do action research and school community is one of the conditions. Borg (2006) lists the

conditions as "(a) awareness, (b) motivation, (c) knowledge and skills,(d) choice, (e) mentoring, (f) time, (g) recognition, (h) expectations, (i) community, and (j) dissemination potential" (p. 23).

2.4.1.4.Problematizing Teacher Research

The benefits of teacher research in terms of empowering the teachers come along with the problem of romanticizing the concept of teacher voice. Hargreaves (1996) points that we shouldn't accept the results of teacher research uncritically (as cited in Zeichner, 2006). Zeichner (2007) criticizes that "little or no information about the reliability and validity of the research tools and about their methods of data collection and analysis" are provided in self-studies (p. 36). Teacher research should be evaluated according the specified criteria. Zeichner (1993) defends that the quality and the nature of the information is also determinant in our support for the knowledge that came out of teacher research. He explains as intentionality and power exerted by teacher could be used in some cases to justify harmful practices to students. Allwright (1997) believes that the quality of research which is aspired to the academic research should not be aimed at the expense of sustainability in teacher research. However there are differing opinions related to this issue. Nunan (1997) argues that there should not be any distinction between practitioner and regular research, and both should be evaluated according to the same criteria. Additionally; teacher research should not be considered as a quick solution to fix unsatisfactory working conditions of teachers or social preconditions necessary for a successful education such as food, healthcare, housing (Zeichner, 2006).

Zeichner (2007) calls attention to another concern related to self-studies. Although they are being published in growing numbers, there is the problem of building the individual studies on other studies in literature.

They are disconnected. Additionally, the book collections of action research take the methods of the studies rather than their research topics. The studies take place in books just because they are self-studies. He believes this approach is to get this type of research through as a legitimate form of research. The problems to the legitimacy also encountered in problems such as academicians don't cite them or are comfortable when they are more than a local knowledge making changes in the practice setting (Anderson & Herr, 1999). In the study of Kyle and Hovda (1987) another form of legitimacy is mentioned. The teachers are concerned whether the time spent on research activities in classroom rather than teaching is legitimate. They also have doubts related to the legitimacy of their work in terms of their position and researcher bias. Anderson and Herr (1999) also call attention to the problems of assimmetrical power relation between student and their teachers and the risks that the participants may face in the research process.

The challenges of doing teacher research include lack of time, space and energy to conduct a systematic research by teachers, lack of encouragement, incentives and status problems (Allison & Carey, 2007). The teachers lack the expertise to conduct teacher research in some occassions. The study of Yaylı(2012) pointed that the teachers had difficulties formulation a research question and the presence of a supervisor to facilitate the process was vital. Some teachers also lack the information related to the concept of teacher research itself (Watkins, 2006) or have "false assumptions about the process or because they are unaware of the many benefits of action research" (Byrnes, 2009, p. 116).

Gao and Chow (2012) focused on the challenges for conducting teacher research for primary school English teachers. They state that teacher research is especially difficult "for primary school teachers, who are relatively underpaid and whose professional contributions receive little recognition in comparison with those of their counterparts in other

educational settings" (Gao & Chow, 2012, p. 224).The major problems that these teachers encounter are the heavy workload, little knowledge of how to conduct research, no training in academic writing and the difficulty to publish their research. The possible solutions suggested by Gao Chow (2012) include widening the meaning of research (not confining it to scientific research) and finding alternative platforms to share research.

2.4.2. Studies on Teacher as a Researcher

In this section, several studies related to practicing and pre- service teachers' experiences of teacher research engagement are explored. The transformative effects of the research experiences on the teachers and the challenges encountered along the way are represented via the selected studies.

In her doctoral dissertation Adams (2009) asked the question: *What does it mean to do research as professional development?* In order to answer the question she employed eight middle school mathematics teachers and a university facilitator who supports these teachers' conducting classroom research. Both the teachers and the facilitator were the members of the "Discourse Project" which was the name of the project for the research group recruited in the study. The project affected the teachers positively both as members of a professional community and as individuals. The participants of the study indicated that the collaborative research group had answered their problems related to isolated nature of teaching profession; with the help of the project they "cultivated a space for professional intimacy" (Adams, 2009, p. 48). On the individual level, the project worked as a reflection tool for teachers and with the help of a closer look at the practice, the teachers were able to criticize the gaps between their beliefs and practices. Lastly the project taught the teachers that the knowledge base for teaching should include teacher's points of view. The

project transformed teachers as professionals. They did not see themselves as researchers or decision makers in curriculum, instruction, and assessment before they take part in the project. However one main problem of the teachers was the problems related to time management.

Levin and Rock (2003) also studied five pairs of pre-service teachers who are elementary education majors and their mentor teachers who engaged collaboratively in action research projects during the pre-service teachers' one semester long internship experience in their professional development school sites. According to Levin and Rock (2003) the action research projects and the written requirement tasks of these projects helped intern teachers to explore themselves as teachers, spot the areas in their teaching or teaching self to develop, clear up their personal teaching philosophies and increase their self-confidence as teachers. The pre service teachers in this study also showed the understanding that reflective practice and professional growth is personal responsibility. Finally the pre service teachers begin to realize their power to determine or change the curriculum after these research projects. The experienced mentor teachers also expressed gaining new perspectives about their students' needs, perspectives and motivations and their teaching. Additionally this project brought in some new understandings to their responsibilities as mentors in pre service teacher training. The project also posed some challenges to both the mentors and the pre service teachers. The difficulties are listed as time constraints, requirement of persistence and commitment, and frustrating effects of depending on another person by pre service teachers; challenges of experimenting with new roles and responsibilities, limited involvement and impediment of other responsibilities by the mentor teachers. This action research project did not influence the thinking and the practice of the three mentor teachers who took part in the project. One mentor also expressed that there is no place for the role of teacher researcher in her teaching life because of time limitations. Although the study supported the findings of other studies in terms of action research's

building positive collegial collaborative relationships in internship settings, the hierarchical relations between mentors and the interns did not change deeply.

The study of Peters (2004) focused on the experiences of the teachers in an action research based project (The Innovative Links Project) which is initiated in Australia as a National Professional Development Program. Although the Links project originally included a wide participation of different universities and teachers, the ten teachers involved in the study were from only one of the schools where the researcher worked as an academic associate. The participants had the high expectations from the project, they valued the process and they were highly motivated, additionally some teachers were familiar with the action research process. However, in the implementation phase the teachers had some difficulties in the technical aspects such as formulating research questions, designing the study, collecting or interpreting the data. Furthermore, some teachers form the scientific background had the preconception that the research should be in the positivistic paradigm to be credible. The problems related to time limitation and busy schedules of the teachers also complicated the process. At the end of the project the teachers gained a better understanding of their students and they adopted a more reflective stance to their practices, and some devised ways to improve their teaching as their understanding of success changed. However some of the participants asserted that the process of transferring the changes in the ideas to the teaching practice is difficult considering the constraining contextual factors and different range of student needs and demands. The study concluded that although the teachers had faced difficulties, there is evidence that they changed their thinking and practice at the end of the research project. The study advocated that, if the action research projects are desired to reach their full potential as means of a professional development tool, necessary conditions should be provided.

Borg (2009) also examined ELT teachers' conceptions of research and the barriers that the teachers reported while conducting teacher research with 505 teachers from 13 different countries. He concluded that although teacher research engagement is seen as an important and a beneficial activity in literature, the teacher research which has the qualities of systemacity and rigor was done by very few teachers. One of the major factors affecting the research orientation of the teachers was the institutional conditions. Unfavorable working settings and some teachers' unrealistic ideas related to what a teacher research should involve makes it difficult for teacher research to be a common activity among teachers. In order for productive teacher research to occur "organizational, collegial, emotional, intellectual, and practical support structures" (Borg, 2009, s. 377) are needed to initiate and sustain teacher research of good quality. Gao and Chow (2011) replicated this study using the adapted data tools of Borg (2009). They aimed to find out what the research engagement level of the English language teachers in mainland China is and what the features of a good research for these teachers are. In the mixed approach study the teachers then shared their research experiences as the doers of research and it is revealed that the teachers had several challenges. The identified challenges were lack of institutional support, lack of resources, heavy workload and insufficient research knowledge of teachers which were parallel to Borg's (2009) study. The teachers also expressed that they were not trained for academic writing. When the research process was unsuccessful, they blamed themselves not knowing enough theoretical knowledge and being unable to design complex experiments. Like Borg's (2009) study this study suggested widening the teachers' research conceptions.

Banegas, Pavese, Velázquez, & Vélez (2013) who were English Language teachers at a secondary school in Argentina, decided to conduct an action research study in their working context to remedy the problems related to reluctance of the students towards the English lessons and revitalize the

curriculum by aligning it to content and language integrated learning. They aimed to explore firstly in what ways action research involvement could serve them in integrating content and language in the lessons; and secondly how this research engagement could affect student motivation. They conducted a collaborative action research project for designing and evaluating newly implemented content and language integrated lessons. The research involved three different classes with around 90 students and consisted of three cycles. In the initial investigation, the teachers ascertained that the text book did not answer their needs causing a lack of motivation in students. The teacher decided to develop their own materials taking the students choice of topics into consideration. In this first cycle the teachers' refined issues, discussed their beliefs and after gathering constructive feedback from the students and they implemented CLIL (Content and Language integrated lessons) with the books that they designed. After they implemented the lessons which was the outcome of initial investigation the teachers again asked the students to evaluate the lessons. In the second cycle they developed more refined CLIL lessons and evaluated them. In the third cycle these actions were repeated with cumulative evaluative feedback. As the project progressed, the students classified their teachers as more professional and the lessons more participatory. The teachers critiqued that positive collegial and collaborative working environment made the transformation possible. After all the cycles were completed, the increased participation and motivation was noted in the students. The teachers also gained different degrees of professional progress at the end of the study. The benefits of the research for the teachers can be summarized as teachers' characterizing themselves as autonomous and more capable and appreciating the collaborative work benefits. As a result; despite the fact that the project required time and systematic efforts of the teachers, the teachers were able to develop professionally and they could devise context responsive curriculum and materials with the democratic participation of their students.

After their involvement in research projects as coordinators, Kyle and Hovda (1987) witnessed that action research is constructive, beneficial and most importantly possible for teachers. However; it is of utmost importance to support teacher research endeavors at institutional level if the expected results in teacher professional development, sustainment of this development and transformation in the education is intended for longer periods of time. The study of Kyle and Hovda (1987) emphasized that when the teachers did not get support, they tended to cease their research activities when the research project was over, even if the transformation of teachers as conductors of research was achieved. The researchers also added, depending on the insight from their previous studies that for sustainability of teacher research; that the theoretical foundation and the concepts should be conveyed to the teachers well, and the teachers should also be willing and committed. Another important point in this study was its being an example to the discussions of standards in teacher research. Some teachers in the study did not feel the need to situate their studies in the knowledge base of the field. The researchers stated it as:

> …We find that teachers' research findings pay little attention relating their research findings to the larger knowledge base. This may reflect a long standing rejection of research literature as irrelevant to practice, or a greater concern with resolving immediate problems than with contributing the knowledge in general. Whatever the reason this limited connection will probably continue to be true unless teachers begin to see a valid for placing their action research within the context of other related theory and research. (p.87)

We also see that the concepts of research and enquiry in teacher professionalism are supported by some governments. Such as in Scotland the Standard for Chartered Teacher (framework of professional standards for teachers in Scotland) items show the given importance to informing practice by research. In this framework the teachers are expected to:

- engage in professional enquiry and action research, and applying findings,
- reflect critically on research evidence and modifying practice as appropriate,
- test whether a particular theoretical perspective actually applies in practice,
- interpret changes to education policy and practice and
- contribute and responding to such changes (p.343) (as cited in Christie and Menter, 2009).

In New York District the statewide process for tenure necessitates the teachers should make successful use student performance data to adjust teaching according the laws in 2007 and 2008 (Chapter 57 of Laws of 2007, 2008).This regulation is in close connection with the use of action research (as cited in Byrnes, 2009). The summaries of the studies on teachers as researchers is shown in the table 2.1.

Table: 2. 1. Summary of the Studies on Teachers as Researchers

Author(s)	Research Questions	Methods	Participants	Major Findings
Adams (2009)	What does it mean to do research as professional development?	Focus group interviews Individual interviews	Eight middle school mathematics teachers and a university facilitator who supports these teachers' conducting classroom research.	TR groups can be the answer to isolated nature of teaching TR is a reflection tool for teachers TR helped teachers to criticize the gaps between their beliefs and practices. TR taught that knowledge base for teaching should include teacher's points of view.
Levin and Rock (2003)	What occurred when five pairs of pre-service teachers and their mentors, designed and conducted collaborative action research projects together?	Transcripts of the conversations between participant pairs Interviews in a multiple case study design	Five pairs of pre-service teachers who are elementary education majors and their mentor teachers	TR helped intern teachers to explore themselves as teachers, spot the areas in their teaching or teaching self to develop, and increase their self-confidence as teachers. Pre service teachers begin to realize their power to determine or change the curriculum. The difficulties are listed as time constraints, requirement of persistence and commitment.
Peters (2004)	What are the experiences of the ten teachers with whom the researcher worked as an academic associate in the action research based professional development project?	Participant observation at research meetings Semi-structured interview with project documentation such as Teachers' informal notes, written research plans, reflective journals and meetings; Researcher's reflective journal.	Ten teachers from a school where the researcher worked as an academic associate	Teachers gained a better understanding of their students They adopted a more reflective stance to their practices Necessary conditions should be provided for action research to reach its full potential as a professional development tool.

Table: 2. 1. Summary of the Studies on Teachers as Researchers (Continued)

Author(s)	Research Questions	Methods	Participants	Major Findings
Banegas, Pavese, Velázquez, & Vélez (2013)	In what ways do teachers benefit from involvement in action research for the integration of content and language? To what extent does professional development through action research impact on student motivation to learn English?	In the initial investigation, the teachers ascertained that the text book did not answer their needs. In the first cycle the teachers' refined issues and they implemented CLIL (Content and Language integrated lessons) with the books that they designed. The students evaluated the lessons. In the second and third these actions were repeated with cumulative evaluative feedback.	There different classes with 90 students in total and their teachers	Teachers characterized themselves as autonomous and more capable professionals. They could devise context responsive curriculum and materials with the democratic participation of their students.
Kyle and Hovda (1987)	Description of how the collaborative effort in the action research project helped teachers to transform as researchers.	Observations Reflections	23 teacher participants who conducted action research	TR is constructive, beneficial and most importantly possible for teachers. Teacher research endeavors should be supported at institutional level if the expected results in teacher professional development are intended for longer periods of time. The teachers should be willing and committed.
Borg (2009)	What are the teachers' views on what research? How often do they read and do it (and why or why not)?	Initial and follow up questionnaires Interviews	505 English teachers from 13 different countries.	Teachers engage in low levels of reading and doing research. The barriers to research include lack of time, knowledge, and access to material. Teacher concerns for research are parallel to conventional scientific notions of inquiry.

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

3.1. Introduction

This chapter presents the research design, description of the participants and the research setting of the study, as well as findings from two pilot studies. Following this, procedures for data collection and data analysis are explained in the stated order.

3.2. Research Design

The goal of the study was to explore the current situation with teacher research among ELT teachers as a form of professional development, and uncover the necessary conditions to involve teachers in teacher research. The study also aimed to sustain this research among teachers as a professional development tool for both improving individual practices and participating knowledge production in the field. In order to achieve these goals and answer the research questions of the study (stated below), a qualitative case study design is utilized for the current study.

3.3. Research Questions

For the purpose of this study, the following questions were addressed:

1. What is the current situation in relation to teacher research as a professional development tool among practicing English teachers in Turkey in their respective educational contexts based on the views and experiences of 18 EFL teachers in six different institutions?

a. What are the views of in-service ELT teachers on teacher research as a professional development tool?

2. How can teacher research be sustained among English teachers' particular educational contexts?
    b. What are the important factors for involving and sustaining teacher research among English teachers?

Case study is defined by Yin (2009) as "an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon in depth and within its real-life context, especially when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident" (p. 28). The case studies aim to give a portrait of a particular situation (or phenomenon) and reveal the reality via thick description. While doing that, the experiences, thoughts and feelings of the participants for this situation are of the utmost importance (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2007). However, there are other interpretations of case studies as well. Stake (1995) for instance, asserts that, case study, rather than a methodological choice, is an object to be studied (as cited in Heigham & Croker, 2009). Looking from the lens of an object to be studied "for a qualitative researcher a 'case' can be seen as a bounded system of which confines are determined by the scope of the researcher's interests" (Heigham & Croker, 2009, p. 69). Some common cases as study objects are listed as "individuals," "organizations," "processes "programs" "neighborhoods," "institutions," and even "events" (Yin, 2009 p.28).

In our setting (Turkish Public and Private Primary Schools, High Schools and Universities), the object to be studied is specified as "experiences and ideas of the teachers with teacher research as a professional development tool." Stouffer (1941) identifies that "a case is a noun, a thing, an entity; it is seldom a verb, a participle, a functioning" (as cited in Stake, 2005 p. 1). "Nurses may be our cases; we usually don't define "nursing activity" as the case. We choose "production sites". With these cases we find opportunities to examine functioning, but the functioning is not the case

"(Stake, 2005, p. 2). He also stresses that even when the main focus is on phenomenon; it is the entities that are chosen as cases. Therefore we took each teacher who is working in Turkish context in several different levels and institution types as the case, to understand the current situation of teachers' teacher research engagement. From the broader lens, our study employs "case study research method" as the research design including "the logic of design, data collection techniques, and specific approaches to data analysis" (Yin, 2009, p.29). The reasons to elicit case study research as the design of the study include the facts that:

- Parallel to the explanations about case study, the question of how is explained via case study research in a more advantageous way. (Research questions of the study were: 1. how is the current situation with teacher research as a professional development tool among practicing English teachers in Turkey? 2. How can teacher research be sustained among English teachers in this particular context?)
- The topic is a contemporary situation.
- There is little or no control over the case (Yin, 2009).

Case studies can cover multiple cases and then draw a single set of "cross-case" conclusions (Yin, 2009, p.30). The current study is a descriptive multiple case study. Stake (2006) states that;

In multi case study research the single case is of interest because it belongs to a particular collection of cases. The individual cases share a common characteristic or condition. The cases in the collection are somehow categorically bound together. They may be members of a group or examples of a phenomenon (pp.5, 6).

Stake (2006) calls this group or phenomenon as "quintain". As explained earlier the quintain in our study corresponds with "experiences and ideas of the teachers with teacher research as a professional development tool." Since the quintain and the context are quite closely interwoven, the behaviors and attitudes of the teachers towards teacher research are

interpreted within the constraints of their contexts. The reasons of the behaviors were tried to be interpreted via their specific needs, conditions, opportunities and climate towards teacher research within their institutions. By doing this, our case study could shed light on why certain behaviors towards teacher research occurred in particular settings.

For the study, teachers from six different school types were recruited, and in the determination of the teachers from different schools, maximum variation sampling: "selecting cases from a diverse population" (Anderson and Arsenault, 1998cited in Cohen, Manion, & Morrison, 2007) was taken into account. In order to reflect the differences among the institutional features the teachers from public primary schools, public high schools, a public university and the three equivalent schools from private sector were chosen. In the sampling process convenience sampling was also at play. The accessible schools due to their proximity and voluntary participants were prioritized. Each teacher in these schools is interpreted as a single case itself within the holistic case study. Figure 3.1 below illustrates the different sites and teachers as cases:

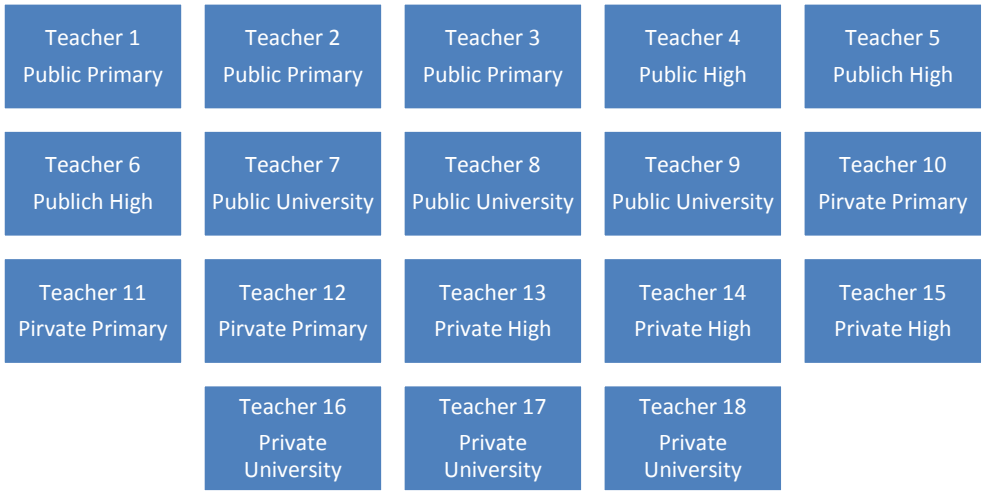


Figure: 3.1. Graphic Design of the Cases

The study aimed to lead recommendations for future actions in the schools in terms of teacher research. Additionally, due to the nature of the research topic (teacher research), and the aims of qualitative research as expressed by Creswell (2007) as to be empowering individuals, making their voices heard and stories shared, the study aimed to empower the teachers in their professional development.

Hinkel (2011) defends the necessity of different data collection methods and sources in order to be able to manifest the depth of the natural context for the case. In the light of this explanation, for the current study at hand, the data was gathered through an open ended survey (Appendix F) and subsequent semi structured interviews with the 7 ELT teachers (Appendix G) from six schools (public primary, high school and university and private primary, high school and university).

3.4. Research Setting & Participants

The research setting was the multiple school sites in central Turkey area. For the study state schools and private schools from three different levels (primary, high school and university) were chosen. The rationale behind choosing schools of different academic levels was to have a sample reflecting the needs of the teachers from several academic settings. (For instance, universities are considered to support research and academic development more.) Initially, one school was chosen to represent each case. However, the number of the teachers who volunteered to participate in study didn't permit this approach. Therefore, the numbers were completed from different schools meeting the criteria for the selection of the cases. (For instance there were two different primary schools for the public primary school type) There were six school type and three teachers to represent each school type. The teachers and their distribution to the school types were shown in the Figure 3.2 below. All the names for the teachers,

schools and the cities are pseudonyms in order to protect the identity of the participants.

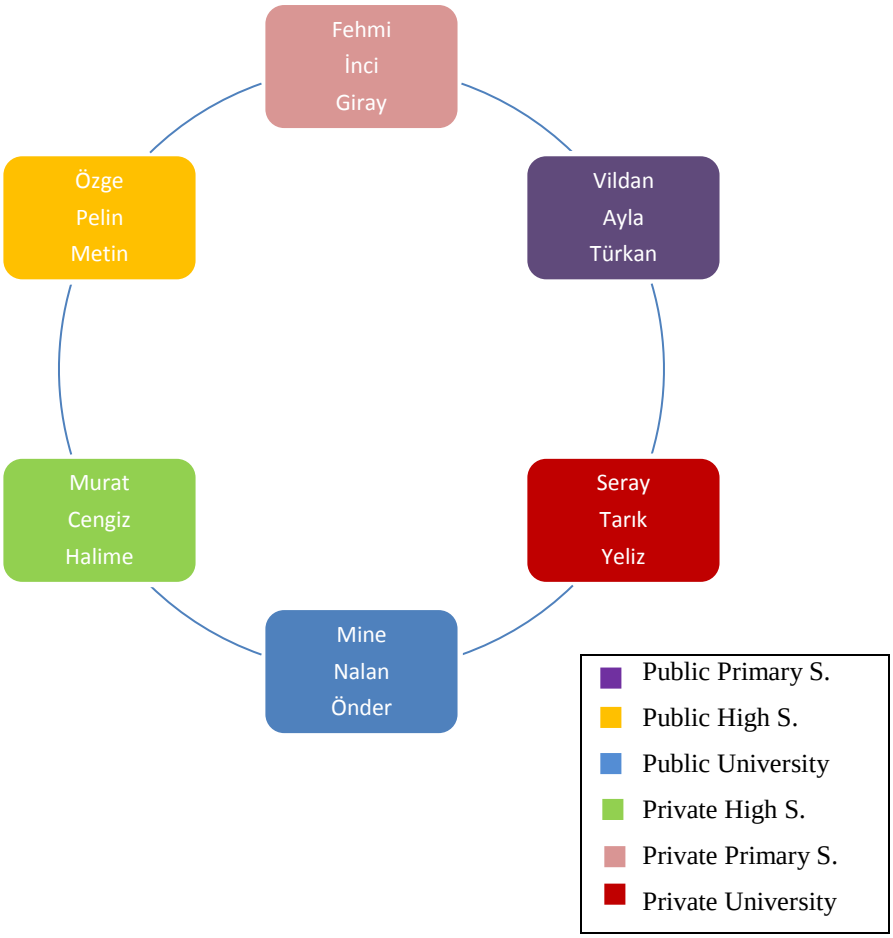


Figure: 3.2. The Schools in the study

The participants were 18 English teachers from three school levels. The teachers' teaching experiences varied between two years and 15 years. The participants were selected via using purposeful criterion sampling. The teachers were chosen among novice and experienced teachers considering the teacher career cycle may influence their attitudes toward teacher professional development and teacher research. The demographic information of the participants and their schools are shown in the table below. The teachers' highest qualification in the field of EFL and whether or not they have conducted teacher research before are also included in the table 3.1 below. The teachers are listed school based.

Table: 3.1. Demographic Profile of the Participants

Participants	School Type	Age	Gender	Teaching Experience	Highest Qualification	School	TR Conduct	City
Türkan		29	F	6	BA	A1	No	Y
Vildan		24	F	3	BA	A2	No	Y
Ayla		29	F	5	BA	A2	No	Y
İnci		31	F	7	BA	D1	Yes	Y
Fehmi		31	M	8	BA	D1	Yes	Y
Giray		23	M	2	BA	D1	No	Y
Pelin		35	F	11	BA	B1	Yes	Y
Özge		38	F	6	BA	B1	No	Y
Metin		30	M	4	MA	B2	No	Y
Murat		27	M	4	MA	E1	Yes	Y
Cengiz		30	M	**7**	BA	E1	No	Y
Halime		38	F	5	BA	E2	No	Y
Mine		24	F	3	BA	C1	No	Y
Nalan		26	F	4	MA	C1	Yes	Y
Öner		27	M	4	BA	C1	No	Y
Seray		25	F	3	BA	F1	No	X
Tarık		25	M	4	BA	F2	No	Z
Yeliz		26	F	5	MA	F3	No	X

- Public Primary S,: A
- Public High S.: B
- Public University: C
- Private Primary S: D
- Private High S: E
- Private University: F

Participants (cases below are described below based on their answers to survey and interviews. The cases are organized based on schools.

Vildan, A2, Turkey

The first teacher, **Vildan** works at school **A2**. (All the names for the schools and teachers are pseudonyms.) It is a public primary school which is situated in the city Y. It employs 50 teachers from different fields and currently about 1.000 students attend this school. It is situated in a central area of the city. The students attend the lessons in two different schedules. Some students take their classes between 8-12 a.m. Some take them between 12 - 8 p.m. First two participants Vildan and Ayla teachers work in this school.

She expresses the reasons of working in this institution as this school's being one of the best schools in Y and that fact that majority of the students are really hardworking and ambitious. Generally, teachers' communication is also well with each other. Especially the experienced teachers help young ones. She is 24 years old and she has been teaching for 1 year in this school. She has 3 years of teaching experience in total. She describes her teaching as a process of experimenting with different teaching techniques and applying the best according to the needs. She emphasizes the importance of communicative aspects of English language education and believes that she does her best in realizing her teaching philosophy in her context. She believes the aim of professional development is to be a better teacher. She tries to evaluate her teaching according the criteria that she follows in online teaching communities. She tries to attend conferences and seminars in the field of ELT. She follows academic research in the field to keep up with the improvements; however she doesn't believe she could apply the academic research into her context for she finds them too idealistic. She thinks that her school doesn't support professional development. She thinks about what she does in the lessons on a regular basis. The teacher research has close bearings to reflective practice. Vildan describes herself as a reflective

teacher. She never conducted a teacher research in her classrooms. She defines teacher research as “solving problems that are faced in the class.”

Ayla, A2, Turkey

The second participant **Ayla** also works at **A2**. She is 27 years old. She agrees the distinguished place of the school in the city and she cites this reason for working at this school. She has been working there for the last two months. She has 5 years of teaching experience. When she has a problem in the classroom she first tries to find the reasons and solve it. If this is not successful, she asks for colleagues’ help. She listens to English conversations and audios at least one hour every day for her professional development. She also reads novels and articles for the same purpose. She follows academic research in the field and believes a good research should have the feature of being practical, however; like Vildan she also complains that she cannot make use of them in the class. She states the reason as that:

> “There are not enough technological devices to use in classrooms and enough time to develop our students’ skills.” *(*Ayla, Blue Hill Primary School, ITR, survey data)

She reflects on the activities in the lessons during or after the classes and make necessary changes according to the success of the activities in the lessons. Like Vildan she has never conducted teacher research before. Her idea of teacher research is also a way to find solution to her problems.

Türkan, A1, Turkey

Türkan works at the school **A1.** It is a public primary school which is also situated in the city Y. This school, though much bigger, shares similar characteristics with the previous one. It is in a central part of the city. Like

in the first school this school also offers education at two shifts. The number of the students and the classrooms require this shift. Around 2000 students attend this school and also around 100 teachers work there. The school is a well-known school in the area and it has a good reputation. It is one of the reasons that the teachers want to work here as our only participant from this school, Türkan put it.

Türkan is 29 years old and has been working in this school for one year. She came to this school because her husband also works there. She has six years of experience in teaching. Her teaching philosophy is to educate students away from routine patterns. She aims to renovate her teaching according to the developments in the field and give students opportunities to produce the knowledge. She believes her school supports professional development within the opportunities provided to the primary schools by Ministry of Education (MONE). She stresses the duty of a school as having to follow the developments in the area both within the country and abroad and make sure that the teachers are also aware of these innovations. She participated in in-service courses in the areas of classroom management and ELT education. However she stresses she cannot perform everything that she has been trained in due to the large class size. She also follows academic research for not to be left behind and to be able to have more enjoyable language classes. She adds that she could perform the ideas that she came across in research if it does not include materials out of her reach. She tries to solve the teaching problems by reflecting on the issues after the lessons. She also takes every student into account while planning lessons. When she was asked what teacher research is she defined it as a type of research, supportive of teacher professional development but subjective.

Fehmi, D1, Turkey

Fehmi works at school **E1.**Different from other primary schools in the study, E1 is situated outside of the city center in the city Y. The school has favorable physical facilities including language and science laboratories, art classes, a conference room, a gym, and a swimming pool. The school's mission is defined as rather than focusing solely on the transmission of the knowledge, giving the students skills and attitudes in the light of international standards. The school employs around 35 teachers. The participants; İnci and Giray also work in this school.

Fehmi is 31 years old and he has been working in this school for the last two years. He has 7 years of teaching experience. He worked abroad for two years before this institution. His teaching philosophy is to break free from the routines and strict patterns and make lessons enjoyable experiences. He emphasizes the importance of making students feel comfortable during the lessons. The students should be able to actively use English. He advocates he can manage his aim and the lessons are successful.

His idea of professional development is that, professional development is the main tool or activity which guarantees the peace and happiness in the classroom. He tries to keep up with the new developments in the field for his professional development. He acknowledges that the school supports his professional development and though not with material awards, the teachers are appreciated for doing innovative works. He continues that he follows academic research in the field and easily applies them to the lessons. If he needs to conduct research in his classrooms, the institution supports him in this request. They have cooperative colleagues in the school and the class activities are discussed and improved after the lessons via meetings with these colleagues. He conducts teacher research in his lessons. He first heard the term in his undergraduate education. He believes that students are great observers and he tries to take advantage of this feature of theirs via feedback

he collects from them. According to him teacher research is "researching how the lessons and activities are interpreted by the students."

Ayla, D1, Turkey

Another teacher who works at **E1** is **İnci**. She is a 31 year old teacher with 8 years of teaching experience. She has been working in this institution for 1 year. She cites the reasons for working there as that the school supports individual and professional development. She believes she can keep up with the world by working here. She uses research and observation for her professional development as well as professional talks with the experienced and successful colleagues. The institution motivates her with appreciation and acknowledgement to the professional development endeavors. She states she has open minded and supportive colleagues. She can easily request if she wants to conduct research in her classes and if the conditions are favorable, the school supports her. Her teaching philosophy is not to provide the students with unnecessary information but to equip them with the critical and essential points and the idea of how to study. She evaluates her classes as the successful applications of this philosophy. She follows academic research and is able to apply them in her classes.

Giray, D1, Turkey

Last participant in this school is **Giray**. He is 23 years old with 2 years of teaching experience. He has been working for 1 year in this institution. He preferred to work in this school because he wanted to gain experience in a professional institution for his graduate studies. Before graduating, his ideas related to the classrooms were based on the humanist approaches. However he now realizes that this philosophy is utopian in some points. When his humanistic philosophy fails him, he tries to blend it with behaviorist

philosophy and he focuses on a more disciplined environment in the classroom. According to him the aim of professional development is to develop education by improving individual teachers. He isn't doing anything for his professional development for the time being. He also points that he is not aware of many professional development activities apart from seminars held by universities. Giray stressed his heavy workload as a reason for his not being able to do anything for his professional development. Similarly he cannot follow academic research for his busy schedule. He reflects on the problems that he encountered in the classrooms and tries to solve them in the light of these reflections.

Özge, B1, Turkey

Özge is one of the teachers at the public High School**B1**. It is located in the close vicinity of the A1 Primary School. It started education in the academic year of 1940-1941. When the school was first opened, it used the building of A1 Primary School for several years. Then it moved to its current building and still serves there. The school comprises of two adjacent buildings; block A and B. Between the years 1999 and 2005 it was a Foreign Language oriented high school. In the year 2010 it became an Anatolian High school. The school takes pride in being one of the oldest schools in the city and having trained many important names for the country. Currently there are about 60 teachers and 1000 students at the high school.

Özge is 38 years old. She has been working in this school for the last 1 year. She preferred to work here since she wanted to work with adolescents. She is a teacher with 16 years of teaching experience. She values her teaching experience stating the years add to her a lot. She explains that "When we were in school, we studied Shakespeare, English theatre, but we are teaching different things, and most importantly we are learning how to teach while teaching." She describes her teaching philosophy as including

different techniques to address students with different intelligences. She partly realizes her teaching philosophy in classes due to the lack of materials in her teaching context. Her idea of personal development is to stay up to date, keep up with the changes and apply the changes to her teaching. She reads books in the field of ELT for her professional development. She first heard the term teacher research via this study. She reflects on the success of the lessons.

Pelin, B1, Turkey

Pelin is the second teacher who works in this school. She is 35 years old. It is also her first year in this school. She has 11 years of teaching experience and she states that she came to this school because the students' levels are better compared to her last school. Her teaching philosophy is to make students like the lesson and understand their learning style. She tries to use empathy whenever she faces a problem in her lessons. She attended some in service seminars offered to the teachers for her professional development. She conducts research in her classroom to give the students a chance to evaluate her and the lesson from time to time.

Metin, B2, Turkey

The second public high school in the study is called **B2**. It is a vocational technical school outside the city. It employs around 30 teachers. (17 for cultural lessons, the rest for technical lessons)

Metin is a 30 year old teacher who works here. He has 4 years of teaching experience 3 of which was in this school. He recently completed his BA degree. He works here since he was appointed to this school. Additionally the school has a warm atmosphere with its students and personnel. He states

the school supports the teachers in their professional development. They can carry out research in classes, they can use different techniques and their endeavors are appreciated by the institution. They have no difficulty in conducting research. His teaching philosophy is" to do his best to teach his students about the subject matter as well as providing them necessary survival skills in life."

The aim of professional development is reaching a high quality level in his teaching and improving him in the field for him. He believes research is the most effective means to do so. He reads research to benefit from others' experiences in the field. He also reflects on the problems he encountered in one class so as to eradicate it for another class. He states that for the requirement of his master's classes, he had to read quite a number of researches. He points out the need for more research conducted in Turkish context. He believes the research reflecting the conditions of our country would be more applicable and relatively more generalizable. He did not conduct teacher research before and defined it as a kind of research done by teachers to solve their problems, or improve themselves more.

Murat, E1, Turkey

Murat works at Private High School **E1**is in the central part of the city. It was originally an English preparatory school for Anatolian high schools; later other classes were also added to the structure. It now serves as a high school itself. Around 30 teachers work at this school.

Murat is 27 years old. He has 4 years of teaching experience and he has been working in this school for the last year. He has an MA degree in ELT an currently he continues his PhD in the field of ELT. He came back from abroad two months ago. He had been teaching English abroad. He works in this school because of the working atmosphere and the teacher dynamics. The school supports the professional development of the teachers by

holding professional development courses. The school also grants awards to teachers for their professional development efforts. Each year a teacher is stated as the teacher of the year according to the performance and the work. There is collegial support in the institution and the management is interested in the problems of the teachers. He has been interested in learning languages since he was a child. Especially his English teacher in the 4th grade influenced him positively to pursue a career in the field of foreign language teaching.

His teaching philosophy is to be able to raise good people who like to read books. He tries to establish a disciplined classroom environment but he also tries to make use of humor. He quotes the Chinese proverb: "If you give a man a fish he is hungry again in an hour. If you teach him how to catch a fish you do him a good turn" to explain his understanding of teaching. He believes the importance of teaching students how to learn. He also advocates rather than telling them the theory of the language all the time, in the lessons application parts should be emphasized. He also criticizes the demands of the students not to use English as the medium of instruction during the classes. He revealed that he is not quite familiar with the general English teaching system as a teacher in Turkey after having been trained and worked abroad for 9 years. He implied the use of Turkish as the medium of instruction is among the things that should change in English teaching. According to him, students should be autonomous and the activities should be student centered. He also emphasizes his role as the guide for the life for the students. He states that he is aware the students call him very strict and disciplined and they occasionally complain about it. However he advocates the importance of discipline and cites some reference for justification. His former students state in their mails that, even if they could not appreciate the disciplined classroom atmosphere when they were his students, they are now thankful for it. They add that they are really successful for their TOEFL and IELTS preparations with their solid background.

The aim of professional development for him is to know the field well and make students love English. He made use of symposiums, courses, briefings and camps for his professional development. He also reads books related to his field and studies for his PhD courses. He states the activities served their aims well. He follows research since language is a changing entity and he needs to keep up with the changes. He conducts teacher research in his classrooms in every three weeks and he defines teacher research as a research type that is done by teacher on the overall success of the lessons and the teachers. He first heard the term in undergraduate education.

Cengiz, E1, Turkey

Cengiz also works at **E1**. He is 30 years old and he has been working here for 2 years. He has 7 years of teaching experience in total. He preferred this school due to its good conditions. The school supports professional development of the teachers. New ideas of the teachers are evaluated according to the national and international standards and then they are adopted. Cengiz also stated he is encouraged by the teacher of the year practice. His teaching philosophy is to make students like English. And he believes he partially accomplishes this aim. He believes, students, their families, teacher, environment and the society are the major factors in achieving this philosophy. He defines professional development as to reach perfection with steady steps. He participates in service seminars, conferences for his professional development. He follows academic research and although he finds to apply them in his lessons, he asserts that it is not impossible. He didn't conduct a teacher research before and he defines teacher research as finding out how the teachers do in her/his lessons.

Halime, E2, Turkey

Halime works at vocational private high school**E2**. It is close to the C1 University. E2 High School adopts a dual level educational system in the school. According to their definition in this system the first two years of the high school education in this university is classified as the level 1. At this level the students' individual differences, and skills are fostered and their tendencies related to a profession is developed. For the last two years in other name the level two, the students are vigorously prepared for the university entrance exams.

She is 38 years old. She has been working in this school for 2 years. She has 15 years of teaching experience. She works here since the job is stabile in this school. Before this school, she was a part time English teacher. She was teaching English at public schools and was paid in return of her teaching hours. She says the school supports professional development by supplying needed materials. The school also appreciates new ideas and professional development efforts. She believes the aim of professional development is to update oneself and be more effective. She reads books for this end and in order to improve her English she watches English news. She doesn't follow academic research and she doesn't think she can apply them in her lessons. She occasionally reflects on her lessons and make up for the lacking points in the following lessons.

Nalan, C1, Turkey

Nalan works at Public University **C1**,It is out of the main Y city. It is close to the border of the city A. It is a public university. It has a large campus area and currently the school has around 10 faculties 7 vocational institutions. Recently an English preparation program was launched for several departments in the school. The preparatory program lasts one year

under normal circumstances. The teachers who participated in this study are the employees of this preparatory program.

Nalan is 26 years old. She has 4 years of teaching experience. She has her MA degree in ELT. Her PhD studies are ongoing. She has been teaching in this university since she first started teaching. She chose to teach in this school since city B is her hometown and it is close to the school where she continues her postgraduate studies. Additionally the university setting and better opportunities for being an academician are among the reasons for working there. She states that the school supports professional development by encouraging the teachers to participate conferences, being open to the idea of organizing conferences and encouraging research conduct and dissemination. She states that:

They encourage us to share the results with other colleagues. It is also highly welcomed when we share our opinions for a change regarding courses, and teaching methods or materials in a meeting. The opinions are evaluated and put into practice based on discussions. Nalan

Though not materially, new ideas are appreciated by the school. She tries update her knowledge and skills according to the needs of the "generation Z" (Nalan) Her teaching philosophy is to deal with all of the language skills in an integrated way rather than just focusing on language structure. She mentions that this is a common problem encountered in English language classrooms in Turkey. She has a passion in teaching and she cares for the individual differences and needs of her students. The needs, interests and background of the student group should be known well by the teachers to respond to them effectively. She also believes the importance of the effective interaction between the teacher and the student for success of the lessons. She also stresses the importance of cultural items in language teaching. Therefore she also tries to improve the students' cross-cultural competence. She notes that she cannot always achieve her aims in the

classroom. The high number of the students in the classroom and heavy workload obstruct the teacher. The standardized tests also cause the teacher to focus on structure rather than emphasizing application. She doesn't believe that the teachers can be competent via only the undergraduate education. She puts forward that,

> "The world is rapidly changing; the needs of the students and the needs of the workplace may show variety. Therefore, in order to be a better teacher … I believe professional development is essential." Nalan, C1 University, ETR, survey data)

She also asserts that so as not teaching to be a routine activity, professional development activities are needed. The teachers can fix their faults and their self-confidence increases in conclusion. She attends conferences and seminars for her professional development. Her PhD is in the major Linguistics and Psychology. She reflects on her teaching and makes the necessary changes. She gave the following example as a sample reflection she did. When she understood her students could understand her in the target language, she increased the amount of the English that she used while teaching reading. She asks her students to give her self-evaluation letters and give her feedback to improve herself. She does research with her students related to the acquisition of language. She believes doing and reading research enables her to keep up with recent developments and improve her teaching skills. Nalan has conducted teacher research before and she defines teacher research as:

> "Teacher research is a type of research which seeks to investigate teacher practices, problems, cognition, and emotions together with factors affecting their performances and aims to give suggestions and improvements."Nalan, C1 University, ETR, survey data)

Mine, C1, Turkey

Mine is 24 years old. She also has worked at University **E1**since she started working as a teacher 3 years ago. She is currently a master student in the field of ELT. She expresses the reasons of working in this school as its central location and its proximity to the university where she pursues an MA degree. She also believes that the opportunities in a university are better than MONE. She explains her teaching philosophy as motivating the students to learn the language. She also stresses the importance of teaching target language culture. She suggests teaching the target language comes after that. She characterizes herself observant in the classroom. She states that she always think about what she has done after each activity. She reads articles and research for her professional development. She believes research enlightens her and provides new developments in the field. Apart from that she attends profession related conferences. She also thinks about her performance later to improve it. She states:

> "Yes. I don't do something written like observations or teacher diaries but I always think about what I have done after each activity. I find myself very observant in classroom. Students'' attitudes are very important. I always ask very my students ideas in classroom." Mine, C1 University, ITR, survey data)

She did not conduct a teacher research before and her definition of teacher research is including school teachers in research process and receiving their ideas about the research from start to end.

Öner, C1, Turkey

The last participant from Public University **E1**, **Öner,** is 27 years old and he has been working in this school for three years. He has 4 years of teaching experience. He decided to work at this university due to the job opening and desirable work conditions. He states that, as a form of supporting professional development activities, the university encourages

and helps teachers when they conduct research. His aim is to help students to become autonomous. He also expects them to have exquisite moral codes. If he encounters problems in his classes, he reads similar cases and talk to more experienced staff. He doesn't do anything actively for his professional development lately. He, however, writes down the methods he uses in his group of students when they learn a topic faster. In that way, he can use them again. Upon failure in class, he again thinks about his methods and behaviors. He tries to find the problem and act accordingly. He did not conduct teacher research before. He defines teacher research as the inquiry into the problems faced by the teachers conducted by fellow colleagues.

Yeliz, F1, Turkey

Private University**F1** is in outskirts of the city X. It was founded in 2011 and currently has 4 faculties and a graduate school. Our only participant from this university is **Yeliz.** She is 26 years old. She has been working at this university for the last 1 year. She has 5 years of teaching experience. She cites the financial reasons for working here. The school has some reference books to offer to the teachers in terms of professional development activities. Her teaching philosophy is to teach the language for students to use it in their academic and social lives. She also aims to prepare the students for their departments. She consults a more experienced colleague when she encounters problems in the classroom. She attends seminars and conferences for her professional development. She also took courses such as CELTA and DELTA training. She is a reflective teacher. She thinks over the lessons after completing them. She stated it as;

> "I often think about whether I achieved my lesson goals or not once the lessons are over. I give it a thought before I convince myself that the learning has been realized." Yeliz, F3 University, ITR, survey data)

She believes reading research can improve her teaching by allowing her to know about new techniques however she cannot find enough time to read

research often. She did not carry out teacher research before but she appraises it as a useful activity.

Tarık, F2, Turkey

Private University F2 is established in the year 2008. It is outside the main city. It has 5 faculties and a School of Foreign Languages. **Tarık** works at this university. He is 25 years old and he has 4 years of teaching experience. He preferred this university because he thought the university could add positive values to his professional career. The other reasons include his being familiar with the university and its location. The school supports the professional development of the teachers via holding professional development sessions, seminars workshops and special interest groups. The school also provides materials for teachers such as technological classroom programs, audio resources. The school awards the teachers for their new ideas and professional development efforts. The school also morally supports the teachers for conducting research by supplying them with materials and sending them abroad. He adopts a student centered teaching stance. According to him, the aim of professional development is to keep up with the changes in the field. He stresses the importance of lifelong learning. He made use of peer reviewing and monitoring activities for his professional development. He evaluates the effectiveness of the activities after the lessons. He didn't conduct teacher research before and he defines teacher research as practice which a teacher does to solve problems in teaching.

Seray, F3, Turkey

University F3 is a private non-profit foundation university in the center of city X. It was established in 2003. It has 6 faculties and a Foreign Language Education Department. The only participant from this university is called **Seray**. She is 25 years old. She has 3 years of teaching experience and she

has been teaching at this university for 3 years. She believes these three years improved her self- confidence as a teacher. However she also admits the negative impacts of her experience. She used to be much more motivated. She believed that she would be really useful to her students the way she imagined. She hoped to raise students who can speak really good English. However she came to the recognition that she needed to reconcile the needs of the students and the institution. Her students needed to study English primarily to pass a general exam. She lost her initial energy if not her motivation due to the priority given to the exam and the fact that the teachers are held responsible for the success of the students.

Her teaching philosophy includes teaching students how to learn, and using contemporary teaching methods. Her aim is to find the ways in which the students learn best. She also stresses the importance teaching students English in a way that they can use it in their everyday lives. She complains about the pressure on the students related to some standardized tests such as TOEFL. This situation causes the lessons to be exam oriented. The students are interested in exam passing strategies. Sometimes the fact that the teachers are held responsible from this general exam results, and the fact that student responsibility is excluded discourage her. She chose to work here for the professional development opportunities that the school provides and its proximity to the university where she pursues her MA degree. The university supports professional development of teachers in several ways. One of them is that it sends some teachers to abroad for professional development courses. The teachers need to work in programming or testing offices to benefit this opportunity. The aim of professional development for her is to add new things to the profession and her each day, to do the job better and feel better. She attends workshops that the school organizes in every two weeks, pursues postgraduate studies and attends conferences related to ELT field. She thinks over the lessons and keeps track of successful conducts to apply them to other classes as well. She also follows academic research. She thinks the research helps her to be aware of the

rationale behind the activities that she carries out in the classroom. She didn't conduct teacher research before and she defines teacher research as a research type that is conducted to solve the small problems in teaching based on the needs of the teachers and the students.

3.5. Data Collection Instruments

3.5.1. The Open Ended Survey

The survey was designed in line with the concepts uncovered in literature review process related to teacher research, practitioner inquiry, teacher professional development and reflective practice. It was piloted with two teachers who were working at a public university. Participant 1 in the pilot study pursues her MA in the area of Curriculum and Instruction and has 4 years of teaching experience. Participant 2 had two years of teaching experience and had the BA as the highest qualification in ELT. The survey was formed out of open-response items which require participants to answer in their own words. Nunan (1999) stressed the significance of open-ended questions as that the responses to these "types of questions more accurately reflect what the respondent wants to say" (as cited in Zohrabi, 2013, p.255). The survey (Appendix F) was comprised of four main parts. The first part included 3 sub parts. In these sub parts there were fill in type of questions related to the demographic information of the participants, their teaching experience and their school context respectively. The second part included two sub parts; first one asking about professional development, and second one asking about research reading habits. The third and the forth parts of the survey were about the teachers' ideas and experiences related to teacher research. The third part was designed for teachers who have conducted teacher research before and it included 15 questions. The 16 questions in the fourth part were for the teachers who have never conducted teacher research. The open ended questions were contained both short-answer items which require a few

sentences long responses and broad open questions which "allow for a deeper exploration and often unpredicted, responses" (Heigham & Croker, 2009, p.203). An example is provided below to these types of questions:

What should the characteristics of a good teacher research be for you? (Short answer item)
How and in what ways teacher research challenged your beliefs related to English instruction? (If it is the case) (Broad open question) 18 teachers completed the survey.

The aim of the questions, their types and how many items of which are included in the survey provided in the table 3.2 below.

Table: 3. 2.Overview of the Survey

Parts	**Aims**	**# of items**	**Question types**
Part 1	To have the demographic information of the participants and learn about their professional experience and school context.	16	checkbox, fill in open ended
Part 2	To gather information about the professional satisfaction and development of the teachers as well as their research reading habits.	15	open ended

Table: 3. 2. Overview of the Survey (Continued)

Part 3	To explore the attitudes and experiences of the teachers who conducted teacher research related to teacher research.	15	open ended
Part 4	To explore the attitudes and experiences of the teachers who did not conduct teacher research related to teacher research.	15	open ended

3.5.2. Semi Structured Interview

Semi structured interview (Please, see Appendix G) was designed and piloted simultaneously with the survey. However, after the completion of the survey and administration of this tool, the questions in the interview were revised and personalized according to the data gathered through surveys. The aim was to get more in depth answers on the attitudes towards teacher research, challenges and the motivation of teachers in conducting a teacher research. The interview also included questions to investigate the needs and suggestions of teachers in order to make teacher research a more common conduct among teachers. A semi-structured interview is defined as an interview type "where the interviewer has a clear picture of the topics that need to be covered but is prepared to allow the interview to develop in unexpected directions where these open up important new areas." (Heigham & Croker, 2009 P.186) The researcher had the previously prepared interview questions, however follow up questions which weren't in the interview questions were also asked as regards to the answers of the participants. An excerpt from the transcript of the interview is illustrated.

Interview question:

What is your teaching experience in English as a Foreign Language (EFL)?

I have been teaching for two years… (Extracted parts) When you look at your university education, you learn useful knowledge good ideas. You think that you can use all of them it after graduation. However when you start working you realize that you have to behave according to the expectations of the institution … (Extracted parts)

Follow Up Question:

You stated that we have to behave according to the expectations of the school. Can you elaborate on that maybe with an example?

7 teachers took part in interviews.

3.6. Data Collection Procedures

3.6.1. Survey

The data was collected via an open ended survey and a subsequent semi structured interviews with the participants. 18 participants were recruited based on a criterion sampling process which took the teaching levels (Primary, high school and university) and institutions (private or public) of the teachers into consideration. 6 participants were chosen for each level. Each level both had participants from private and public sector.

After the METU ethic committee permissions were taken, the participants were distributed the survey via e-mail or in person at the beginning of the term. They were provided with the consent form to participate in the project. Additionally they were informed about the study both orally and in written formats. The teachers were delivered the contact information to

inquire the results after the project was completed. The participants were notified that the anonymity of the participants would be assured by changing their names and school's names into random pseudo names. They were requested to fill the survey and hand it in two weeks' time. However the data collection process took longer than two weeks, lasting more than one month in some schools. The researcher distributed the surveys, visited the schools two weeks later. The teachers, who completed answering the items, returned the survey to the researcher. The researcher kept visiting schools on scheduled times determined by the participants who didn't finish answering the questions. Since the researcher visited the schools every week for different teachers, she could ask clarification questions to the responses in the completed the surveys. The frequent presence of the researcher in the data collection site made it possible for the participants to ask questions to the researcher as well. The researcher provided clarifications to the questions without leading the participants or giving away information which would jeopardize the results. The figure3.3 illustrated the estimated amount of time spent in the field.

School	A1	A2	B1	B2	C1	D1	E1	E2	F1	F2	F3
Hours	9	12	10	3	15	10	11	4	5	3	2

Figure3.3 The amount of time spent in the schools

After the voluntary participants completed the surveys, the initial analysis of the surveys was done and the researcher took some notes for interviews. Upon the fulfillment of this phase, the researcher contacted the participants and asked their availability for the interview. She made appointments with the ones who agreed to take part in this form of data collection. Figure 3.4 below summarizes the data collection process of the study:

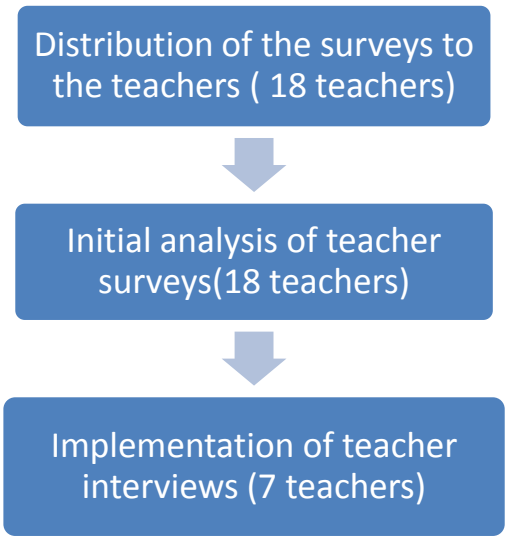


Figure: 3.4. Data collection Procedures

3.6.2. Interview

Seven participants volunteered to take part in the interview. There was one participant for each level and sector, only public university case having two participants.

The distribution of the participants to the schools for interviews is shown in the Figure 3.5below.

Figure: 3.5. The teachers who took part in interviews

The interviews (Please see app. G for a list of interview questions.) were conducted face to face at the institutions of the participants on the pre-arranged dates during their recess and break times. The interviews were carried out either in the empty staff rooms or in the meeting rooms. The interviews were audio-recorded. The interview dates are shown in the Table 3.3below.

Table: 3.3. Interview Schedule

Teacher	Date and Duration
Nalan	10 December, 2014, 30 min.
Mine	12 December, 2014, 15 min
Murat	16 December, 2014, 50 min
Özge	17 December, 2014, 10 min
Fehmi	18 December, 2014, 18 min
Vildan	19 December, 2014, 13 min
Seray	23 December, 2014, 30 min

Richards (2003) agrees on the definition of interviews done by (Burgess 1984, p. 102) as "conversation with a purpose". He also adds that different from conversations where we listen and try to find the right things to say, in interviews we are only concerned getting the richest and fullest account possible without putting our own point across (p.50). During the face to face interviews, the researcher was attentive to be neutral and respectful. She created rapport and tried to provide the environment where the participants could freely express their opinions without intervention. She reflected the points where she was in doubt to check meaning. The face to face interviews were audio recorded. One interview (interview with Seray) was carried out via phone call due to schedule conflicts. The interview was carried out with the speakers on and the call was audio recorded with the software "audacity". The interview durations ranged between 10 minutes to 50 minutes.

3.1. Pilot Studies

Two pilot studies were conducted to "help to refine data collection plans with respect to both the content of the data and the procedures to be followed." (Yin, 2009, p. 82) The cases were chosen from the public university setting since they were convenient in terms of time and the availability of the participants.

The first pilot study was conducted with a female teacher who didn't carry out teacher research before. She was 25 years old and she had 2 years of teaching experience. After the completion of the surveys (see Appendix F for survey questions), the researcher asked the participant whether or not there were ambiguous questions. After they read the survey together and discussed the questions, it was revealed that the teacher didn't quite understand the following question:

What do you think about the dual role of being teacher and the researcher at the same time?

The question in the survey was changed as the following:

What do you think about the dual role of being teacher and the researcher at the same time? (You are both the researcher and the researched at the same time.)

The second study was also conducted with a female ELT teacher who is 25 years old from the same setting. She was pursuing an MA in Educational Sciences and had 4 years of teaching experience. This study revealed that the teacher research is not a very well-known type of research to the participant. The participant answered the question "What is teacher research for you?" as:

> "Conducting research on teachers to see what their needs or opinions or experiences are in a certain topic." (Pilot 1, ITR, Survey Data)

The participant also suggested that,

> "Researchers should find the areas which need to improve. They should care about teachers' needs." (Pilot 1, ITR, Survey Data)

The answers and the subsequent interview for member checking showed that the participant interpreted teacher research as a research type which takes teachers as topics or the participants rather than emphasizing the roles of teachers as researchers. Considering this could be the case among other participants, in addition to an existing paragraph describing teacher research, other explanatory parts emphasizing teachers' roles as the conductor of the research were placed in parentheses in the survey to clarify the meaning of the term.

In the first pilot study, the participant commented that she was not knowledgeable about teacher research. Therefore; she believed she wasn't capable enough to conduct teacher research. She defined teacher research as,

> A teacher's own studies on his/her own teaching environment, her development or her own problems. (Pilot 1, ITR, Survey Data)

She considered the biggest challenge for her would be defining the problem and asking the right research questions. She suggested that teacher research should only be conducted by experienced teachers in this area. She also stated the heavy workload and the lack of free time would prevent her from doing teacher research. She believed this research was beneficial in terms of focusing on specific problems of a specific group. She suggested that the solutions would be context based therefore serve the teachers well. She believed the data collected from the students by their own teacher was valid on the condition that the privacy of identity was assured. She demanded teacher research project groups to be established as a way to support teacher research conduct and she specified that she would like to conduct teacher research (if the time was provided) on the area of student motivation.

The second pilot study wasn't informative on the subject teacher research. The evaluations of the teacher referred to research which chose teachers as the research topic.

3.2. Standpoint of the Researcher

In a qualitative case study using a belief system grounded in social constructivism:

> "Researchers recognize that their own background shapes their interpretation, and they position themselves in the research to acknowledge how their interpretation flows from their own personal, cultural and historical experiences" (Creswell, 2005 p.20).

Therefore in this section, I shall contextualize my experiences in the field of ELT and describe the course of events which lead my path into the research topic "teacher research as a professional development tool." My personal experiences related to being an EFL student in high school gained a different meaning in the light of my studies on the way of becoming an EFL teacher at university.

There is growing recognition of the power of teacher research to improve education. In order to gain more insight into teacher research concept, I attended a teacher research conference at Gediz University and had the chance to know communities of teachers who frequently do teacher research. I heard more and more things about how it is useful for classroom practice from the teachers who actually conducted it. The teachers stated that the teacher research had positive effects on their professional development. Therefore I was interested in teacher research as an in service teacher myself. My standpoint toward teacher research as the researcher in this study could be explained by my own definition of teacher research. Teacher research is a form of research, an inquiry carried out by teachers or researchers who are closely collaborated with teachers in every step of the

research. Its main aim is to understand the practice better and solve the classroom problems. Its final aim is to reflect the practice in academia and contribute to the field. Teacher research includes any forms of attempts related to gathering evidence from practice, and making it better.

Dwyer and Buckle (2009) suggests that holding an insider attribute in a study, helps the researcher to get thicker data. The common experiences of the researcher with the participants make this possible. Dwyer (2009) experienced in one of her studies that, since she was not a parent who lost a child, some of her participants (parents who lost a child) believed she didn't understand them fully. They expressed they would talk differently if there was someone who have lost somebody. In this study as a teacher I had the insider position, but as a researcher who doesn't belong to the sub cultures and the different contexts in this study I was an outsider. My standpoints in the study can be explained as emic as a teacher working in Turkish context; and etic as a researcher who seeks ways to improve English language teaching in general. The words emic and etic is defined by Lett (1990, p. 130-131) as the following:

> Emic constructs are accounts, descriptions, and analyses expresses in terms of the conceptual schemes and categories regarded as meaningful and appropriate by native members of the culture whose beliefs and behaviors are being studied… Etic constructs are accounts, descriptions, and analyses expressed in terms of the conceptual schemes and categories regarded as meaningful and appropriate by the community of scientific observers (as cited in Rabe, 2003, p. 151).

The standpoints were not opposite but complementary. Dwyer and Buckle (2009) calls this "the space between" They express the same data from two points of view. Therefore a researcher's perspective is twofold.

According to Wax (1991):

> "(The researchers) expect, in time, to become capable of thinking and acting within the perspective of two quite different groups the one in which they were reared and – to some degree- the one they are studying. They will also, at times, be able to assume a mental position peripheral to both, a position from which they will be able to perceive and hopefully, describe the relationships, systems, and patterns of which are inextricably involved insider is not likely to be consciously aware" (as cited in Maykut & Morehouse, 1994, p. 1114).

The different perspectives were used in the study the way they are described by Maykut& Morehouse (1994). Additionally, since the researcher's background, and preconceptions may influence what she/he understands (Maykut & Morehouse, 1994), It was assured that every interpretation is supported by the gathered data in order to prevent hunches derived from past experiences. After the interviews member checking was done during the completion of the surveys and the interview process, as well as at the conclusion of the study. In the member checking, the participants were asked whether what is understood from their data was in line what they meant.

3.3. Trustworthiness

In naturalistic paradigm, trustworthiness of the study is assured via several actions. Guba and Lincoln (1981) specified these actions under the titles credibility, transferability dependability and conformability. In this section the trustworthiness of the current study is detailed in the following paragraphs. The table 3.4. summarizes the concepts in trustworthiness.

Table: 3 .4. Trustworthiness (Guba and Lincoln, 1987)

Inquiry can be affected by:	Which produce effects of:	To take account which we: During	To take account which we: After	In the hope these actions will lead to:	And produce findings that are:
Factor Patterning	Non interpret-ability	Use prolonged Engagement	Establish structural (corroboration Coherence)	Credibility	Plausible
		Use persistent observation			
		Use peer debriefing	Establish referential adequacy		
		Do triangulation			
		Collect referential adequacy materials	Do member checks		
		Do member checks			
Situational uniqueness	Non comparability	Collect thick descriptive data	Develop thick description	Transferability	Context relevant

Table: 3 .4. Trustworthiness (Guba and Lincoln, 1987) continued

		Do theoretical/ purposive sampling			
Instrumental changes	Instability	Use overlap methods Use stepwise replication Leave audit trail	Do dependability audit (process)	Dependability	Stable
Investigator predictions	Bias	Do triangulation Practice reflexivity (audit trail)	Do conformability audit (product)	Conformability	Investigator free

In order to assure the credibility of the study, Guba and Lincoln (1981) assert that the prolonged engagement at the site, peer debriefing, triangulation and member checking are necessary. The study complied with these criteria. The presence of the researcher at the research site for long periods of time renders the participants' getting used to the researcher possible. Since the participant is no longer considered a threat, the data reflect reality closer. In this study, the researcher spent considerable amount of time at the research sites. Since there were several participants at some of the institutions, and their schedules were different from each other, she waited for the teachers in the staff room. She joined in the discussions with the teachers. It served not only the researchers' being no longer regarded a threat, but also provided time to the researcher to test her perceptions. She knew the institutions and the characteristics of the local settings better. The data wereobtained via two different data collection tools (surveys and interviews) for the purpose of triangulation. The data sources also were different including different settings from private and public sector.

For the purpose of attaining credibility, member checking was also done with the available participants. There were no disparities identified during member checks. The researcher also compared her coding and interpretation of the two survey data with a critical friend and the codes matched.

Guba and Lincoln (1981) include the feature of transferability as a value that a study should have in order to be trustworthy. They however explained that by transferability, they don't intend the generalizability of the study. It refers to the detailed description of the study within the specific context. In the study, participants bearing different characteristics were recruited to reveal data related to different contexts. The purposeful sampling was done in order to maximize the findings. Thick descriptive data for the research sites, participants and study were intended to be provided in the study for the purposes of transferability.

It is stated that for dependability, it is important to establish an "audit trail". It allows for;

> "…an external auditor to examine the processes whereby data were collected and analyzed and interpretations were made. The audit trailtakes the form of documentation and an account of the process" (Guba and Lincoln, 1981 p. 87).

The study included detailed accounts of how the study was conducted in order to meet the dependability criterion. The dependability also required reflexivity (Guba Lincoln, 1981). The researcher should be reflexive to eliminate research bias. The researcher needs to be self-disclosing his/ her position in the study. Creswell (2005) explained in order to meet this criterion "the researcher comments on past experiences, biases, prejudices, and orientations that have likely shaped the interpretation and approach to the study" (p.208). The part, related to the standpoints of the researcher explained the personal connection the study in detail to attain this.

Lastly, they study both included teachers who carried out teacher research and who didn't carry out teacher research before. There were also teachers who would like to carry out teacher research in the future and there were teachers who didn't plan to carry out teacher research as well. The difference between cases served for the negative case analysis which was also an important point in the validity of the study.

3.4. Data Analysis

Creswell (2005) states that, in social constructivism rather than starting with a theory, patterns of meaning is formed inductively. The aim is to understand the meanings that the participants have about the concept. Therefore open ended questions were chosen and used in the data sources of this study. Mainly qualitative data were sought for and gathered via survey and the interview. In order to conduct an inductive analysis of the qualitative data the constant comparative method is used. Glaser and Straus (1967) explain this method as a combination of inductive category coding with simultaneous comparison of all units (as cited in Maykut &Morehouse,

1994). Goertz and LeCompte (1981) describe the data analysis process in constant comparative method as the following:

> "A meaningful unit is selected and then it is compared to other meaningful units. Similar units of meaning are categorized together. When there are no similar units of meaning, a new category is formed. This process allows for continuous refinement including merging or omitting categories. New relationships can be discovered along the way" (as cited in Maykut &Morehouse, 1994, p.123).This process is shown in the figure 3.6 below.

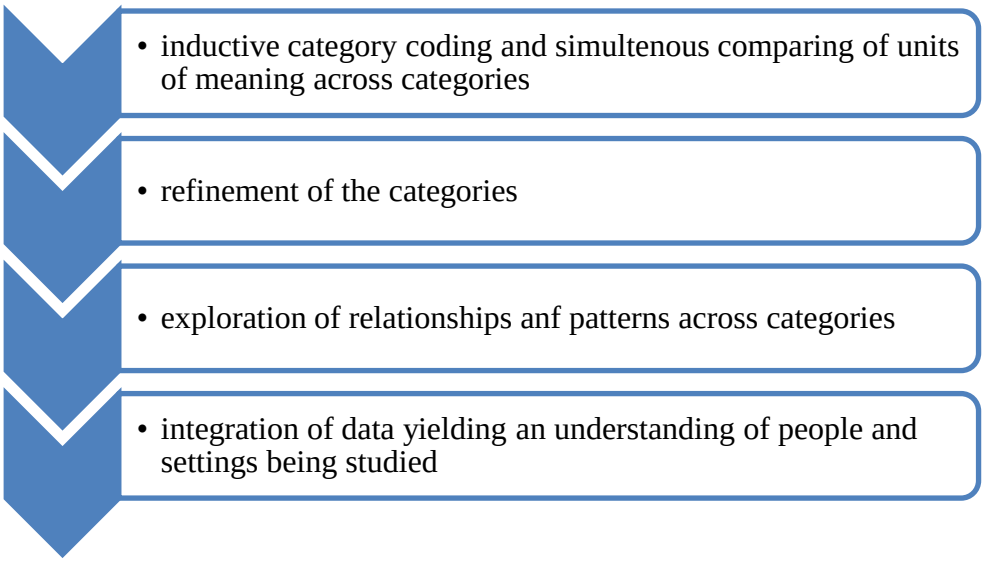


Figure: 3.6. Constant Comparative Method of Data Analysis

In line with the explanation provided, the researcher gathered the data, and read it several times and reflected on the chunks of meaning. While the researcher did these, she was skeptical about the first impressions and she compared the data in the surveys with the interviews. In the coding process, a PC based software program (MAXQDA) was utilized. Units of meaning were marked and labeled in the program. Different colors were used for different codes. The answers of the surveys were analyzed first. All the surveys were compared with each other for similar patterns. When a match between earlier codes (that had been acquired throughout data) occurred, the new data also categorized under that early code. For the new meanings new codes were created. Subsequently the interviews were

transcribed verbatim and the same procedure is followed. The chunks of meanings were labeled with the codes that are obtained in the coding of the surveys. The new pieces of information were aggregated to the existing codes. For new meanings new codes were created. After the coding process, the data and the codes were read thoroughly and some codes were merged, some codes were re- arranged as sub codes. For instance, the codes "**Teacher Awareness /critical thinking (17), teaching skills improvement (6)** and **Teacher autonomy (3)"** were arranged as sub codes for the sub theme "**Benefits of TR for teachers**". (The numbers represents the frequency of the codes.) While coding process progressed, salient themes were emerged in the data in line with the research questions. The codes were organized under these themes. Continuing with the code in the example, the sub theme "**Benefits of TR for teachers**" was categorized under the theme "**BENEFITS OF TR".** (Sample coding appendix D) In order to assure inter-rater reliability, 11% of the data (a survey and an interview) were coded by another researcher and the results were compared. The codes were consistent.

The data were analyzed and interpreted in a way to assist readers to make naturalistic generalizations. Therefore throughout the study, it was aimed to provide readers with experience related to the case (Stake, 1995). Stake (1995) highlighted that, emphasizing time, place and people were the three major steps in doing so. Therefore the settings and the people were described in detail. After each person in the study was described, the cases were reported in a way to reveal how they contributed for the understanding of the quintain. Kemmis (1980) stated that;

"We conceptualize the case in various ways to facilitate learning about the quintain. The quintain is something that functions that operates that has life. The multi case study is the observation of that life in multiple situations" (as cited in Stake, 2006 p. 83).

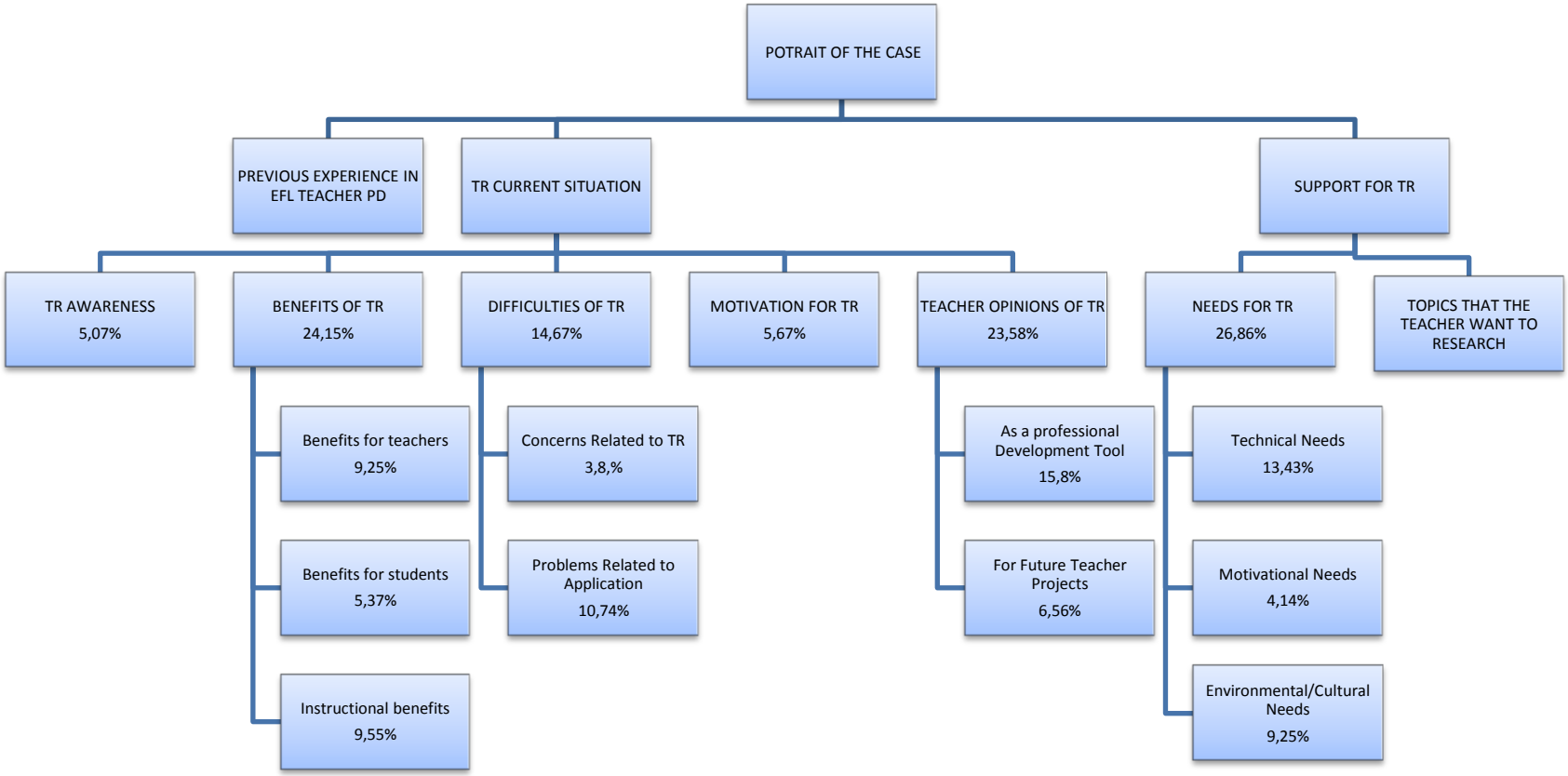
CHAPTER 4

FINDINGS

4.0. Introduction

In this chapter the findings of the study arepresented. The purpose of the survey and the interview questions was to describe the current situation of English teachers related to teacher research engagement, and to interpret the extent to which teacher research are feasible in Turkish context described in the scope of the study. Additionally, it is aimed to explore the teachers' further suggestions and needs to be able to use teacher research as a professional development tool in their teaching environments. After the analysis of surveys and interviews, the results were synthesized and organized into themes and categories and presented as the answers to the research questions of the study. The table 4.1 summarizes the findings.

Table: 4.1. Themes and Codes emerged in relation to the Portrait of the Case



4.1. Research Questions

For the purpose of this study, the following questions were addressed:

1. What is the current situation in relation to teacher research as a professional development tool among practicing English teachers in Turkey in their respective educational contexts based on the views and experiences of 18 EFL teachers in six different institutions?
    a. What are the views of in-service ELT teachers on teacher research as a professional development tool?
2. How can teacher research be sustained among English teachers' particular educational contexts?
    b. What are the important factors for involving and sustaining teacher research among English teachers?

The themes "Previous Experience in EFL Teacher Professional Development, Teacher Research Awareness, Benefits of Teacher Research, Difficulties of Teacher Research, Motivation for Teacher Research and Teacher opinions of Teacher Research" were identified concerning the first question.

The data related to second question was categorized under the theme "Needs for teacher Research," The possible topics for teacher research that the teachers called upon either as their future research conducts or as a request for other researchers to carry out were specified under the category "Topics That The Teacher Want To Research."

4.2. Previous Experience in EFLTeacher Professional Development

In order to understand the attitudes and the feasibility of teacher research as a professional development tool better, the current professional development

practices of the teachers were investigated. The questions below were asked for this purpose:

1. "*Which professional development methods and activities have you used so far?"* and, 2 *"What are your opinions related to these professional development activities? (Did they manage their aims?)*The answers are compiled in the table 4. 2.

Table: 4.2.Professional Development Activities

		conferences /seminars	observation	Talkingto colleagues	Workshops	reading articles /similar cases	peer reviewing	CELTA training	doing research	improving English	professional development courses	camp	feedback from students	students' evaluation
Vildan	Pub.	Yes		Yes		Yes								
Ayla	Pri.			Yes						Yes			Yes	
Türkan	Sch.	Yes									Yes			
İnci	Priv.		Yes	Yes										
Fehmi	Pri.			Yes										Yes
Giray	Sch.			Yes										
Özge	Pub.					Yes						Yes		
Pelin	High									Yes				
Metin	Sch.	Yes							Yes					
Murat	Priv.	Yes		Yes					Yes		Yes	Yes		Yes
Cengiz	High	Yes		Yes							Yes			
Halime	Sch.									Yes				

Table: 4.2.Professional Development Activities (Continued)

		conferences /seminars	observation	Talkingto colleagues	workshops	reading articles /similar cases	peer reviewing	CELTA training	doing research	improving English	professional development courses	camp	feedback from students	students' evaluation
Nalan		Yes				Yes			Yes				Yes	Yes
Mine	Pub.	Yes												
Öner	Uni.			Yes		Yes								
Seray	Priv.	Yes			Yes							Yes		
Tarık	Uni.		Yes				Yes					Yes		
Yeliz		Yes	Yes					Yes						
TOTAL	*f*	56%	18,75%	50%	6,25%	25%	6,25%	6,25%	18,75%	18,75%	18,75	25%	11,1%	18,75%

The most widely used practices were attending conferences/seminars (56%) and talking to colleagues to solve classroom problems (50%). Colleague collaboration was a strong positive cultural element in the institutions inspected in the study.

Some of the teachers made use of teacher research as a professional development tool and a tool to solve the problems in their classrooms before. The teachers who conducted teacher research before is referred as Experienced in Teacher Research (ETR) and the other teachers who didn't conducted teacher research before is referred as Inexperienced in Teacher Research (ITR) throughout the paper. The distribution of teachers as ETR and ITR is shown in the table 4.3 below.

Table: 4.3. The Teachers Who conducted TR (ETR) and the Others (ITR)

Türkan ITR	Cengiz ITR	Yeliz ITR
Vildan ITR	Mine ITR	Pelin **ETR**
Ayla ITR	Tarık ITR	İnci **ETR**
Giray ITR	Öner ITR	Fehmi **ETR**
Özge ITR	Seray ITR	Murat **ETR**
Metin ITR	Halime ITR	Nalân **ETR**

Apart from the only teacher, Ayla, who avoided making a comment on the collaboration of colleagues at her institution, (since she was a new member) all the other participants stated that they were happy about the communication and help provided by their colleagues. They mostly mentioned form of cooperation was sharing materials among teachers. Additionally, the experienced teachers were reported to guide novice teachers.

Different from other places, at the public university, participating in one another's research study was also cited as a form of collaboration. Apart from talking to colleagues, talking to the manager upon encountering problems in the classroom was stated by three teachers all of whom worked in private institutions. Tarık (Private University), Murat (Private High School) and Halime (Private High School) preferred to consult school managers as well as talking to colleagues. During the interviews, two teachers mentioned about in service training sessions as professional development activities. The first teacher was Murat. As stated before, Murat spent long years abroad. Therefore, he stated that he was not familiar with most of the professional development practices of teachers that were provided by Ministry of Education. As he was pursuing his PhD degree in this specific area, he attempted to search this topic and tried to understand how in service training sessions were done. He observed several in service sessions and concluded that the practice part was missing from these sessions. Additionally, most of the teachers did not dedicate themselves to these courses; they invented excuses not to attend them. Lastly he mentioned that the institutions didn't control their employee's in service practices. He regarded this as another void in the application of in service sessions.

> "I recently learned that there were seminars. I researched how these seminars were conducted. By the way I am currently a PhD student at (ELT) department. Since it is my area, it aroused my attention. Everyone gathers in a place. A teacher comes and tells the teachers how a lesson should be conducted, and that is all. They don't go into deeper and they don't practice what is being told. It is not effective. Most of the teachers get sick reports. They aren't effective. They can be more effective by the control of institutions where the teachers work." (Murat, E1High School, ETR, interview data)

The second teacher Seray also took an in service teacher training course. This course was provided by her institution and it was not related to MONE's in service training. She also complained about lack of practice in the course.

> "When I first started teaching, I attended a teacher training course. However from start to finish, we constantly learned approaches and methods of teaching which we already knew. We need to do activities related to practice. Last week of the course, within only 5 minutes they told us there is a concept called action research." Seray, F1 University, ITR, interview data)

Some of the teachers listed the professional activities from the most effective to the least effective. The opinions of the teachers related to the professional development activities were listed in the table 4.4.below.

Q: "*Can you list these professional development activities from the most effective to the least?"*

Table: 4.4. The Most Effective PD Activities (Top to bottom from the most effective to the least effective)

Tarık	Cengiz	Seray	Metin	Mine	Murat	Nalan
1. PR	1. INSET	1. WS	1. DR	1. C	1. SMR	1. PGR
	2. SMR	2. SMR	2. RA	2. SD	3. CMP	2. DR
	3. RA	3. RA	3. SMR	3. WS	4. C	3. CD
				4. MR		4. MR
						5. RA

Peer reviewing: PR

In service: INSET

Literature review: LR

Colleague Discussion: CD

Post Grad. Degree: PGD

Self-development: SD

Reading articles: RA

Seminars: SMR

Workshops: WS

Mentoring: MR

Camps: CMP

Doing Research: DR

Courses: C

Forty three percent of the teachers (Fehmi, İnci, Seray, Tarık, Metin, Nalan, and Murat) reported that the professional development activities they are

using, managed their aims. They were positive and content about the end results of the procedures. Two teachers from the public primary school and a teacher from public university however, mentioned some of the problems related to the application of the principles that they have learned during their professional development activities. The reasons they cited included the lack of materials in the school and lack of school support and student background (Vildan), crowded classrooms (Türkan) and student profiles. (Öner) Additionally, Giray commented that he didn't do much for his professional development due to his heavy workload and lack of time to allocate for professional development.

School support for professional development showed differences across the cases. The participants, İnci and Fehmi and Giray were the participants from the same private primary school. İnci and Fehmi underlined that their institution supported their professional development. The school provided opportunities for professional development. Their professional development endeavors were appreciated by verbal praises. Giray also added the school provided conveniences for the teachers who pursue master's degrees.

For the private university case, there were three different schools in the study. Seray stated that her school supported pursuing master degree and gave materialistic awards for the teachers who strived for their professional developments. Tarık confirmed that his school gave importance to professional development of teachers. In the school, there were special interest groups among teachers, the school held professional development sessions and conferences as well as providing materials to the teachers. However, Yeliz stated her school was not supportive of teacher professional development.

The participants Murat and Cengiz worked at the same private high school. They both mentioned that their school awarded teachers who were

successful. Therefore professional development was an institutional priority. The best teacher of the year was chosen every year. They frequently held in-service courses and encouraged teachers to pursue postgraduate degree. Halime worked at another private high school. She also reported that her school is supportive of professional development of teachers. The school provided materials and verbally praised the teachers for their professional development achievements.

There were also two primary public schools in the study. Vildan and Ayla worked at the same institution. Vildan reported that the school did not support professional development. Ayla avoided commenting since she couldn't quite observe it yet. She started working at this school two months ago. Türkan commented about her own school. She stated that the school verbally praised them if the teachers did a useful contribution to school success.

In the study, there were two different public high schools. The first school employed the participants Özge and Pelin, the second school employed Metin. Özge and Pelin stated that their schools didn't support professional development of teachers. The school didn't in any way awarded professional development achievement of teachers. Metin however was content the way his school supported his professional development. He expressed the school permitted the teacher to try different teaching methods and also gave teachers the permission to carry out research in the lessons. He also felt satisfied due to the care of the managers for teachers. The school verbally praised achievements.

The only public university in the study was C1 University. Nalan stated that the school supported professional development via several activities. Firstly the university encouraged postgraduate education. The school also encouraged conference participation and doing research. The school encouraged sharing the results of the studies conducted by teachers and new

opinions of the teachers were put into practice if they were evaluated positively. Mine added; although the school did not arrange special training programs, it supported the teachers' own efforts. She also confirmed that the school encouraged post graduate studies. The last teacher Öner stated that the only support that school provided was encouragement and help when the teachers carried out research.

The themes emerged in relation to teacher research is compiled in the table 4.5. These themes were analyzed further in their relational places.

Table: 4.5. Themes in relation to TR

	Themes	***F***
Theme 1	Teacher Research Awareness	17
Theme 2	Benefits of Teacher Research	81
Theme 3	Difficulties in Conducting Teacher Research	49
Theme 4	Motivation to Conduct Teacher Research	19
Theme 5	Teacher's Opinion of Teacher Research	79
Theme 6	Teacher Needs to Conduct Teacher Research	90

4.3. Teacher Research Awareness

In this theme, the knowledge of teachers related to teacher research is presented. The teachers shared whether or not they have heard the term before or used it as well as whether they have the necessary technical knowledge to be able to successfully apply this research type. Accessing and reading teacher research was another concern that was dealt in this section. The codes in relation to TR awareness are compiled in the table 4.6 below.

Table: 4.6. Codes in relation to TR Awareness

TR awareness	***F***
Accessing TR	**7**
Previous TR conducts	**5**
TR Knowledge as a concept	**3**
Technical Knowledge	**2**
TOTAL	**17**

4.3.1. Accessing TR

The answers of the teachers threw light on whether the teachers knew the ways of accessing teacher research. 43, 75% of the teachers in the study didn't attempt to access teacher research or they think it is very difficult to access to teacher research. The teachers who reported easily finding teacher research (Seray, Özge and Vildan) showed internet as the means of getting them.

4.3.2. Previous TR conducts

The teachers who conducted teacher research before, included İnci, Pelin, Fehmi Murat and Nalan. All the teachers except Nalan, conducted teacher research regarding how they conducted lessons and how they were perceived by students. The research was used as feedback for the implementation of the lessons. Nalan was the only teacher who had a special focus area in her research.

> "I had done a linguistic study with the goal of analyzing how my instruction might be more effective when I used certain discourse markers." (Nalan, C1 University, ETR, Survey Data)

Fehmi asked his students to evaluate the lessons and express the points which they didn't like. He reported that he was able to see a few points which escaped him. Similarly Pelin asked her students to evaluate herself. Nalan on the other hand used peer evaluation when she wanted to have feedback related to her teaching. She video-recorded her lesson and she got feedback on her voice and the way she taught grammar. She tried to follow the suggestions and saw improvements in her teaching. She also turned to her students' feedback from time to time. Classroom authority was one of the topics in which she improved herself after the results of one of her teacher research. She stated that in the first year of her teaching, she got feedback on her classroom management by her students. She tried to have a comfortable classroom environment and some of the students got it in the wrong way according to the feedback of the students. They pleaded a little bit of more authority in the class. After she complied with the feedback, the authority and the flexibility were balanced and the lessons became more effective.

The teachers Murat, Fehmi, Nalan and Vildan explained that they had first been informed about the teacher research concept while they were studying as undergraduate students at university. Fehmi narrated that his teachers had stressed the importance of student feedback and how good observers the students were. Therefore, there was great importance that was put onto teacher research. Nalan was the teacher who conducted a teacher research as well as being aware of the concept while she was a student.

> "I am not pretty sure about it, but I think I first engaged in teacher research while I was working as an intern teacher in my 4th year at university. Our teacher had asked us to conduct an action research. I had determined points I wanted to take feedback on. ... With the feedback and my reflection on my own teaching, I had done some improvements and later reported the results to the teacher as a mini research paper. I think this one can be counted as the first one." (Nalan, C1 University, ETR, Survey Data)

Murat explained his research knowledge through the previous studies he had conducted. He stated that his research aimed to find the effective teaching methods. He wanted his students to evaluate the teaching methods he used.

> "I generally do research on teaching techniques. For example, which subject should be taught with which method? When do you understand best? I even care for the small details such as should we listen the audios louder. Especially with the students who started learning English for the first time. Generally I spare the last 10 or 5 minutes of the lesson. I ask them to take a piece of paper and write their class and then write their ideas. I first tell them about what points they should write their ideas on. For instance I ask them to evaluate a specific part of the lesson. I assure them that no one would see their notes except me. I say that; I am not going to humiliate you for your comments or give marks accordingly. I will read them respectfully. This way, they become objective. I give them surveys like the ones you gave us. I ask them to provide extra comments if they have any." (Murat, E1 High School, ETR, Interview Data)

He analyzed the results as the following fashion. He wrote his lesson point for evaluation (research question) and categorized the positive and negative comments about it, and counted them. He then evaluated the content of the comments and planned how to respond to problems.

4.3.3. TR Knowledge as a concept

Teacher research awareness as a concept was one of the emerging themes. 18% of the teachers in the study weren't aware of the concept teacher research. In the survey, Pelin from public high school gave information about the feedback process in her classroom. She from time to time distributed some note papers to her students and asked them to evaluate the effectiveness of the lessons and the points which they thought weren't effective. She then made necessary amendments according to these feedback forms. After she learned during this study process what teacher

research was, she reported that what she was doing was teacher research. She wasn't aware that she was conducting teacher research. Türkan also reported carrying out activities that can be classified as teacher research though, omitting the reporting part. She acknowledged in the survey that she wasn't aware teacher research practice. Özge was another teacher who had never heard the concept of teacher research before the study. She didn't study teacher research as an undergraduate student and she didn't carry out teacher research as a practitioner. The teachers, who conducted teacher research, refer to the underlying assumptions of teacher research concept as identifying the problems in teaching and producing context specific solutions for them. (Nalan, Fehmi, Murat)

4.3.4. Technical Knowledge

The teachers Vildan and Seray stated that even if they hadn't conducted teacher research, they had the technical knowledge to handle this research process. Seray stressed that since she had to conduct a research every term due to her master course requirement, she knew how to use resources, how to determine research questions. She was also confident about choosing the correct research methods for her study. The teachers who expressed that teacher research could be applicable with the training of the teachers were Mine, Murat and Nalan. They supported the idea that if the teachers were provided with the necessary technical knowledge, teacher research could be applicable in the schools.

4.4. Benefits of TR

In this theme, the chunks which included the benefits of Teacher research were identified. The benefits of teacher research were categorized under three sub themes; "Benefits of TR for Teachers", "Benefits of TR for Students" and "Instructional Benefits."

4.4.1. Benefits of TR for Teachers

Benefits of teacher research directly associated with teachers were increase in the teacher professional awareness and critical thinking, improvement in teaching skills, increase in teacher autonomy and collaboration and lastly keeping up with developments. The Codes in relation to benefits of TR for teachers is shown in the table 4.7.below.

Table: 4.7. Codes in relation to Benefits of TR for Teachers

Benefits of TR for teachers	***f***
Teacher Awareness /critical thinking	**17**
Teaching skills improvement	**6**
Teacher autonomy improvement	**3**
Collaboration	**3**
Keeping up with developments	**2**
TOTAL	**31**

4.4.1.1.1. Teacher Awareness/Critical Thinking

Professional awareness was a frequently mentioned gain by teachers as a result of teacher research. Seray specified that teacher research could make teachers aware of their conducts in the classroom. It could give the teachers rationale for their activities. Among the teachers who didn't conduct teacher research and stressed that teacher research increased professional awareness included Türkan, Metin, and Yeliz. Nalan also added that after she had conducted teacher research, she became aware of the importance of discourse markers and their effects on instruction and students' cognitive involvement in the class. İnci concluded teacher research helped her to understand why she was doing specific activities and became a more planned teacher. Fehmi also stated teacher research helped him to understand that there was a problem in the curriculum. Mine, Metin, Vildan, Ayla, Türkan and İnci advocated that teacher research was inquiry oriented

and therefore increased the critical thinking of the teachers in lessons. Therefore the teachers knew why they were doing specific acts in the classroom.

Mine, Türkan, Yeliz and Seray emphasized that if the necessary importance was given to teacher research, and the required support was provided, they believed that the teacher research could be a powerful tool for their individual and professional development. Mine suggested that teacher research could help teachers to find some clues to their enlightenment, Yeliz was confident that the teacher research would give her different perspectives and Seray added at the end of teacher research she would expect to learn new things and see different things in her classroom.

4.4.1.1.2. Teaching Skills Improvement

The teachers also believed that teacher research could increase their teaching skills in that it could have positive effects on their lecturing and the management of classroom activities. Yeliz evaluated teacher research as a necessary activity to improve her teaching skills, İnci, Cengiz and Ayla believed teacher research could gave way to a more qualified teaching and more effective lessons. Nalan gave a related example that after the teacher research, she worked on her voice and she was able to use her tone better. Teacher research improved İnci's teaching via boosting her confidence. After she conducted teacher research, her know- how related to classroom teaching improved and she believed she became a better teacher. She also added that after conducting teacher research she had a more comfortable teaching environment. Different from other remarks İnci additionally concluded that teacher research could help a teacher to develop himself/ herself personally and help mature his/her personality.

4.4.1.1.3. Teacher Autonomy Improvement

Vildan, Türkan and Mine concluded that teacher research could improve their autonomy as teachers. Türkan expressed that she was not happy with the education which was exam oriented. She believed teacher research could increase the collaboration and dialogue between colleagues thus professional autonomy of the practicing professionals could be strengthened. These three teachers worked in primary school settings. The teachers opinions related to the gains of autonomy of teacher research were confirmed by several teachers who took part in an action research project for creating context responsive classroom materials. (The CAR-CLIL project) (Banegas, Pavese, Velázquez, & Vélez, 2013). Several teachers reported feeling more autonomous. They attributed their autonomy to the successful collaborative work.

4.4.1.1.4. Collaboration

Teacher research could promote collaboration among colleagues. The teachers who work together on research projects build up strong connections. The teachers Halime, Ayla and Türkan believed teacher research would benefit them in increasing the dialogue and collaboration with their colleagues.

4.4.1.1.5. Keeping Up With Developments

Vildan saw teacher research as a means to keep up in ELT field. She believed the benefits of teacher research included helping teachers to keep fresh. The teachers who carry out teacher research read and therefore keep being informed of the latest trends and applications. She wanted to conduct teacher research because of that reason.

4.4.2. Benefits of TR for Students

The direct positive outcomes for the part of students were identified in the answers of teachers related to their opinions of benefits of teacher research. These benefits were listed as "understanding student perception, interaction with students, student self-confidence, and increase in student interest. The codes in relation to Benefits of TR for Students were shown in the table 4.8 below.

Table: 4.8. Codes in relation to Benefits of TR for Students

Benefits of TR for students	***f***
Understanding of student perception	**5**
Interaction with students	**5**
Student self confidence	**5**
Increase in student interest	**3**
TOTAL	**18**

4.4.2.1. Understanding of Student Perception

The teachers who conducted teacher research before shared their experiences related to learning students' perspectives via teacher research. Fehmi, Murat, Pelin remarked that teacher research was a window into students' points of view. Teacher research taught Pelin and Murat what it meant to start to learn a new language for the first time. It showed Fehmi how he and his lessons were perceived by his students. Murat also stressed that the students were really valuable. They were the prominent actors of our future. The teacher research was an effective means of knowing his students better.

4.4.2.2. Interaction with Students

Zeichner (2006) reports that after the he Madison, Wisconsin Classroom Action Research Program many teacher claimed that they understood the importance of talking to and listening to their students. Fehmi and Murat, two teachers who are experienced in teacher research also shared similar gains at the end of their previous individual teacher research. Fehmi shared his personal experience related to student interaction in the following way:

> "Since we involve them (the students) in the process, their interaction with us is effected positively. They feel happier and safer. It directly effects our classroom management and how we conduct lessons. If there is a problem in the interaction the students can never learn anything. We don't want that. In order to eradicate this unwanted situation we always make use of teacher research." (Fehmi, D1Primary School, ETR, Interview Data)

When the interaction with the students strengthened, the teachers started to understand the causes of the problems better and they changed their approach to them. They started to see the positive results of their new approaches. Murat gave the example as:

> "Generally the teachers whose students don't have any interest towards lessons lose their interest as well. This stated to happen to me. After a while you think the students who don't listen to the lesson don't want to learn. However after I encouraged my students to write me the problems, some students of mine stated "Actually I was embarrassed to tell you but I hate English. I don't want to learn. I was pretending to be listening but I wasn't." After the student told these, the student thought it was the end. She thought I wouldn't be interested in this student anymore. So the student though she would fail the lesson. However on the contrary, I was interested in this student more. When I am the teacher of duty in the school, I talked to this student. The students like her started to feel that their opinions were taken seriously." (Murat, E1High School, ETR, Interview Data)

4.4.2.3. Student Self Confidence

As for other merits of teacher research, it improved the self-confidence of students as well building up communication between the teacher and the students. Teachers Fehmi and Murat remarked that teacher research increased their students' self-confidence. The teachers shared some anecdotes related to increase of self -confidence in students due to teacher research. As being a part of teacher research process, the students could contribute to the planning of classroom activities. They could share their opinions on the way the lessons should be conducted. This developed the confidence of students as well as catered as a tool to invoke positive attitudes towards lessons. Murat stated that:

> "Last year I attended a professional development course. One of the foreign teachers told us there that don't be afraid of students, they won't bite you. Don't be ashamed of getting their opinions. If you have good interactions with them, they will love you love English. Therefore they will concentrate their lessons better. I definitely agree with this statement. I personally applied what I have learnt and I confirm this. I think (teacher research) is a practice that every teacher should do. We should ignore the inconveniences that it may bring but see it as a step in our professional development."(Murat, E1High School, ETR, Interview Data)

The students also gained self-confidence after teachers took their opinions and they made changes in the lessons accordingly. Fehmi stated the following:

> "First of all, when the students understand that their opinions are cared, they have a different perspective to the lessons. Additionally, when we solve the problems with the help of their observations and opinions, we create an effective learning environment for them." (Fehmi, D1 Primary School, ETR, Interview Data)

Murat added that talking to students and taking their opinions mean a lot for the students and this act is quite important for students to feel that they are

important members of the classroom community. This can change the way they see themselves.

> "If we don't value our students they feel worthless, I can't teach anything to students who feels themselves worthless. One of my students came to me and said: "I have been a student for nine years and it is the first time a teacher cares about my ideas. This is really painful. I am not bragging about what I do. This is the way it should be done. That is why I do it." (Murat, E1High School, ETR, Interview Data)

4.4.2.4. Increase in Student Interest

Murat shared that after he deeply understand the reasons for student failures and their opinions related to the lessons, he tried to work on students who are reluctant to learn. He tried to talk to them, after the lessons whenever he saw them. These students started to like English gradually. He highlights that in one of his classroom several students started to like English this way. He adds that he spent a lot of time but it had positive gains for him. The students became more interested in the lessons and the success of the lessons improved.

4.4.3. Instructional Benefits

Teacher research was evaluated as a tool which can eliminate or reduce the problems occurring in the classrooms related to instruction. One of the striking features of teacher research in this aspect was its relevance to the actual context. It was also a food feedback tool. The Codes in relation to instructional benefits were shown in the table 4.9.

Table: 4.9. Codes in relation to Instructional Benefits

Instructional benefits	***f***
Context specific implications	**14**
Solution to classroom problems	**13**
Feedback	**5**
TOTAL	**32**

4.4.3.1. Context Specific Implications

The benefits of teacher research also included that it had direct applicable results to the immediate teaching environment. 43, 75 % of the teachers voiced that they expected teacher research to be practice oriented. They believed the results of teacher research should be applicable to their classroom and it should give them the data for implication. Cengiz stated when applied in his classroom, the results of the study should work in that environment. Similarly Özge expressed the result of the study should easily be applied to the classroom. Halime requested the research results must be immediately practiced in the classroom and they should work. Seray and Giray also stated that the teacher research should reflect the context very well and at the end of the research, there should be suggestions for implication. Mine added that the teacher research was research where the actor of the specific context played an important role; therefore the problems could be solved fast. Nalan was also another teacher who emphasized the importance of the capability of teacher research to respond different contexts well due to its context oriented nature. She therefore advocated that it worked well in implications for practice. Seray commented that reading teacher research could also benefit teacher in terms of providing teachers with sample cases to benefit from.

In the interviews, the teachers Murat, Fehmi and Seray implied the importance of applicable results to classrooms. Fehmi believed the theory of teacher research was easily reflected into practice. He stated that:

> "Teacher research is quite easy and it is effective for your career. It is really important. Maybe it is an exercise whose practice and theory the most closely connected." (Fehmi, D1 Primary School, ETR, interview data)

Seray also advocated that she was a researcher who believed the implications part of the research was the most important section of a research. She therefore gave the reason that teacher research addressed implications for why she wanted to carry out teacher research in the future. She also believed that teacher research, although presented an additional workload to teachers, had the potential to improve our education system.

Murat evaluated teacher research as having the potential to actually work in the classroom because he believed this research type was more realistic. He voiced this as:

> "We can say that teacher research is more realistic compared to other research teachers carry. Because teachers see the students personally and they can experience whether the results of the study works in the classroom form first hand. He knows the students. Sometimes students can fill the surveys for the sake of filling; the teachers can understand this kind of an interaction better. Although it is possible for researchers too, the teachers can control it better since they know the students. I have been using teacher research for years. The person who carries out the research should try to understand the teachers and the students for a while if not very well. They should know the classroom environment." (Murat, E1High School, ETR, interview data)

4.4.3.2. Solution to Problems

The teachers who highlighted that the teacher research was useful to solve the problems which occurred in the classrooms included Fehmi, Murat, Halime, Ayla, Giray, Nalan. Giray stressed that with the help of teacher research teachers could do their job easier. Nalan identified the aims of teacher research as giving suggestions for the solutions of the problems. She also commented that during the research process other stakeholders such as other teachers, parents, administers could also be consulted and included in the problem solving. Fehmi believed with the help of this research the teacher could identify and solve the problems in the classroom. He commented that teacher research has positive merits in terms of classroom management. Since the students were great observers, he could correct the mistakes minutely in the light of their comments. He commented this feature was very favorable for him. In addition to these ideas, Murat who conducted teacher research added that he corrected his mistakes in the class, and dissatisfactions were diminished by the side of the students. Murat expressed that even though he spent some 5 or 10 minutes of his lesson for teacher research and at least 45 minutes for data analysis, he believed he gained valuable times, hours indeed by tracking the shortcomings before they turned into serious problems. Therefore he stated that he "dressed the wounds, before they turned into gangrene."

4.4.3.3. Feedback

During the interviews, the teachers Murat and Nalan specified that teacher research provided feedback for their lessons. Murat likened the function of teacher research for his lessons as the compass for a sailor. He could determine his route in the lessons with the help of teacher research. Nalan stated that although teacher research did not challenge her beliefs related to how the lessons should be conducted, she learned a lot from them. She believed teacher research provided clear feedback from her students and

colleagues. Murat also added teacher research provided valuable feedback for the parent meetings as well. He could understand the underlying problems and could explain them to the parents with the help of teacher research. In this way parent could also track their students. Öner and Pelin believed teacher research helped them to be able to evaluate their lessons more objectively. Türkan also stressed the importance of carrying out the teacher research in an objective way to utilize it in the best way.

4.5. Difficulties of Teacher Research

In the study the teachers were asked about their problems in terms of using teacher research as a professional development tool. The teachers shared their opinions related to the applicability of teacher research considering the conditions in their working environments. They also shared their individual concerns about this research movement.

4.5.1. Concerns Related to TR

The reservations which were explained by teachers were compiled under the sub themes reliability, validity and legitimacy. The teachers were concerned with the reliability of data mostly. The codes in relation to concerns related to TR are compiled in the table 4.10 below.

Table: 4.10. Codes in relation to Concerns Related to TR

Concerns related to TR	***f***
Reliability	**8**
Validity	**4**
Legitimacy	**1**
TOTAL	**13**

4.5.1.1. Reliability/ Validity/ Legitimacy

The teachers Türkan, Vildan, Giray, İnci, Fehmi, Murat, Halime, Mine, İnci (56, 25% of the teachers) commented on the issue of reliability and validity and legitimacy. Giray stated that teacher research could open new ways for teachers, especially when they couldn't find direct answers to their specific problems in literature. However, if done by unqualified people, it might not be reliable. Türkan stated that not being taken seriously while conducting the research could be one of the problems that the teachers might encounter. Also the concern for the reliability of the data obtained from a teacher's own students constituted a big part of the reservations of the teachers. Türkan defended that the answers to the questions would be biased since the students tend to give answers that their teachers want to hear. Fehmi also added that the low number of participants is a great obstacle for teachers and if the target group for the research has negative thoughts related to English, their answers would be affected by this fact. İnci stated the students gave evasive answers or they can't reflect their ideas well and Vildan and Halime pointed the student weren't objective.

There were also several suggestions of teachers to increase the reliability and validity of the teacher research. Giray proposed adding teacher observation to the data collection methods and İnci warned teachers to attentively monitor every step of the research process. The teachers who conducted teacher research contributed to the theme describing their experiences related to data collection and the reliability of the data. Nalan, Tarık and Metin also suggested that if the research was conducted carefully and systematically, reliability of the data would be high.

Murat shared the solution he found to improve the reliability of the data gathered from students. The teacher reported that it was important not to let the student feel that they could direct the teacher easily with their feedback. He stressed that this would lead some of the students to exploit the teacher.

In order to prevent this he announced his students that he wouldn't necessarily have to do everything written in the feedback forms. He needed to observe and confirm them. However this time, students lost their enthusiasm to fill the feedback forms or questionnaires. Upon noticing this decline the teacher selected some of the excerpts from the student feedbacks. He especially picked from the ones which weren't necessarily confidential or caused offense to the students who wrote them. He read them out loud in the classroom and explained the reasons of the problems which were mentioned by the students. Realizing each one of their notes was noticed by the teacher, the students were more attentive, constructive and enthusiastic the next time.

4.5.2. Problems Related to Application

Even though the teachers believed teacher research had a potential to positively affect their practices in the classrooms and their professional development, they shared their opinions of the difficulties in the application process. The codes in relation to problems related to application are shown in the table 4.11.

Table: 4.11. Codes in relation to Problems Related to Application

Problems related to application	***f***
Workload/limited time	**15**
Resources-expertise	**8**
Difficulties in data collection	**5**
Negative school research culture	**4**
Lack of Teacher autonomy	**4**
TOTAL	**36**

4.5.2.1. Workload/Limited Time

As for the applicability of teacher research, all of the teachers in the public primary school case stated that teacher research wasn't applicable in their school context. The problems of applicability which were addressed by the teachers were the problems related to time, heavy workload. Ayla and Vildan stated that her existing workload was heavy. Therefore they wouldn't be able to allocate time for teacher research. They had to follow the program within a specific time limit. Vildan stressed that she could hardly follow the lesson program. She specified that she had to complete a pre-arranged syllabus on a determined time. In the school they had to spare time to celebrate some special occasions. This also was a problem for her to conduct teacher research. Vildan expressed that even though teacher research was useful, the teachers tend to find more practical solutions for their problems rather than conducting detailed research. Since they had a lot of workload including paperwork of school, they preferred talking to their colleagues about their problems.

Türkan, another teacher who works at a public primary school stated that, because she had so many students and heavy workload, teacher research wasn't applicable for her as well. The teachers who stated that they can't conduct teacher research due to their heavy workload and time problems also included two other teachers from private university setting. These teachers shared their doubts related to teacher research.

Tarık believed that teacher research would add to the existing workload of teachers. Seray was also another teacher who cited time limitations and the heavy workload of teachers as the source of doubts for teacher research.

4.5.2.2. Resources/ Expertise

During the interviews for the difficulties of conducting teacher research, the lack of resources and knowledge was an important topic that came up. Mine claimed that teacher research might work in university setting but not in schools that were associated with MONE. She didn't consider all the teachers had the necessary technical knowledge to carry out teacher research. They wouldn't define their research problems clearly or conduct it properly. She added that the teachers who pursued master degree might know about teacher research but others especially senior teachers, might not even know the term. Additionally, Özge shared that she had never heard the term teacher research before. She was informed about teacher research during the research process. The teachers who expressed that teacher research could be applicable with the training of the teachers were Mine, Murat and Nalan. They supported the idea that if the teachers were provided with the necessary sources and knowledge, teacher research could be applicable in the schools.

Mine cited that even photocopying was a heavy burden on the teacher if the institution didn't support them in this matter. The statement of Özge, Ayla and Vildan who worked at a Public primary school corroborated with what Mine commented.

4.5.2.3. Difficulties in Data Collection

Another impediment for the applicability of the teacher research was the difficulty of data collection. Some teachers voiced that they were discouraged by the data collection process. Yeliz stated that participants consent and the permit of the host school was one of the biggest problems that a beginner teacher researcher might come across. Seray added that the difficulties of the teacher research included getting necessary approvals and permits during data collection process. However, Yeliz added although it

was hard to apply teacher research, it wasn't impossible for her. The doubts of the teachers of teacher research also included the inability to find voluntary participants or teachers to collaborate with. Halime and Seray were the teachers who had the concerns related to voluntary participation. Seray stated the following:

> "In the classrooms where the students abstain from responsibilities and even homework, application of teacher research is really difficult."(Seray, F1 University, ITR, Survey Data)

4.5.2.4. Negative School Research Culture

Ayla commented that since there wasn't school support, the teacher research wasn't applicable for her. Türkan also stated her school culture wasn't suitable for conducting teacher research. Seray stated that she happily wanted to conduct teacher research as long as the institution supported her. The last comment in the applicability problems of this research belonged Halime. She stated that teacher research could be hard for her to apply this research due to student profile in her school environment. Vildan stated that the features of her school weren't supportive of teacher research. Özge stated that the most eminent problems that a teacher researcher might come across included finding people to ask questions in case of hardships. Lastly Murat added the harsh comments of students as another difficulty for teacher research. He stated that occasionally, the students wrote unfair negative comments which could cause hard feelings.

4.5.2.5. Lack of Teacher Autonomy

The teachers stated that applying the results of teacher research could be difficult due to factors which weren't related to teachers. Vildan stated that she didn't want to conduct teacher research since the research was not realistic. Even if she came up with solutions, the solutions wouldn't be applied in her classes. She shared her experiences related to research in the field of ELT. She stated that this research wasn't applied in schools

therefore she foresaw that the teacher research would share the same fate. The teachers Türkan and Giray noted that the teachers weren't the only stakeholders in the educational decision making. Therefore teacher research might not eradicate all of the problems that teachers face. Giray specified it as:

> "Since we are teaching in the light of instructions which are given to us, I don't believe teacher research would make a great difference. However, it can lead to small scale changes in classrooms." (Giray, D1 Primary School, ITR, survey data)

The teachers Nalan and Seray reported that permission of the schools to conduct teacher was quite important in the application of this teacher research. Seray believed that; when the institution didn't support teacher research, it was unethical to conduct it.

Nalan also added that:

> "If the institution does not allow you to do this research you cannot do anything you are just an employee there so you have to obey the rules you have to persuade the people, the authority above you so it would be really hard. … Luckily I have never faced the difficulty but I hear some these kinds of things from other institutions." (Nalan, C1 University, ETR, Interview Data)

4.6.Motivation for Teacher Research

The teachers in the study had several motives for conducting teacher research. The motives included the problems in education and the intrinsic desire to improve the quality of lessons as well as the desire of teachers to improve themselves as professionals in the field. The codes in relation to motivation for TR are shown in the table 4.12.

Table: 4.12. Codes in relation to Motivation for TR

Motivation for TR	***f***
Intrinsic desire for improvement	**11**
Problems in classroom	**5**
Academic success	**2**
Prior benefits of TR	**1**
TOTAL	**19**

4.6.1. Intrinsic Desire for Improvement

The teachers Murat, Fehmi and Nalan stated that in order for teacher research to be applicable the intrinsic desire and interest of the teachers were the necessities. The teachers were expected to spare their times and efforts for this work, therefore they should desire to do it. The teachers Vildan, Nalan and Mine also suggested that teacher research shouldn't be a compulsory practice. Nalan insisted that if the teacher research was compulsory, there would be the danger of the decrease in the quality of it. Mine and Vildan also added the teachers would disagree with the idea of compulsory teacher research due to their workload.

In the interviews, the teachers shared their motivation for conducting teacher research. The dominant motive was the intrinsic motivation of teachers to become more effective teachers. The teachers who mentioned intrinsic motivation during the interviews were Murat, Fehmi, Seray, Nalan and Vildan. Seray stated the importance of intrinsic motivation for her desire to conduct teacher research in her own words as the following,

> "I can cite the desire to improve myself and the classroom dynamics for my motivation to conduct teacher research. I think how I can carry out my job better. This motivates me to do action research. …. If you are a conscious person and you have researcher personality, conducting action research is meaningful for you. You learn from it. If you can publish your research

> you feel satisfied. You can state that you are different from others. You can say I am a teacher who still gives importance on improvement. I don't feel satisfied with what I know. Action research shows you still want to improve yourself. Therefore only the teachers who have high motivation will conduct it." (Seray, F1 University, ITR, interview data)

She also stated the fact that she works at a private institution also affected her desire to improve herself as a teacher. She shared her opinion that different from the teachers who don't have a reason to improve themselves or who can easily get by with their existing knowledge, she wants to become better since she works at a private institution.

Vildan stated that, although the opportunities weren't very supportive, she would try to make the conditions better if she wanted to conduct teacher research. These words confirmed that the intrinsic motivation could help teachers to overcome problems in some cases.

4.6.2. Problems in Classroom

The problems that the teachers face in their lessons or in the education system also motivated some teachers (Murat and Mine) to conduct teacher research. Murat exemplified the education problems as:

> "I have encountered teachers who have just completed their pedagogic formation education. I have conversations with them. The teachers believe their job is to enter into classrooms, lecture their subjects and leave. The aims and objectives are only on paper. They aren't realized in real life. We believe we know teaching by memorizing European methodologists' approaches. Unfortunately teaching cannot be realized this way. I don't claim that I am perfect. I may not know everything that every pedagogic say. You can be a teacher even if you miss a few things in theory but you can't be a teacher if you can't handle the practice. There are teachers who can't speak a word of English. I had a teacher in high school he was admitting this. He was preparing us for general English exam. I still have some

> students who complain about this deficit. (The fact that English teachers aren't able to talk in English fluently themselves) …… Therefore we can save the patient. Maybe we can only realize it in the future. If everyone does this (teacher research) and there can be unity, this ship can be saved. However if everyone tries to put a hole in it, it sinks. "(Murat, E1High School, ETR, Interview Data)

Mine specified that the problems in her classroom motivated her to conduct teacher research. Seray stated when she encountered recurring problems; she would consider teacher research as a tool to solve them. She also stated that finding ways to change classroom routine motivated her to conduct research. The students could be bored of the routine activities if they weren't changed. Teacher research could be the means of adding variety to the lessons.

4.6.3. Academic Success

The teachers Vildan and Mine specified the desire to attain academic success as the source the motivation for teachers to carry out teacher research. Vildan expressed that the teachers who wished to have an academic career would find teacher research useful. However other teachers might not prefer this form of academic development. Mine stated that her master studies motivated her to carry out teacher research.

4.6.4. Prior Benefits of TR

Murat added the fact that he saw the positive effects of teacher research in his classroom motivated him even more to conduct teacher research. He suggested that he personally observed the benefits of increased teacher awareness, to be able to evaluate the classes effectively, as well as increase in student interaction and motivation. He stated that he conducts teacher research at more frequent intervals after seeing the good results.

4.7. Opinions of Teachers of Teacher Research

In this part the opinions of teachers related to teacher research as a professional development tool is compiled. The teachers explained what the term teacher research meant for them. They expressed their thoughts and concerning this professional development tool. The teachers also stated whether or not they wanted to conduct teacher research projects in the future.

4.7.1. As a Professional Development Tool

Teacher opinions of teacher research as a form of development tool are listed in the table below. The most frequent opinion among teachers was it being responsive to their problems. The codes in relation to opinions of teachers of TR as a professional Development Tool are shown in the table 4.13.

Table: 4.13. Codes in relation to Opinions of Teachers of TR as a Professional Development Tool

As a professional development tool	***f***
Responsive to teacher problems	**13**
Provider of the position of teachers as researchers	**9**
Unsuitable for teachers who lacks expertise	**8**
Owned by teachers	**5**
Useful	**4**
Evaluative	**4**
Reliable	**3**
Context embedded	**3**
Different from academic research	**3**
Subjective	**1**
TOTAL	**1**
	53

4.7.1.1. Responsive to Teacher Problems

The teachers Öner, Nalan, Metin, Vildan, Ayla, Türkan, Halime, Seray, Tarık, and Giray stressed the fact that teacher research addressed teachers' problems. They regarded it as a way of solving their problems related to teaching or improve their practice. They evaluated teacher research as a practice which is relevant to their needs.

4.7.1.2. Provider of the Position of Teachers as Researchers

The role of being the teacher and the researcher at the same time invoked different opinions in teachers. Some of the teachers stated it would be hard and challenging task (Tarık, Yeliz), some teachers remarked these different roles could be beneficial in that it could cause teachers to be a more observant (Mine, İnci) and due to their unique position they could contribute to the field from different perspectives (Metin, Fehmi). Some of the teachers stated although being a teacher and researcher at the same time was a challenging task, the benefits outweighed the difficulties (Öner, Seray, and Nalan)

> "I think it had both advantages and disadvantages. Sometimes, it is hard to see and one's own faults. However, I believe that as a researcher, a teacher must have overcome these problems, and are eager to approach teacher research as a powerful tool to improve his/her skills. And in this sense, I believe it might be even better because a teacher herself is also the only one who will see her mistakes or practices need improvement when looked with an open mind. Furthermore, because s/he is the one who see these, it is highly possibly for him/her to be more willing to improve himself/herself and because s/he knows her/his situation better, the possible solutions s/he come up with are going to be most likely applicable ones for her/his case. Sometimes people do suggestions, yet they may ignore their applicability in different situations."(Nalan, C1 University, ETR, Interview Data)

> "The teachers who are going to conduct teacher research and teach at the same time have to be determined. They

> have to be patient and forward- thinking. Only this way, teacher and researcher double role could be accomplished."(Halime, E2 High School, ITR, Survey Data)

4.7.1.3. Unsuitable for Teachers who Lacks Expertise

Some of the teachers advocated that teacher research couldn't be done by every teacher. Some suggested that teacher research should be conducted by experts while the experts listened to the views of the teachers. The teachers who stated inexperienced teachers might have problems in conducting teacher research included Giray, Mine, Halime and Ayla. Mine suggested that only experienced teachers should conduct teacher research.

> "It is good to receive the teachers' opinions but research can be conducted only by experienced teachers. I don't think that any teacher is capable of conducting a research. It is a tough task.… It is very useful to find solutions for many problems however teacher should not be himself or herself to conduct the research. (Mine, C1 University, ITR, Interview Data)

4.7.1.4. Context Embedded

Mine and Nalan also highlighted that teacher research was context embedded. Teacher research reveals the problems which they face in specific places where their teaching is embedded.

> "A good teacher research, I think, must focus on specific characteristics of the context where the teacher is working. I believe every single teaching context is unique and must be evaluated accordingly. Therefore, a good teacher research cannot ignore the effects of school environment, parents, students, administers, and other possible factors which make the place special." (Nalan, C1 University, ITR, Interview Data)

4.7.1.5. Different from Academic Research

In the interviews, the eminent differences between teacher research and academic research as perceived by the teachers were included the fact that the teachers knew the context, participants and problems better and that academic research were sometimes inconclusive.

> "What happened at the end of that research? (Academic research) Where did they gather the results? What was found in the analysis? The students aren't aware of those. They just fill out forms and that is it. They students and other stake holders should be notified about the results but nobody cares to do that."(Vildan, A2 Primary school, ITR, Interview Data)

Murat and Fehmi highlighted that one of the biggest differences between teacher research and research which were conducted by researchers as some researchers don't have classroom experience which causes inconveniences.

> "In teacher research, the effectiveness is 100%... since other researchers are outsiders they wouldn't know much about the classroom environment. Therefore teacher research would be more effective since teacher can make better observation." (Fehmi, D1Primary School, ETR, Interview Data)

> "The students may sometimes fill out the surveys for the sake of filling them. They don't take it seriously. The teacher can track it better. Although the tracking is also possible for other researcher they don't know the students well… even though they don't know the students and the teacher well, they need to know about teaching." (Murat, E1High School, ETR, interview data)

4.7.1.6. Evaluative

The teachers who work at Private High school in our study, considered teacher research as a tool for evaluating their current classroom activities

and practices. Murat answered the question “What are the assumptions behind teacher research and its potential benefits?” as; he could learn satisfactions and dissatisfactions, in the end necessary steps were taken accordingly. Cengiz defined teacher research as a way of finding out whether teachers were aware of the developments and whether or not they could apply new methods to their classes. Halime stated that teacher research provided the opportunity to investigate herself and her lessons. If there were mistakes or problems, help her to try out new ways.

4.7.1.7. Owned by Teachers

Öner and Mine stressed the importance of including teachers into research process and the fact that teacher research was conducted by teachers or from beginning to end was a good advantage for the teachers.

4.7.1.8. Useful

In the survey, the teachers Öner, Halime, Türkan, Giray and Tarık evaluated teacher research as a useful practice. Tarık and Öner elaborated on the topic the following way:

> “Since I have never seen teacher research before I don’t know it well. As far as I understood, it could be useful in problem solving and professional development. I believe it would serve us well if it is conducted seriously and in a comprehensive way.”(Tarık, F2 University, ITR, Survey Data)

> “The research is done by people who actually have a realistic idea of the possible problems. Therefore it is useful.” (Öner, C1 University, ITR, Survey Data)

4.7.1.9. Subjective

Türkan was the only teacher who highlighted that teacher research has the feature of subjectivity.

> "Teacher research is critical, supportive of professional development and teaching profession but it is subjective." (Türkan, A1 Primary School, ITR, Survey Data)

4.7.1.10. Reliable

Two teachers Murat and Türkan regarded teacher research as reliable. Murat stated that teacher research was reliable due to the fact that the students were more comfortable expressing themselves in written feedback forms or questionnaires that he prepared.

4.7.2. Future TR Works

The teachers discussed whether or not they thought they would do teacher research. The answers and their reasons were presented below. The codes in relation to future TR projects are shown in the table 4.14.

Table: 4.14. Codes in relation to Future TR Projects

Future TR projects	***F***
No Desire for future TR works	**12**
Desire for future TR works	**10**
TOTAL	**22**

4.7.2.1. No Desire for Future TR Works

The teachers who stated that they wouldn't like to carry our teacher research included Öner, Mine, Halime, Vildan, Seray, Tarık, Fehmi and Giray. İnci stated that she tried to carry out teacher research from time to time but due to the workload and time constrains, it wasn't always possible. The dominant reasons the teachers cited for not wanting to conduct teacher research included the lack of time and the fact that they didn't feel themselves capable enough to conduct teacher research. Mine, Fehmi Tarık and İnci stated that lately they had a very busy work schedule. Giray stated he didn't feel himself capable enough. Halime specified that she wasn't determined enough to be able to finish a teacher research project. She stated that:

> "No I wouldn't want to do it. For the professions which include dealing with people, doing research and concluding it, is very hard. In order to carry out research one has to be determined. I don't feel myself determined enough." (Halime, E2 High School, ITR, survey data)

4.7.2.2. Desire to Conduct Future TR Works

When the teachers were asked the question whether they would like to carry out teacher research the teachers who answered positively were the teachers Nalan, Murat, Cengiz, Ayla, Türkan, Giray, Seray and Yeliz. The reason that the teachers gave included contribution to the field (Nalan), being aware of the problems (Murat, Türkan) solving the problems and unearthing useful information to use in class (Ayla) and to become a better teacher (Yeliz).

4.7.3. Features of Good TR

Lastly in this section the opinions of the teachers of the features of good teacher research were examined. The identified features were being

repeatable, being responsive to the needs and different perspectives. The codes in relation to features of good TR are shown in the table 4.15 below.

Table: 4.15. Codes in relation to Features of Good TR

Features of Good TR	***f***
4.7.3.1. Repeatable	**2**
4.7.3.2. Responsive to the needs	**1**
4.7.3.3. Reflective of different perspectives	**1**
4.7.3.4. TOTAL	**4**

4.7.3.5. Repeatable /Responsive to needs and Different Perspectives

Halime, Öner and Giray believe that a good teacher research should be repeatable. Öner states even if the conditions weren't 100% the same, partial generalization (should) be obtained to work on, adapt and improve. Halime also believes it should have informative implications for people who wanted to replicate it in their environments. Halime suggested that good teacher research should deal with contemporary needs. Lastly according to Fehmi a good teacher research needed to represent different viewpoints. The target group and the research questions should be selected with utmost care.

4.8. Teacher Needs to Conduct Teacher Research

In the study, the teachers who conducted teacher research (Murat, Fehmi, Nalan, İnci) mentioned the positive outcomes of the conduct to their personal and professional developments. The teachers who didn't conduct teacher research also shared their ideas related to the potential benefits and their positive attitudes towards it. However teacher research is far from being a common activity among the teachers studied. Only four teachers out of 16 stated that they were actively making use of teacher research. The

teachers listed their needs for this research to be a more prevalent activity among them.

4.8.1. Technical Needs

The demands of teachers to ease their participation in teacher research as a form of professional development included their desire to work in a more flexible schedule, help during data collection process, training and being provided with necessary resources. Interestingly in the study some of teachers demanded that teacher research should be a compulsory process to generalize its use among practitioners. The codes in relation to Technical Needs of Teachers for TR are shown in the table 4.16 below.

Table: 4.16.Codes in relation to Technical Needs of Teachers for TR

Technical needs	***f***
Resources	**12**
Compulsory research conduct	**10**
Flexibility of lessons hours	**7**
Help during data collection	**6**
Training	**5**
Experienced assistants	**4**
Action Research Center	**1**
TOTAL	**45**

4.8.1.1. Resources

The teachers also specified that they needed resources to be able to do teacher research. They demanded technological resources such as software programs or data bases (Türkan, Ayla) or the materials or documents which would be used during data collection process or during literature review (Öner, Mine, Cengiz, Özge, Metin, Vildan and Yeliz.)

4.8.1.2. Flexibility of Lesson Hours

In the surveys, the teachers touched upon the issue that as practitioners who need to keep up with a pre-arranged program, it was hard for them to spare the necessary time to conduct teacher research from beginning to end. The teachers demanded that extra duties should be lessened for the teachers who were carrying out research at their classes. These teachers also demanded less workload from their institutions. (Seray, Öner) The teachers suggested allocating the teachers off- time to conduct research (Öner) or they demanded that sometime of the academic year should only be spared for conducting research (Cengiz, Vildan). Another proposal related to time was arranging teachers' lessons or other duties' due dates flexibly to let them carry out teacher research (Öner, Fehmi)

4.8.1.3. Training

Training was needed in order to spread teacher research use among teachers. Most of the teachers in the study expressed that they didn't feel themselves capable enough to carry out teacher research. Therefore teacher research education and training was demanded by teachers (Mine, İnci, Ayla, Türkan, Cengiz, and Pelin). The teachers also suggested that the students should also be involved in the training process.

> "I want to do teacher research. First I really want to be aware of everything about teacher research: I can't find myself skillful and informed enough."(Mine, C1 University, ITR, Survey Data)

> "The colleagues, school and the students should be trained about this issue. Teacher trainers should be placed to schools for this education."(Türkan, A1 Primary School, ITR, Survey Data)

Tarık and Vildan proposed that experts could be involved in the teacher research process. Vildan stated that the teachers should observe the class and the researcher should analyze the results.

4.8.1.4. Help During Data Collection

The teachers who conducted teacher research remarked that while they were conducting teacher research the motivation and the positive attitudes of the students during data collection were the most helpful aid to ease the process. A case mentioned by Nalan in which the research process was halted due to the lack of the permission and collaboration for data collection by one of the parents.

> "Most helpful thing while conducting teacher research is people's willingness to take part in your research. All the other problems are minor and can be handled once you have willing participants who want to share their beliefs, opinions, and experiences with you, and open to be observed and interviewed or other stuff you want to use to collect your data... From whom you collect your data actually is very important if you have to work with your students your students have to consider your research positively. They should be voluntary. … Sometimes you may need to work with the outer community; other people, parents, students' parents. Maybe their interest is definitely important. In one of the cases for example we were doing a research with students at a primary school and one of the students' parents did not let us do that and we were stuck there. So people's permission and their willingness are definitely important. And they need to give correct information they need to be honest so they have to be voluntary, really willing to do that."(Nalan, C1 University, ETR, Interview Data)

İnci highlighted the importance of positive reactions during the research process, Seray commented on the importance of student motivation and Murat stated that he appreciated constructive criticism and feedback of his students in the research process. Yeliz who didn't conduct teacher research also remarked she expected positive reactions from their students in the data collection. This would make teacher research process successful.

4.8.1.5. Compulsory TR Conduct

Some of the teachers (Vildan, Fehmi, Murat, Seray, and Özge) believed if the institutions require teachers to do teacher research as a compulsory duty, the prevalence of teacher research could be assured. They believed this would have positive effects on education. The teachers Murat, Vildan and Özge defended that the teachers tend to do the things that they are required by an authority. Since teacher research is a beneficial practice, the teachers should do it even if in the form of a compulsory duty.

> "As a nation, we are fond of our comfort. If this practice was compulsory, the institutions could control whether or not the teacher research was carried out." (Murat, ETR, E1High School, Interview Data)

The teachers Seray and Fehmi stated that the teachers need to meet this form of professional development. Therefore, their first teacher research could be compulsory to make the widest possible population of teachers to get to know this research type.

> "In order to make progress, we should make teacher research compulsory. If it was compulsory, the teachers who had never conducted it would have to do it. They would get the chance to have feedback from their classrooms. They could find the chance to fix the problems that they missed. This would have positive effects on education. The teachers who are voluntary are already doing teacher research, but if it was compulsory, a general improvement would be observed. … Institutions could monitor it."(Fehmi, D1Primary School, ETR, Interview Data)

> "Actually, I believe this research is necessary. Today the teachers don't have to carry out research. However the teachers compare what they do with their salary. They just lecture and go out. They don't feel the need to improve themselves or their classes. Therefore, I believe teacher research should be compulsory, not only in universities but in other schools too. … Some teachers are pursuing master or PhD. They can carry out teacher research but other teachers may not have this capability.

> It is the institution that will provide the teacher this feature. Therefore the research could be advertised in schools. It could be compulsory. The teachers at least could choose one topic and they are required to conduct research on it. Even though it brings extra workload, I believe this will be good for our education. … The teachers who work at universities for example are exposed to a training session, this research training could likewise be compulsory. In high schools for example it could be for a semester. I don't argue that everybody should be equal, but even if not in many numbers, the teachers should conduct research to know it, to make use of it." (Seray, F1 University, ITR, Interview Data)

4.8.1.6. Action research Center

Seray suggested that a nationwide action research center could be established to generalize the use of teacher research among practitioners. She stated that the institutions should send some teachers for training to this center at some specific periods. This center should require them to finish a teacher research project to finish the training. The teachers could get feedback related to their teacher research projects. The excepted ones could be published and this way teacher research training could be effectively provided for teachers.

4.8.2. Motivational Needs

The teachers' motivational needs to conduct teacher research included encouragement from the manager and school community for teacher research, awards and publication opportunities for their studies. The codes in relation to motivational needs of teachers for TR are shown in the table 4.17.

Table: 4.17.Codes in relation to Motivational Needs of Teachers for TR

Motivational needs	***F***
Awards	**6**
Encouragement for TR	**6**
Publication opportunities of TR	**2**
TOTAL	**14**

4.8.2.1. Awards/Encouragement/Publication

The suggestions for the initiation and sustainment of teacher research as a professional tool included material awards and incentives as means of encouragement for teacher research among teachers. (Nalan, Tarık, Seray, Cengiz, Murat)

In the interviews, Seray and Murat suggested that teacher research should be introduced to teachers. The positive examples and successful cases should be shared with teachers to encourage them and to let them know that they could also benefit from the similar results. Workshops and presentations could be held to make teacher research a common practice. Seray suggested that one of the most important elements of motivation for teachers is the publicity of teacher research.

4.8.3. Environmental/ School Culture Needs

The teachers Seray and Nalan especially focused on the importance of the attitudes of school managers towards teacher research in order to be able to do it. Apart from that the factors related to school research culture and other environmental needs of the teachers were listed in this section. The codes in relation to environmental/school culture needs of teachers for TR are shown in the table 4.18 below.

Table: 4.18. Codes in relation to Environmental/school Culture Needs of Teachers for TR

Environmental/ school culture needs	***f***
Positive manager attitudes towards TR	**15**
Supportive manager towards teacher opinions	**8**
Supportive school community	**6**
Innovative school environment	**2**
TOTAL	**31**

The teachers emphasized during the study that, school support was indispensable for a successful and quality teacher research application. Some of teachers underlined that the teachers could easily give up conducting research without school support, (Fehmi) and the permission from schools was the first step of conducting research. (Seray)

4.8.3.1. Supportive Manager Towards Teacher Opinions

Some of the teachers (Türkan, Metin) described their idealized school setting as having the qualities of being reliable, objective and ethical as well as keeping up with national and international developments. Seray stressed that the institution should listen to their teachers and value their opinions. The institutions should believe in teachers (Murat, Giray). The institution should also support teachers' decisions (İnci, Pelin). The institution must be open to new ideas of teachers and should provide a constructive environment. (Murat)

4.8.3.2. Positive Manager Attitudes Towards TR

The attitudes of school manager played an important role in the decision of teachers whether or not to carry out teacher research. While a welcoming school manager who was open to new ideas and the application of the teacher research, motivated teacher to conduct teacher research, the

restrictive school managers inhibited teacher research process altogether. The teachers Nalan and Öner reported that although they did not face this problem themselves, they were aware of the institutions where conducting research was not welcomed. They stated,

> "There are places where managers do restrict research. They may not be happy with the idea of teachers dealing with other things such as research or attending seminars, etc. except giving instruction to students. Though not frequent today, Turkey has seen times in which academicians weren't allowed to do postgraduate studies, let alone do research in the institutions. Even today there are some universities which do not let their staff, especially instructors of English giving compulsory English courses at universities, or prep school teachers follow postgraduate studies." (Nalan, C1 University, ETR, Interview Data)

> "It (school managers' attitude) plays a gigantic role. Some managers restrict research for no apparent reason which is a big discouragement." (Öner, C1 University, ITR, survey data)

Seray was another teacher who highlighted the importance of the attitudes of school managers towards teacher research. She believed the first determinant factor for her whether or not to carry out research was the consent of the manager.

> "The institution plays an important role. If you want to conduct action research your school should support you. You cannot just go and carry out the research. You need their consent. If the school grants this consent you can conduct the research if not, you can give up doing it… conducting research without permission is not ethical… The school should first give you permission; second if you need any kind of approval related to the conduct of research, the school should provide them." (Seray, F1 University, ITR, Interview Data)

The teachers who believed that managers' positive attitudes to research influenced teachers positively included Tarık, Murat, Giray Seray and Metin. Türkan stated that managers should eradicate obstacles for teacher research. Vildan also stressed the importance of managers' guidance. Nalan

stressed the attitudes and support of managers in a way ensured the success of her research.

> "I feel lucky because I am working with people who support me to realize my dreams from the very first days. Even sometimes my research requires these managers involvement; they willingly contribute to these studies. For all research stuff I have administered, they are willing to learn what the research is about, they like to comment on them to make them better or to give a different perspective, or to share their experiences. Therefore, it is a success to conduct research here."(Nalan, C1 University, ETR, Interview Data)

The teachers who reported that their institution let their research conduct or would let them if they were to ask the school included Metin, Fehmi, İnci, Seray, Murat and Nalan. Some of the teachers (Murat, Nalan, Mine, and Giray) also voiced that they appreciated the fact that the school let them pursue postgraduate degree and do the necessary program arrangements as a form of school support. Seray however expressed that even though her school let post-graduate studies; their support might not be consistent.

> "They support us and let us take master courses, but sometimes even they support this conduct, they may put some obstacles." (Seray, F1 University, ITR, Survey Data)

4.8.3.3. Supportive School Community

Along with managers' support, the attitudes and assistance of school community were also important for teachers. The behaviors and attitudes of the students as well as the colleagues affected teachers' research conduct considerably. In the surveys, Nalan and Mine stressed the importance of the attitudes and help of colleagues and school community do research process. Fehmi also stated:

> "The teacher can only strive for to a certain extent alone… The institution creates the optimum conditions for education more easily compared to teacher…

> Without the institution, the teachers can do little. Unfortunately there aren't many institutions which provide support for English field. When the teacher and the school work in a coordinated way, the activities are more successful. The process is easier for the teacher." (Fehmi, D1Primary School, ETR, Interview Data)

The teachers Seray and Vildan stressed the necessity of the support of students during research process. This topic was categorized under the support of school community.

> "If the students accept to participate in the research, I can only conduct it. They should also be informed about the benefits of research. Sometimes only to desire to conduct research isn't enough. Therefore if the necessary conditions are provided, if the school approves and the students support the process, I happily want to carry out teacher research. The aim is to measure the effectiveness of the activities that we use in our classroom and open the effective activities to the use of other teachers. Therefore I support it." (Seray, F1 University, ITR, interview data)

4.8.3.4. Innovative School Environment

The teachers also mentioned their institutional opportunities and the importance of these opportunities. For instance Mine, stated that she was lucky to be in a university setting where she can collaborative with specialists to carry out research. She also believed that university setting helps the teachers to be more open minded.

> "If I were to conduct teacher research, I would need to get help. I can get this help in university setting. … In terms of training and in the evaluation … The people are more open- minded. You can also reach sources easily for instance you can download an article in the university campus while you don't have this opportunity if you aren't a university member." (Mine, C1 University, ITR, Interview Data)

4.8.4. Topics for Teacher Research

The teachers portrayed several possible teacher research topics for the studies in the future. The teachers identified the problematic points that they observed in their teachings and expressed the issues that they either desired to conduct a teacher research about or as suggestions for other teacher-researchers. The topics were illustrated in the table 4.19.

Table: 4.19. Suggested Topics for TR by the Participants

Topic	Data Type	Participant
Effectiveness of Fulbright practice	Interview	Seray
Effects of family socio economic conditions to student success	Interview	Vildan
Effects of puberty to school success	Interview	Vildan
Effects of School physical opportunities to student success	Interview	Vildan
Effective teaching ways for multicultural classes	Survey	Yeliz
Classroom management	Survey	Giray
Syllabus	Survey	Halime, Fehmi
Individual differences	Survey	Murat
Effective grammar teaching	Survey	Mine, Halime
How to motivate students	Survey	Mine, Cengiz, Metin
Student needs analysis	Survey	Türkan
Effective Vocabulary Teaching	Survey	Öner, Giray
Teacher cognition	Survey	Nalan
How to improve listening speaking pronunciation skills	Survey	Öner, Vildan, Ayla, Tarık

1. Seray observed that in her school, the extracurricular activities which were carried out by several foreign students didn't meet their aims. She noticed the interaction between the students and these foreign instructors weren't effective. She believed the preparation of the instructors wasn't enough, the number of the activities which were covered during sessions were low. She desires to conduct research on this topic to improve her students' success and the effectiveness of these lessons.
2. In Vildan's case, she reported having the pressing need for research in several topics. She desired these three research questions to be answered in the future teacher research to improve education in her setting:

- What kinds of problems does puberty cause in primary school students?
    - What are the attitudes of teachers towards these children?
    - What are the attitudes of teachers towards these children?
- What kinds of effects do the socio economic conditions have on students' education and school success?
- To what extend do the school physical conditions affect students' education and school success?

3. Yeliz specified the problematic are in her teaching as the finding the effective teaching techniques in multicultural classrooms. She wanted to research the effectiveness of techniques developed specifically for multicultural classroom environments.
4. Although Giray didn't consider conducting teacher research himself due to his busy heavy workload, he requested researchers' to focus on investigating the reasons and possible solutions to specific problems in classroom management.
5. Türkan wanted to carry out an analysis on individual students' needs from lessons.

6. Halime stated that the same textbooks were used for some time. The fact that these books didn't changed or updated causes problems in education. She desired researchers' to work on this topic. Fehmi was another teacher who stated there were problems in syllabus. Therefore he also pointed this topic to be researched.

7. Murat stated he desired to do research on the individual differences of students.
8. Since Nalan believed teacher cognition enabled researchers to understand the factors which shape a teacher's mind, leading to understand their practices and to unpack problems hard to see, she recommended that there should be studies on this area. She narrowed down the topic as teachers' beliefs and knowledge about intercultural skills or grammar teaching.
9. Mine and Halime recommended the ways related to effective grammar teaching should be researched.
10. Mine, Cengiz and Metin reported the topic motivation needed special attention. They picked this topic to be researched in the future. Cengiz stated that it is important to work on our society's perception of learning a foreign language. He suggested doing research on why they were reluctant to learn a second language. He stressed that he cared having the students like English.
11. Öner, Ayla Vildan and Tarık stated that research should be conducted to find out the effective ways to teach the skills listening, speaking and pronunciation. Vildan pointed the importance of focusing all four skills sufficiently. However she stated that they had problems in listening and speaking skills due to the fact that the lesson hours were not enough to teach those skills deeply. She stated the lack of school support played a role in this problem as well.

4.9. Summary of the Findings

In this section, firstly the findings related to the first research question; "What is the current situation with teacher research as a professional development tool among practicing English teachers in Turkey in their respective educational contexts?" and its sub question: "What are the attitudes of in-service ELT teachers towards teacher research as a professional development tool?" were presented. In order to picture the teachers' current professional development practices, the information related to which professional development methods they used and whether or not the professional development activities managed their aims were asked. The answers of the teachers indicated that the teachers used conferences and seminars as well as talking to colleagues as the most frequent forms of professional development activities. There weren't meaningful differences among the different institutions, in terms of preference of professional development activities. Although, majority of the teachers stated that their professional development activities achieved their aims, the teachers in the public primary school case reported that they cannot apply the principles that they had learnt to the lessons due to either the lack of materials or the crowded classrooms. The school support for professional development also showed differences. In the study some of the private schools held seminars and camps or constituted special interest groups for the teachers. E1Private High School chose the best teacher of the year and F1Private University send exceptionally hardworking teachers abroad as a reward. The other schools were positive and encouraging to professional development even if they didn't give materialistic rewards. One teacher from a public primary school (A2)one teacher from private university (F3and two teachers from public high school (B1) stated that they didn't get support from their school for their professional development.

The teachers' awareness of the term teacher research was also investigated. Five of the teachers knew the term and they conducted teacher research

before. Two of the teachers (Türkan, Pelin) stated that they were doing activities similar to teacher research in the classroom but they weren't aware that it was called teacher research. One of the teachers stated that she didn't know anything related to teacher research. Most of the teachers didn't attempt to access teacher research to benefit from it. The teachers who conducted teacher research didn't appraise its empowering power. Reading teacher research wasn't a common activity among teachers.

Teachers regarded teacher research as a beneficial professional development tool in that it could improve teacher autonomy and teaching skills. They also stated that teacher research solved and had the potential to solve the problems in the classroom. It triggered awareness in the teaching and served as rationale for teaching activities. It gave teachers suggestions for better practice. Teacher research also created a channel between teachers and students and improved the interaction between these two stakeholders of education. The interest of students to the lessons increased. Since their opinions were included in the lesson planning process, self-confidence of the students was improved.

The difficulties of teacher research included data collection process and the existing workload of the teachers. The teachers expressed the necessity of cooperating students and the permission of the institutions to conduct teacher research. They also stated that with the existing lesson schedules and the paperwork, it was hard for some of the teachers to put teacher research into practice. Some teachers also lack the necessary technical knowledge which prevents them from doing teacher research.

The biggest motivation factor for teacher research was the intrinsic desire of the teachers to improve themselves as teachers and their classroom practices. They also stated the problems in the education and in their classes also motivated them to conduct teacher research.

The general opinions of teachers towards teacher research as a professional development tool included the features of a good teacher research, applicability of teacher research and the role of being teacher and researcher at the same time. Some of the teachers defended that some necessary characteristics were needed to be able to conduct teacher research such as determinism, and experience. Some of the teachers believed with training and support teacher research could be applicable in schools. Even if being a teacher and researcher at the same time was a challenging task, it could help teachers to see their problems via their own eyes; it could help them to be more observant. Therefore some of the teachers stated that the benefits of being a teacher and researcher outweighed the challenges. The teachers conceived the features of good teacher research as its including different perspectives and its being repeatable.

The second question was: "How can teacher research be sustained among English teachers in this particular context?" and its sub question: "What are the important factors for involving and sustaining teacher research among English teachers?" The needs of teachers to facilitate teacher research conduct included training in teacher research, support during data collection process, supply of necessary resources, flexibility of lesson schedules and making the teacher research compulsory at least for the beginners to introduce the research to them. Some of the teachers advocated that training of teacher research and the guidance of the experts throughout the process were needed by teachers to be able to conduct teacher research. Several of the teachers cited the reason that they didn't feel themselves capable enough to conduct the research as for not wanting to carry out teacher research. Another pressing need of the teachers was in the area of data collection. The teachers pointed the difficulty of getting necessary permission to start data collection and necessity of cooperation during the data collection process. The teachers needed positive attitudes of the participants for the research process to be effective and successful. The teachers also underlined that teachers needed flexible due dates for their other work to be effectively

conduct teacher research as well as off time which was allocated solely for the purpose of conducting research. Three teachers who conducted teacher research and two teachers, who didn't carry out teacher research before the study, pointed the necessity of compulsory teacher research application and the tracking of the process by the institution. They advocated this to introduce teachers the teacher research. Another reason for the support of compulsory teacher research was that they believed only this way there could be a general improvement in education.

School support played an important role in the decision of teachers whether or not carrying out teacher research. The teachers expressed that without the permission of the school managers, carrying out teacher research was neither ethical nor possible. Some of the teachers stated that the restrictions for teachers' postgraduate studies or research endeavors were in practice in some schools. Therefore, a welcoming manager as well as supportive school community was vital for teacher research practice. The teachers needed a school environment in which the decisions of the teachers were supported and the teachers were valued.

The topics in which the teachers were having problems and wanted teacher research to be carried out were listed in the study. The main topics were related to student motivation, teaching listening and speaking skills more effectively, classroom management, grammar and vocabulary teaching.

CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSION

This study sought to describe the teacher research engagement of English teachers and their attitudes towards teacher research as a professional development tool. It was aimed to find out the extent to which teacher research is feasible in Turkish context and what the teachers' further suggestions and demands in terms of teacher research are to support and facilitate conduct of teacher research.In the study depending upon the data gathered though surveys and the interviews several assertions could be drawn.

A) The teachers in this study see teacher research as a tool to solve immediate classroom problems and a tool for professional development not a social change agent.

In the study the teachers evaluated teacher research as a tool to fix their teaching problems in their teaching settings and as a means to make them better teachers. The answers given to the survey and interviews indicated that they only expected to benefit from teacher research as a method which enables feedback to tune their teaching activities accordingly. There were only three teachers who mentioned that teacher research could help them to become autonomous. There was neither the focus on the knowledge production outcome of the research nor the effects of it for policy changes in schools in the data gathered through survey and interviews. Gore and Zeichner (1991) explain that there are three components of teacher research. The components are shown in the following definition of teacher research: "(a) researching one's own practice and situation, (b) collaboratively (c) with emancipatory/ democratic intent" (p. 126). They also add that the best variety of teacher research is emancipatory teacher research and it should be

encouraged. However the current situation with the teachers in the study suggests that the teachers only use the first component of teacher research. The remarks of Lyte (1999) that is, "In some contexts, teacher research has been used as a technique for fine-tuning strategies and practices that make classroom curriculum or routines more efficient rather than as a way of questioning assumptions and posing problems" (p.17) summarize the concerns of Giray who expressed the limitation of teacher research for himself:

> "Since we are teaching in the light of instructions which are given to us, I don't believe teacher research would make a great difference. However, it can lead to small scale changes in classrooms." (Giray, D1Primary School, ITR, Survey Data)

B) Teacher research is an effective professional development tool for teachers.

The benefits of teacher research emerged from the teachers' data could be summarized as the following:

- It raises the awareness in teaching and leads to critical thinking.
- It solves classroom problems.
- It promotes autonomy.
- It improves teaching skills.
- It promotes collaboration.
- It increases confidence in teachers and students.
- It offers implications for practice.
- It is context specific.
- It shows student perception.
- It increases interaction with students.
- It increases student interest to the lessons.
- It helps teachers to reflect on their lessons better.

The teachers believe that teacher research may help them in several points in teaching and they consider this type of research relevant to their teaching contexts. Harris-John, Ritter, (2007) highlight the importance of professional development in producing high quality teachers and the significance of providing it in the most effective format (as cited in Byrnes, 2009).Professional development in the format of teacher research is consistent with their needs since the teachers explained it produced context specific solutions. The fact that teacher research could produce context specific solutions may be the answer to the problems of teachers related to their previous professional development experiences. Some of the teachers in the study stressed the problems of realizing the content of professional development activities in their school settings. The reasons included the lack of materials in the school, lack of school support, student backgrounds, crowded classrooms and student profiles. Especially the problems related to student backgrounds and profile could be minimized with the context specific solutions attained by teacher research. Additionally he schools are important places for teacher learning. Teacher research is a job-embedded professional development tool which enables teachers to use their own contexts to learn.

One teacher (Vildan) complained the inconclusive research which her students were subjected to by other researchers. She expressed that they weren't informed about the end result of these studies and these activities caused unwillingness on the party of students to take part in future studies. However the fact that teacher research doesn't treat the teachers and the students who take place in the study, merely as participants could answer the problem stated by Vildan.

The teachers' attitudes related to this type of professional development are highly positive. Some of the highly cited benefits of teacher research were its solving teaching problems via bridging between student opinions and

teacher opinions. The interaction between those two parties improved. After the changes were applied to the lessons in the light of student feedbacks, both the student interest and the student confidence were boosted. Ball and Cohen (1999) believe it is a highly important teacher quality to make use of student feedback. The subject knowledge and peadagogy are altough crucial don't offer clear guidance for teaching.

> "Teachers additionally need to learn how to investigate what students are doing and thinking, and how instruction has been understood, as classes unfold. … Second, teachers would have to learn to use such knowledge to improve their practice. All teachers accumulate experience, and some inquire into children's ideas. But neither experience nor inquiry improves teaching. Teachers would need to learn how to use what they learn about students' work and ideas to inform and improve teaching"(Ball & Cohen, 1999, p. 11).

The opinions of teacher towards teacher research include its being useful, context embedded and applicable. Some teachers expressed their opinions as teacher research is a research type that deals with teacher problems. The teachers evaluated that a good teacher research should deal with contemporary problems, it should represent different viewpoints and reliable. Most of the teachers stated that they are voluntary to take part in or initiate a future teacher research project and make use of it actively in their lessons. They defended their decision since teacher research could make them more aware of their problems, help them to solve the problems and be better teachers. Teacher research's contribution to teachers' awareness of their problems is significant in that, normally being aware of one's weaknesses might not be as accurate as the awareness of the teachers' strengths. The study of Gürbüz (2006) showed that, pre- service EFL teachers' perceptions of their own weaknesses didn't match the observation of their mentors. Mastering this skill necessitated external feedback (Gürbüz, 2006).Teacher research was important in providing the necessary feedback to make amendments in the problematic areas. The teacher also reported having benefitted from it in terms of professional awareness. They expressed that it increased their critical thinking skills and helped them to

consciously explain why they were doing specific activities. Nixon (1987) explains that since teacher research is self-evaluative, it informs practice. This in turn increases the teachers' understanding of their lessons and self-awareness as a teacher.

The unique position of the teachers in teacher research enabled them to evaluate the occurrences from different viewpoints (both as a teacher and a researcher) even though it presented some challenges in terms of objectivity, they agreed that this situation contributed them in terms of being observant and open minded. The proposition of Herr (1979 cited in Ritchie, 1993) that studying one's own site brings dangers and risks, isn't referred to by the participants in the study. The fact that the teachers are the people to evaluate their own mistakes helped them to be more open to the study. This finding supported the idea that the teachers were defensive when an unwanted or a contrastive result comes out of a research done by a researcher(Cope & Gray, 1979).

C) School support is quite important in assuring teacher research engagement

The support of the school in which the teachers work, is an indispensable variable in assuring the initiation and the quality of teacher research as a professional tool among teachers. Borg (2006) highlights the significant place of community and community support in conducting teacher research. He lists the several things that he means as the community support: "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" (p. 26). The data attained in the study confirm this. The teachers needed collaboration and support from their colleagues and their students to apply this research type. School principals especially

have an important place for the support of teacher research in the school community. Several participants (Seray, Öner, and Nalan) highlighted the importance of the consent and the support of school principals as the pre-requisite of any research activity to take place. Additionally, the arrangements in the lesson schedules and workload are important determinant factors which necessitate the support of school principals.

The school context also plays a crucial role in teacher research conduct. The three teachers (Fehmi, İnci; Murat) out of four (Fehmi, Murat, Nalan, İnci) who have been conducting teacher research regularly are from private school sector. These four teachers who are conducting teacher research are exclusively the ones who stated they have school support and encouragement for professional development and teacher research.

D) The motivation for teacher research is mostly intrinsic.

The study unearthed several reasons why the teachers desired to conduct teacher research. The reasons were mostly intrinsic.They wanted to be a more effective and more qualified teacher. Another pressing reason for the teachers to carry out teacher research was the problems that they encountered in their teaching setting. In the Gao, Barkhuizen and Chow's 2011 study this was also the primary reason for teachers to do teacher research (as cited in Borg, 2013). Additionally Borg (2013) found out the teachers desired to teacher research mostly for finding better ways of teaching. The academic success as the outcome of teacher research is mentioned by only few teachers. The explanation of one teacher, who highlighted that positive effects of teacher research motivated him to do further research, supports the idea that the teachers tend to embrace the changes in beliefs and attitudes when they see its positive effects on their students (Guskey, 1986 cited in Daloğlu, 2004).

E) There are challenges in the application of teacher research.

The teachers' were generally confident about the benefits and the legitimacy of the teacher research. However they shared their doubts related to reliability and practicality of it. The challenges that the teachers encountered or thought that they were likely to encounter in their teacher research practice substantially stem from physical hardships such as data collection, the lack of time, lack of expertise and heavy workload.

The hardships in the data collection process included the concern that the data gathered by the students may not be reliable. Some teachers suggested that the students tend to give the answers that their teachers want to hear or as the opposite way round they don't take it seriously all together. These kinds of concerns however, were remedied by some suggestions by the teachers such as using multiple data collection sources and methods. (Student data as well as teacher observation etc) Another problem was the possibility of uncooperative behaviors on the side of students. The necessary consents for the research process to begin also caused difficulties for the teachers.

Especially in the schools where the classrooms are crowded, the teachers experience problems related to finishing their syllabus in time. This situation plays havoc with the research process. There were 8 teachers who stated that they wouldn't like to take part in future teacher research projects with their current situations. Only for one teacher, the reason was individualistic and related to the personality of the teacher. For others the school environment, heavy workload, lack of time and expertise were the main reasons. A few of them also cited the reason that, even if they conducted a teacher research they wouldn't apply it since they weren't the only determiners of how the lesson were planned and done.

The teachers seek a supportive school environment and encouraging school managers to carry out teacher research. Since it is a new concept for some teachers and most teachers need assistance especially in technical aspects of teacher research.They also demand teacher research training and help from experts in the application process. One of the demands that found voice frequently was the flexibility in the regular duties of teachers when they conducted teacher research. They also wanted help during data collection process. The teachers suggest that taking teacher research in the educational agenda as a compulsory part of the job should also be considered.

CHAPTER 6

RECOMMENDATIONS

The study revealed descriptive information related to the current situation of teacher research engagement of teachers and their conditions and their opinions related to this form of professional development. Based on these findings, it is possible to talk about several implications for researchers, teachers, teacher educators and policy makers.

6.0.Recommendations for researchers

1. In the study the teachers worked in school where they can get collegial support. The study should also be conducted with teachers who work in isolated places and the potential of teacher research for professional development in these schools needs to be understood.
2. This research investigated the experiences and opinions of teachers towards teacher research. A follow up study which investigates the experiences and opinions after taking part in a teacher research project with teachers who never conducted teacher research before should be conducted.
3. The study focused on individualistic teacher research. School based teacher research projects with a specialist to guide teachers and the opinions of teachers before and after the projects should also be investigated.

6.1. Recommendations for teachers

1. Teacher research is crucial in involving students in the decision making process in the classroom. The students feel confident and develop positive attitudes towards the lesson and the teachers. Additionally, the interest towards the lesson increases. The teachers should prioritize using teacher research for the specified gains and for a more democratic classroom environment.
2. The importance of colleagues as a part of research culture in schools is voiced by teachers. The teachers would like to work with supportive colleagues who are at the same time open to criticism. The teachers should build supportive collegial communities in their working environments for teacher research activities to thrive and to be long running.

6.2. Recommendations for Teacher Educators

1. Learning to teach is a lifelong process. The most important skill in teaching is to respond the needs of the students which could show immense differences from one group to another. Therefore the skill to adapt teaching should be supported with the skills to be able to research about the needs, problems and effective teaching methods. The teachers should be equipped with the underlying assumptions of teacher research and necessary technical knowledge in pre service and in service training to conduct it.

6.3. Recommendations for School Managers

1. Supportive school environment for professional development is one of the reasons for teachers to prefer their working places. Teacher

research is an effective school embedded professional development activity that most of the teachers expressed that they profited from. The teachers who never conducted teacher research also believe that this form of professional development will benefit them. Therefore the impediments which deter teachers from conducting research should be eradicated. The school managers have an important duty in accomplishing this goal. They should support teachers in their initiatives and appreciate their efforts. They should supply them with necessary resources and other support such as allocating flexible working hours and necessary training.

CHAPTER 7

CONCLUSION

In the light of the points discussed in the scope of this paper, teacher research is found to be a highly potential form of teacher professional development on several grounds. Firstly, teacher research takes place where the teachers spend most of their time. The school environment enables direct learning experiences for teachers. The teachers can produce immediate answers to their context specific problems. Secondly, since teacher research is inherently built upon student data and feedback, the communication between students and the other members of the school is strengthened. The self-confidence of students increases since teacher research provides opportunities for them to share their ideas on the way the lessons are planned. Thirdly, it also raises teacher awareness in teaching and leads to critical thinking. It encourages teachers to make informed decisions in classrooms. However, not every teacher in the study is aware of the term teacher research and how to make use of it. There is also the need for training in the technical aspects of teacher research. Additionally, the teachers in the study aren't fully aware of the underlying assumptions of teacher research. They mentioned only its potential to fix problems in classroom. They didn't focus on its socio- political function or the way it enabled teacher voices to be heard in academia or in policy making process.

The attitudes of teachers to teacher research are generally positive. The teachers support the idea that they should take action for their own problems and improve their teaching skills. They have intrinsic motivation to become better professionals and they believe that teacher research can contribute to this aim. The abstinence of the teachers from teacher research stems from attaining reliability and application part of it. The unique position of teachers as both teachers and the researchers could contribute the field with

valuable perspectives but at the same time problems related to reliability. The teachers need training and support in this aspect. The teachers also desire support from their school management and community during the data collection part of teacher research. If the necessary importance was given to teacher research, and the required support was provided, the teachers believe that the teacher research could be a powerful tool for their individual and professional development. Their positive attitudes are promising in compensating the problems caused by the hard feelings towards one shot conference type professional development endeavors.

As a last word, the importance and the criticality of teacher professional development should be understood very well. No matter how well an educational policy should be, if there are problems in the application process, in other words in the line of teachers, it is not possible to talk about the success of this program. Since transferring the learned skills to the actual application requires continual feedback and continual development, teacher research should be considered as an effective means of accomplishing this goal. Teacher research also acts as an intermediary between the contextual needs and basic theoretical underpinnings of the field. Although it is undeniable that the teacher research is highly effective means of professional development, its use is not a common activity among teachers. For the teachers to appreciate the benefits of teacher research, the promotion and teacher research awareness-raising related to its philosophical underpinnings should be taken into the educational agendas. The necessary conditions should be provided for this practice to flourish at individual schools.

7.1. Suggestions for Further Research

The current study was conducted to reveal the perceptions of EFL teachers on teacher research as a professional development tool and reveal the

factors in the sustainment of teacher research among practitioners. In the study it was revealed that 11 of the 16 participants never carried out teacher research. These teachers' lack of experience in teacher research process could have caused problems in their descriptions of challenges associated with teacher research and benefits of teacher research in detail. Additionally, the teachers in the study needed training on the philosophical underpinnings and ideas behind teacher research. For these reasons, this study could be re-conducted after the mentioned training was provided and the teachers who were willing to conduct teacher research completed their teacher research studies. Furthermore, requesting teachers to keep journals during their teacher research studies could help us to understand the changes in the teachers' opinions throughout their teacher research study. As a last word, for the suggested study design, adding the component of student data and the data obtained from other stakeholders related totheir perceptions of changes in the classroom before and after the implementation of the teacher research could enable us to picture the cases in more depth.

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APPENDICES

A. Themes Emerged in the Study

Theme 1	Teacher Research Awareness
Theme 2	Benefits of Teacher Research
Theme 3	Difficulties in Conducting Teacher Research
Theme 4	Motivation to Conduct Teacher Research
Theme 5	Teacher's Opinion of Teacher Research
Theme 6	Teacher Needs to Conduct Teacher Research

B. Debriefing Form

This study aimed to find out the attitudes of ELT teachers towards teacher research as a professional development tool. The study also pursued the opinions and suggestions of practicing teachers for the promotion and sustainment of teacher research among ELT teachers. The study was conducted as the thesis project by one of METU masters students Nuriye Karakaya under the supervision of advisor Assist Prof. Perihan Savaş. In order to get a picture of the current situation with professional development opportunities among practicing teachers, the teacher participants were given an open ended survey asking for their opinions towards professionalism and the methods that they have been using for their professional development. The second part of the survey aimed to find out the awareness level of the teachers towards teacher research as a professional tool and the information related to research culture in their institution. Last part of the survey asked teachers to evaluate teacher research as a professional development tool. The teachers were requested to shed light on the problems, challenges and needs during the teacher research process. Following the survey the teachers were interviewed for the purposes of member checking and deepening the information gathered via the survey.

It is anticipated that the characterization of the teachers' attitudes towards teacher research along with the challenges that the teachers encounter while conducting teacher research will be utmost use for the teachers and teacher educators. The evaluation of teacher research by the teachers, and the specified needs of teachers to sustain teacher research as a professional development tool can also provide and insight for the administrations of the schools and inspire them to provide the necessary conditions for this type of research at their institutions.

The data gathered in the study will only be used for scientific purposes and in the scientific presentations and journals anonymously. You can contact the researcher via the provided e-mail address for further questions related

to the study. We thank you for participating in the study and your cooperation.

Nuriye KARAKAYA nuriyekarakaya@gmail.com

Appendix C. Themes According the Cases

Private primary School Setting	Private University Setting
Prominence of theme **1low**	Prominence of theme **1low**
Prominence of theme **2 high**	Prominence of theme **2high**
Prominence of theme **3high**	Prominence of theme **3average**
Prominence of theme **4 low**	Prominence of theme **4low**
Prominence of theme **5very high**	Prominence of theme **5very high**
Prominence of theme **6 very high**	Prominence of theme **6very high**

Private High School Setting	Public Primary School Setting
Prominence of theme **low 3**	Prominence of theme **1low 2**
Prominence of theme **2very high**	Prominence of theme **2 high**
Prominence of theme **3low**	Prominence of theme **3high**
Prominence of theme **4average**	Prominence of theme **4 low**
Prominence of theme **5very high**	Prominence of theme **5very high**
Prominence of theme **6very high**	Prominence of theme **6very high**

Case study File public high school	Case study File public University
Prominence of theme **1low**	Prominence of theme **1average**
Prominence of theme **2average**	Prominence of theme **2 high**
Prominence of theme **3low** Prominence of theme **4 -**	Prominence of theme **3high** Prominence of theme **4average**
Prominence of theme **5average**	Prominence of theme **5very high**
Prominence of theme **6high**	Prominence of theme **6very high**

Appendix D. Sample Coding

Please define your teaching philosophy. (What do you want to accomplish as a teacher?)

I really have a great passion in teaching. It is an invaluable happiness to teach new things and develop my students' skills.Personally, I believe that every student in the class has potential to success. All of the students cannot be expected to have an equal academic success. There are different variables affecting this issue. For instance, intelligence, interest, background knowledge, emotions, physical environment are some of them. For this reason, I aim to do my best not only for the most talented students but also for all of the students. A teacher should regard each student as a unique individual and should take his/her interest and level into consideration.

I believe that it is important to remain up-to-date with new developments in my field. We see important developments thanks to technological and scientific studies every day. And the generation, known as generation Z, we are supposed to teach English are born in a world of the Internet. So, I believe it is important to keep up with their pace to be able to reach them. It does not sound me possible to teach English anymore with old, traditional ways.For me, students should internalize the language and be actively involved in the language learning process.Rather than just focusing on language structure, it is important to deal with all of the language skills in an integrated way.This is a problem that I see in EFL context, especially in our country. Because the teachers generally teach grammar and do not give importance to the development of the other skills, most of the students experience difficulty in using the target language especially in speaking.

Besides those teaching skills, I strongly believe that relationship between students and teacher is very important. A teacher can be very knowledgeable but if s/he cannot interact with her/his students effectively, the teacher's competence can be useless for the students. For this reason, a teacher should closely know the needs, interest and background of the student group. Moreover, I see cultural items as an

PASSION IN TEACHING

SENSITIVENESS IN THE INDIVIDUAL DIFFERENCES

KEEPING UP WITH DEVELOPMENTS

SENSITIVE TO STUDENTS AUTONOMY

SENSITIVE TO TEACHING INTEGRATED SKILLS

SENSITIVE TO THE PROBLEM OF ALIENATION OF PRODUCTIVE SKILLS

EFFECTIVE TEACHER STUDENT INTERACTION

THE

important component of language teaching. I am aware of the importance of developing cross-cultural competence. Personally, I believe that culture cannot be separated from the language. It is also important to have a link between the target language and the students' native language. I believe that I can develop intercultural competence of my students. Reading and listening authentic materials, using visual items such as videos are the main ways that I can use for this purpose.

CULTURAL ASPECTS

What are your suggestions to sustain teacher research at educational institutions?

I think encouraging staff to follow postgraduate studies in education related fieldsand giving awards to them if they do teacher research in their institutions might help quite help.

ENCOURAGING POSTGRAD IN EDUCATION
AWARDS

THTHEME: TEACHER NEEDS TO CONDUCT TEACHER RESEARCH

Encouraging post grad [1]

Awards [1]

What do you think was most helpful for you while conducting a teacher research?

THEME: TEACHER NEEDS TO CONDUCT TEACHER RESEARCH

Help during data collection [1]

For me, the most helpful thing while conducting teacher research is people's willingness to take part in your research. All the other problems are minor and can be handled once you have willing participants who want to share their beliefs, opinions, and experiences with you, and open to be observed and interviewed or other stuff you want to use to collect your data.

VOLUNTARY PARTICIPANTS

E. Informed Consent Form

Dear ELT teacher

I would appreciate if you could participate in a study about teacher research as a professional development tool. The goal of this research study is to find out the opinions and attitudes of ELT teachers towards teacher research as a form of professional development. This study is being conducted as my (Nuriye Karakaya) thesis project in MA Graduate Program in English Language Teaching, Middle East Technical University

Participation in this study is voluntary. If you agree to participate in this study, you will complete a survey about your development as a professional in the field of ELT and your opinions about teacher research, its applicability to your context and your opinions about sustainability of this form of professional development. Later you will be interviewed (and audio-recorded) about the same topics to clarify your statements in the survey and to give some deeper information.

Participating in this study will provide us valuable information about teacher research, its potential benefits and challenges and context sensitive data to find ways to promote or sustain teacher research as a professional development tool, if potential benefits are identified. None of the questions were foreseen as upsetting however, you may skip any questions you don't want to answer and you may end the interview at any time.

You can decline from the study at any time, for any reason. Your decision to stop participating, or to refuse to answer particular questions, will not affect your relationship with the researcher or the institution.

The information you will share with us if you participate in this study will be kept confidential. All information you supply during the research

will be held in confidence and, your name will not appear in any report or publication of the research. The data will only be used for scientific purposes and anonymously. Your data will be safely stored in a locked facility and only the researchers will have access to this information. Confidentiality will be provided to the fullest extent possible.

If you want to take part in the study please sign below.

I am voluntarily taking part in this study.

Name Surname: _____

Signature: _____

If you have any questions about this study, please contact nuriyekarakaya@gmail.com.

Thank you for your cooperation and help.

Nuriye KARAKAYA

F: Survey Questions for Teachers

Part 1

TEACHER BACKGROUND AND INSTITUTION

A. Background

1. Participant number: ……..
2. Age: …….
3. Gender: …….
4. Highest educational attainment:
   Bachelor Degree (program, graduation year): ……..
   Postgraduate Degree (program, graduation year): ……
5. Institution: private ☐ state: ☐
6. Level: ☐ primary ☐ high school ☐ university

B. Teaching Experience

1. Years of teaching in this school: ……
2. Grades that you have been teaching: ……
3. Teaching experience: ..... years

C. School Context and Research

1. Please explain briefly the reason(s) why you have chosen to teach in the school / place where you are currently teaching.

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2. Does your institution encourage teacher professional development (if the answer is yes) in what ways?

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3. Are the teachers awarded for new ideas, or techniques or their success in instruction?

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4. What can you comment on the collaboration of teachers in your institution?

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5. What are the opportunities that your school provides you in terms of reading the current research in literature and conducting a research yourself?

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6. What do you think of the role of school managers' attitude and the school characteristics to your conduct of research?

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7. What should be the features of a school which supports teachers' conducting research?

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Part 2

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

A. Professional satisfaction and development

1. Please define your teaching philosophy.

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2. To what extend you are able to realize your teaching philosophy as a professional in your teaching context?

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3. How do you try to solve your problems related to your profession?

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4. What are the aims of professional development for you?

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5. What kind of professional development methods or tools you are aware of?

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6. Which professional development methods and activities have you used so far?

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7. What are your opinions related to these professional development activities? (Did they manage their aims?)

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8. Can you list these professional development activities from the most effective to the least?

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9. What do you do as a teacher for your professional development for yourself?

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10. Do you consider yourself as reflective in your teaching profession? Can you please support your answer with examples or instances from your teaching?

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B. Reading research

1. Can you define research in your field?

Research in ELT is

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2. What are the characteristics of a good research for you?

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3. Do you follow academic research related to your field? What are the reasons for this?

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4. What are the benefits of reading research into your practice?

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5. What are your opinions about the research in the field and their applicability of the results to your own context?

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Part 3

TEACHER RESEARCH

A. Teacher research

Have you ever conducted or engaged in **teacher researc**☐ Yes ☐ No

(If your answer is yes, please answer the sub questions if not, please skip PART 3.)

1. What is teacher research for you?

Teacher research is
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1. What are the assumptions behind teacher research and its potential benefits?

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2. What are the qualities of a good teacher research?

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3. How did you first become engaged in teacher research?

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4. In which areas did you conduct a teacher research?

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5. As a practitioner what are your suggestions for teacher research projects? Which aspects should be researched? (For instance which areas are problematic in your teaching?)

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6. Are you still engaged in teacher research? Why/ Why not?

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7. What do you think about the reliability of data that teachers obtain from their students as well as legitimacy and the validity of teacher research?

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8. What do you think the dual role of being a teacher and a researcher at the same time?

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9. What kinds of benefits of teacher research have you observed in your practice if it is the case?

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10. How and in what ways teacher research challenged your beliefs related to English instruction?

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11. Can you evaluate the effectiveness teacher research as a professional development tool? (Your autonomy, critical thinking, collaboration with other peers, your professional awareness, informed decisions and reflection etc…)

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12. What do you think was most helpful for you while conducting a teacher research?

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13. What are the problems that you encountered while conducting a teacher research?

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14. What are your suggestions to sustain teacher research at educational institutions?

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If you finished part 3, you don't have to answer more questions on this survey. Thank you for your cooperation.

Part 4

TEACHER RESEARCH

(If you completed part 3, please skip PART 4.)

A. Teacher research

"A new tradition emerges as highlighting the role of classroom teachers as knowledge generators. This tradition is often referred to as teacher research, teacher inquiry, classroom research, and action research or practitioner inquiry. In general, the teacher inquiry movement focuses on the concerns of teachers (not outside researchers) and engages teachers in the design, data collection, and interpretation of data around a question related to their own teaching problems. "(Dana, 2009 p.3)

1. Based on what you've read in this survey and other information you've gathered about teacher research, what does teacher research mean to you? (In your own words.)

Teacher research is
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2. What do you think about this research tradition in general?

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3. What do you think about your access to teacher research?

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4. What do you think about the usefulness of teacher research in term of finding solutions to your problems or for your professional development?

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5. What do you think about the applicability of teacher research in your teaching context? (Think about lesson hours, workload, school support, research culture, your personality, your research knowledge, ethicality, validity, sources etc…)

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6. What should the characteristics of a good teacher research be for you?

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7. As a practitioner what are your suggestions for teacher research projects? Which aspects should be researched? (For instance which areas are problematic in your teaching?)

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8. What do you think about the reliability of data that teachers obtain from their students and the validity of teacher research?

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9. Do you have any doubts about teacher research? If so can you write them? (Legitimacy, time spent on it etc…)

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10. Would you like to conduct a teacher research? Why or why not?

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11. What do you expect as a result of you teacher research? (For your instructional practice, teaching problems?)

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12. In what ways can teacher research help to your professional development (your autonomy, critical thinking, and collaboration with other peers, your professional awareness, informed decisions and reflection?)

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13. Do you consider yourself as a teacher researcher (who uses teacher research actively) in the future? Why?

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14. What do you think the dual role of teacher and the researcher at the same time?

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15. What can be the problems that a beginning teacher researcher encounter while conducting a teacher research?

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16. What kinds of support do you expect if you decide to be a teacher researcher?

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The survey ends here, thank you for your cooperation.

G: Interview Questions with English Teachers

EFL TEACHER RESEARCH INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

COMMON QUESTIONS

1. What is your teaching experience in English as a Foreign Language (EFL)?
2. What were the main reasons for becoming an EFL teacher?
3. How can you describe yourself as a teacher/your teaching philosophy/approach in EFL?

THE TEACHERS WHO HAVE NEVER CARRIED OUT A TEACHER RESEARCH

1. What do you think about the underlying assumptions of teacher research which suggest increasing "the teacher's role in the generation of knowledge about teaching" and targets teachers to "understand and improve their own classroom practice" with their own research? (Cochran-Smith& Lytle, 1990 p. 2)
2. What encourages you to do EFL teacher research?
3. What discourages you from doing EFL teacher research?
4. Do you believe EFL teacher research should be an integral part of teaching profession?
    a. Should teacher research be voluntary or an institutional obligation of the job itself? Why?
5. Do you have the necessary technical knowledge and skills to conduct an EFL teacher research? How can this situation influence the research process?
6. Do you believe you have the necessary institutional support if you decide to conduct EFL teacher research?

    a. What is the role of institutional support in conducting teacher research?
7. Do you want to carry out an EFL teacher research on your practice? What are the reasons for this?
8. In which areas or topics do you want to conduct EFL teacher research?
9. What are your suggestions to sustain teacher research at schools?
10. What do you think about teacher research as a professional development tool?
11. Do you have any other comments you wish to make on EFL teacher research?

THE TEACHERS WHO CARRIED OUT AN EFL TEACHER RESEARCH

1. How did you first involve in teacher research?
2. Can you tell me the subjects of your previous research; what did you do?
3. How is EFL/teacher research different than other research?
4. How did doing EFL teacher research influence you as a practitioner?
    a. How did it affect what you do in your classroom? Can you think of an example?
    b. Have you changed any of your beliefs related to language teaching after your research? Can you give an example?
    c. How have you changed your thinking about yourself as a professional?
5. In what ways has doing an EFL teacher research changed your ideas about teacher research as a professional development tool?
6. What was the role of institutional support in your conducting EFL teacher research?
7. What keeps you continue to your EFL teacher research?
8. What discourages you from doing research?

9. Do you believe EFL teacher research should be an integral part of teaching profession?
    a. Should teacher research be voluntary or an institutional obligation of the job itself? Why?
10. What are your suggestions to sustain teacher research at schools?
11. What do you think about teacher research as a professional development tool?
12. Do you have any other comments you wish to make on EFL teacher research?

H: TURKISH SUMMARY

ÖZET

İNGİLİZCE ÖĞRETMENLERİNİN BİR MESLEKİ GELİŞİM ARACI OLARAK ÖĞRETMEN TARAFINDAN YAPILAN ARAŞTIRMALARA KARŞI GÖRÜŞLERİNİN NİTEL DURUM İNCELEMESİ

GİRİŞ

Sistemli bir öğretmen mesleki gelişim tüm başarılı eğitim sistemlerinin bir gereksinimidir. Müfredat ve ölçme değerlendirmedeki pozitif değişimler ancak öğretmenlerin bu gelişmeleri derslerine yansıtabilmeleri ile mümkün olabilmektedir. Öğretmen mesleki gelişimi ayrıca öğretmenlerin eğitim sistemindeki değişen rollerine ayak uydurabilmeleri için önemlidir (Berne & Wilson, 1999). Buna ek olarak alan-yazında, öğretmenlik mesleğinin öğrenilmesinin bir süreç olup, eğitim programlarından mezun olmakla sona ermediğine vurgu yapılmaktadır. Smith ve Ingersoll'un çalışması mesleklerinin ilk yıllarında mesleki eğitim programlarına katılan öğretmenlerin, mesleklerini bu programlara katılmayan öğretmenlere göre daha az oranlarda bıraktıklarını gösteriyor (Smith ve Ingersoll'dan aktaran Herrington & Kervin 2006). Mesleki gelişim aktivitelerine katılan öğretmenlerin öğrencilerinin başarılarının da bu süreçten olumlu bir şekilde etkilendiği gözlemlenmiştir (Yoon & Duncan, 2007).

Richards & Farrell (2005) mesleki gelişimin faydalarını aşağıdaki şekilde sıralamıştır:

- Dil gelişim sürecini anlamak,
- Derslerde verilen kararları anlamak,

- Kişinin kendi dil öğretimindeki kendi teori ve prensiplerini gözden geçirmesi,
- Ders aktivitelerine öğrencilerin bakış açılarını belirleyebilmek,
- Farklı stillerdeki öğretmeleri anlamak,
- Öğretmenlerin ders verdikleri öğrencilere göre rollerinin nasıl değiştiğini anlamak (Richards & Farrell 'den aktaran Yurtsever, 2012 s.667).

Mesleki gelişim aktivitelerinde beklenen sonuçlar geleneksel olarak kullanılan yöntemler olan çalıştay ve eğitim seminerleri ile nadiren amaçlarına ulaşmaktadırlar. Bu aktiviteler kısa süreli olup konuları öğretmenler tarafından belirlenmemektedir. Bu aktiviteler "yüzeysel ve kopuktur ayrıca bu programlara olan bağlılık da düşüktür" (Ball & Cohen, 1999, s. 5). Yukarıda anlatılan mesleki gelişim programlarına yönelik memnuniyetsizlikler, dışarıdan gelen uzmanların öğretmenleri bilgilendirmesi tekniğinin amaçlara ulaşmada yetersiz oluşu, alternatif mesleki gelişim metotlarının ortaya çıkmasına sebep olmuştur. Öğretmen eğitimindeki derslerde, katılımcıları araştırmaya yöneltmenin teşvik edilmesi öğretmen eğitiminde kabul görmüştür (Jorge, 2007, s.402). Lyte ve Cochran Smith (1990, 1999) Öğretmen tarafından yapılan araştırmayı sistematik, bilinçli olarak yapılmış olan kişinin kendi işine yönelik eleştirel bir sorgulaması olarak tanımlamıştır (Lyte ve Cochran Smith'den aktaran Borg, 2006; Ritchie, 2006; Adams, 2009; Borg, 2013). Öğretmen tarafından yapılan araştırmaların öğretmenlerin kendi gelişimlerinden sorumlu olmalarını sağlama özelliği bu araştırma türünü incelemek için değerli kılmaktadır.

ÇALIŞMANIN AMACI

Yabancı dil öğretimindeki çalışmalar, (Johnson, 2006; Kumaravadivelu, 2003) öğretmen eğitimindeki değişiklikler ile öğretmenlerin değişen rollerini vurgulamaktadır. Yabancı dil öğretmen eğitimindeki bu değişiklikler, genel olarak öğrenme geleneklerindeki değişikliklerle paraleldir. Davranışçı görüşte öğretmenler teknisyen olarak betimlenmektedirler. Öğretmenler bu

görüşe göre uzmanlar tarafından oluşturulan bilgiyi aktaran kanallar olarak resmedilmektedirler. İçinde bulundukları koşulların ve ortamın gerektirdiklerini ve bilginin ihtiyaçlara uygunluğunu sorgulamazlar. Öte taraftan yansıtıcı öğretmenler sadece bilgiyi aktaran kişiler değil aynı zamanda problemleri çözen ve eğitimi öğrencilerin ihtiyaçlarına göre şekillendirebilen, eski hatalardan ders çıkarabilen profesyoneller olarak görülür. Son olarak öğretmenlerin rolleri kendi eğitim felsefeleri ile daha geniş sosyal olayları birleştirmeleri olarak vurgulanmıştır. (Kumaravadivelu , 2003). Öğretmenlerin bu bağlamdaki rolleri bilen, düşünen ve daha da önemlisi araştırma yapan ve değişim odağı olarak vurgulanmaktadır. Bu görüşe göre öğretmenler araştırma yapıp bilgi üretebildiklerinden, akademik dünyada seslerini duyurabildikleri varsayılmaktadır.Ancak, pratikte öğretmen tarafından yapılan araştırmaların yaygın bir aktivite olabilmesi için çeşitli noktaların göz önüne alınması gerekir.

Kurumsal faktörler (Borg, 2009; Hahs-Vaughn & Yalowitz, 2009) öğretmenlerin kişilikleri (Akbari, 2007), öğretmenlerin deneyim, özgeçmiş gibi çeşitli farklı özelliklerinin(Hahs-Vaughn & Yalowitz, 2009) öğretmen tarafından yapılan araştırmalarda yer almalarını etkiledikleri gözlenmiştir. Öğretmen araştırmalarının geleceği büyük oranda bu araştırmaların şu anki durumunun ve öğretmenlerin bu araştırmalara katılabilmeleri için ne gibi ihtiyaçlarının olduğunun bilinmesine bağlıdır. Bu yüzden öğretmen tarafından yapılan araştırmaların bir mesleki gelişim aracı olarak Türkiye'deki şu anki durumunu incelemek yararlı olacaktır. Bu nitel çalışmanın amacı İngilizce öğretmenlerinin öğretmen tarafından yapılan araştırma türü ile ilgili deneyimlerini ve bu araştırmaya yönelik görüşlerini anlamaktır. Bu sayede öğretmen tarafından yapılan araştırmaların Türkiye'de nasıl uygulandığını anlayabiliriz. Ayrıca bu araştırma türünün mesleki gelişime olan katkıları, bu araştırma gerçekleştirilirken karşılaşılan zorluklar ve öğretmenlerin kendi önerilerini görmek mümkün olacaktır.

ARAŞTIRMA SORULARI

Araştırmanın amacına yönelik aşağıdaki sorular belirlenmiştir:

3. Öğretmen tarafından yapılan araştırmaların, çalışmakta olan İngilizce öğretmenleri arasındaki durumu çalıştıkları ortamlara göre nedir?
    a. Çalışan İngilizce öğretmenlerinin öğretmen tarafından yapılan araştırmalara bir mesleki gelişim aracı olarak tutumları nelerdir?

4. Öğretmen tarafından yapılan araştırmalar İngilizce öğretmenlerinin görev yaptıkları yerde nasıl devam ettirilebilir?
    a. Öğretmen tarafından yapılan araştırmaların devamlılığının sağlanmasında ve öğretmenlerin bu araştırma türü ile tanıştırılmasında hangi faktörler önemlidir?

ARAŞTIRMANIN ÖNEMİ

Öğretmen tarafından yapılan araştırmalar öğretmen mesleki gelişiminin bir parçasını oluşturmaktadır ve gittikçe artan bir öneme sahiptir. Bu sebeple bu araştırma türü hakkında daha fazla bilgi edinilmelidir. Öğretmenlerin bu araştırma türüne yönelik görüşleri ve bu araştırma türünün uygulanabilirliği iyi anlaşılmalıdır.“Hem öğretmen tarafından yapılan araştırmaların hangi koşullar altında yapıldığını hem de bu araştırmaların öğretmenler, öğrenciler ve okullar üzerine etkilerini konu alan az sayıda araştırma vardır” (Zeichner, 2006, s. 304). Buna ek olarak öğretmen tarafında yapılan araştırmaların, öğretmenler tarafından nasıl karşılandığı üzerine bilgiler de kısıtlıdır (Byrnes, 2009). Türkiye’de çeşitli okullarda çalışan İngilizce öğretmenlerinin bu araştırma türünü uygulayabilmek için taleplerini anlamak alandaki boşluğu doldurabilir ve

gerekli düzenlemeler yapılabilir. Sonuç olarak öğretmen tarafından yapılan araştırmalar öğretmenler arasında yaygınlaştırılabilir.

YÖNTEM

Çalışmanın amacı öğretmen tarafından yapılan araştırmaların bir mesleki gelişim aracı olarak, çalışmakta olan İngilizce öğretmenleri arasındaki durumunu incelemek ve öğretmenlerin bu araştırma türünü gerçekleştirmelerive bu çalışmalarda yer almaları için gerekli şartları belirlemektir. Çalışma ayrıca öğretmen tarafından yapılan araştırmaları hem öğretmenlerin mesleki gelişimleri hem de alandaki bilgi birikimine katkıda bulunacak bir araç olarak devamlı kılmayı amaçlamaktadır.

Çalışmada durum incelemesi yöntemi kullanılmıştır. Durum incelemesi Yin (2009) tarafından " çağdaş bir durumu derinlemesine ve meydana geldiği bağlam çerçevesinde özellikle bağlam ve durum arasındaki sınırlar açık olarak belli değilse kullanılan bilimsel bir araştırma" olarak tanımlanmıştır. (s. 28). Durum incelemesi belirli bir durumun portresini çizmek ve gerçeği derinlemesine tasvirlerle anlatmayı amaçlar. Bunu yaparken katılımcıların deneyim, düşünce ve duygularını yansıtmak oldukça önemlidir. (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2007). Fakat durum incelemelerinin farklı yorumları da vardır. Stake (1995) örneğin, durum incelemesinin seçilen yöntem olmaktan çok çalışılacak objeyi ifade ettiğini söylemektedir (Stake'den aktaran Heigham & Croker, 2009). Bu lensten bakıldığında "nitel bir araştırma için durum belli sınırları olan ve sınırları araştırmacını ilgilerine göre belirlenen bir sistemdir"(Heigham & Croker, 2009, s. 69). Bazı yaygın durumlar; kişiler, kurumlar, süreçler, programlar, çevreler ve hatta durumlardır. (Yin, 2009 s.28).

Bu çalışmada çalışılacak olan durum "öğretmenlerin bir mesleki gelişim aracı olarak öğretmen araştırmasına yönelik deneyimleri ve fikirleri olarak belirlenmiştir. Stouffer (1941) incelenecek durumun "bir isim bir şey bir varlık olup nadiren bir fiil ya da işlev" olduğunu belirtmiştir. (Stouffer 'den aktaran Stake, 2005 s. 1). "Hemşireler incelenecek durum olabilir, genelde hemşirelik aktivitelerini durum olarak belirlemeyiz. Durumun gerçekleştiği yerleri seçeriz. Bu yerlerde işlevleri gözlemleyebiliriz ancak işlevi incelenecek durum olarak almayız" (Stake, 2005, s. 2). Stake (2005) ayrıca vurgunun durumda olduğu zamanlarda bile çalışılmak için seçilenin varlıklar olduğunu vurgulamıştır. Bu sebeple Türkiye'de çeşitli okullarda ve seviyelerde çalışan her öğretmeni, öğretmenlerin öğretmen araştırmalarında yer alma durumunu anlamak için incelenecek durum olarak belirledik. Daha geniş bir açıdan, çalışmamız durum incelemesi yöntemini bir araştırma metodu olarak benimsemiş "veri toplama teknikleri, tasarım ve veri analizlerinde" bu araştırma yöntemi kullanılmıştır (Yin, 2009, s.29).

Çalışma için altı farklı okuldan (devlet ilköğretim, devlet lise, devlet üniversite, özel ilköğretim, özel lise ve özel üniversite) öğretmenler seçilmiştir. Öğretmenlerin seçiminde en fazla değişkeni barındırma ilkesi göz önüne alınmıştır (Anderson and Arsenault, 1998'dan aktaran Cohen, Manion, & Morrison, 2007). Kurumlar arasındaki farklılıkları yansıtabilmek için Devlet ilköğretim, lise ve üniversite ve bu okulların özel sektördeki karşılıkları seçilmiştir. Bu süreçte ulaşabilecek okulların seçilmesine de özellikle dikkat edilmiştir. Okulların yakınlıkları ve gönüllü katılımcıların bulunmasına öncelik verilmiştir. Bütünsel durum incelemesinin içinde her bir öğretmen incelenecek ayrı bir durum olarak benimsenmiştir.

VERİ TOPLAMA

ANKET

Çalışmada kullanılan anket alanyazında okunan kavramlar ışığında öğretmen tarafından yapılan araştırmalar, yansıtıcı öğretim ve öğretmen mesleki gelişimindeki konulara dayanılarak hazırlanmıştır. Üniversitede çalışan ki öğretmen anketi doldurup anket hakkında geri bildirim vermişlerdir. Anket genellikle açık uçlu sorulardan oluşmaktadır. Nunan (1999) açık uçlu soruların " katılımcıların söylemek istediklerini açık bir şekilde yansıttığının" altını çizmektedir. (Nunan'dan aktaran Zohrabi, 2013, s .255). Anket (Ek F) dört bölümden oluşmaktadır. İlk bölüm ise üç alt bölümden oluşmuştur. Bu alt bölümlerde öğretmenlerin eğitim, yaş deneyim ve çalışma ortamları sorulmuştur. İkinci bölümde öğretmenlerin mesleki gelişimleri ve araştırma okuma alışkanlıkları sorulmuştur. Üçüncü ve dördüncü bölümler öğretmenlerin, öğretmen tarafından yapılan araştırmaya yönelik fikir ve deneyimlerini içermektedir. Üçüncü bölüm daha önceden öğretmen tarafından yapılan araştırma yapmış öğretmenlere yönelik olup 15 soru içermektedir. Dördüncü bölüm ise daha önceden öğretmen tarafından yapılan araştırmalarda yer almamış katılımcılar içindir.

MÜLAKAT

Mülakatta gönüllülük esasına göre yedi katılımcı yer almıştır. Katılımcıların dağılımı her okul tipi için bir katılımcıdır. Yalnız devlet üniversitesinden iki katılımcı yer almıştır. Gerçekleştirilen mülakatlar veri analizi için "audacity" adı verilen program ile kaydedilmiştir.

VERİ ANALİZİ

Bu tezde ağırlıklı olarak mülakat ve anketlerden nitel veri toplanmıştır. Veri analizi için "constant comparative" yöntemi kullanılmıştır. Glaser and Straus (1967) bu yöntemi veriden kategori üretme ve aynı zamanda tüm birimleri birbiri ile kıyaslama olarak açıklamaktadır. (Glaser and Straus'dan aktaran Maykut &Morehouse, 1994). Bu açıklamaya paralel olarak araştırmacı verileri topladı, bir kaç kez okudu ve anlamlar üzerine yorumlar yaptı. Tutarlılık için anketler ve mülakatları kıyasladı. Kodlar oluşturulurken MAXQDA adlı bilgisayar programından yararlanıldı. Ortak anlamlı parçalar işaretlenip etiketlendi. Farklı kodlar için farklı renkler kullanıldı. İlk olarak anket verileri analiz edildi. Tüm anketler benzer kodları içerip içermediklerinin anlaşılması için birbirleri ile kıyaslandı. Anketlerdeki verilerden oluşturulan kodlar ile başka bir ankette benzerlik bulunduğunda buradaki bölüm de aynı kod ile etiketlendi. Yeni anlamlar için yeni kodlar üretildi. Daha sonra mülakatlar yazıya geçirildi ve aynı işlemler buradaki verilere de uygulandı.

SONUÇLAR VE TARTIŞMA

Bu bölümde ilk olarak birinci soru ve onun alt sorusu cevaplanmıştır:

1. Öğretmen tarafından yapılan araştırmaların, çalışmakta olan İngilizce öğretmenleri arasındaki durumu çalıştıkları ortamlara göre nedir?

    a. Çalışan İngilizce öğretmenlerinin öğretmen tarafından yapılan araştırmalara bir mesleki gelişim aracı olarak tutumları nelerdir?

Öğretmenlerin kullandıkları mesleki gelişim aktiviteleri

Öğretmenlerin şu anda kullandıkları mesleki gelişim aktivitelerini yansıtabilmek amacıyla hangi mesleki gelişim araçlarını kullandıkları ve bu araçların amacına ulaşıp ulaşmadıkları sorulmuştur. Cevaplar göstermiştir ki öğretmenler mesleki gelişimlerinde en çok seminerler ve sorunları hakkında meslektaşlarla tartışmayı kullanmaktadırlar(Sırasıyla %56 ve %50). Farklı okullarda kullanılan mesleki gelişim araçları arasında anlamlı bir farklılık gözlenmemiştir. Öğretmenlerin çoğunluğu mesleki gelişim aktivitelerinin amaçlarına ulaştığını söylese de, devlet ilköğretim okullarındaki öğretmenler materyal eksikliği ve kalabalık sınıflar sebebiyle öğrendikleri her şeyi uygulayamadıklarını belirtmişlerdir. Mesleki gelişim için okul desteği de öğretmenler arasında farklılık göstermiştir. Çalışmadaki bazı özel okullar öğretmenler için seminer, kamp düzenleyip özel ilgi grupları oluşturmaktadır. E1 Özel Lisesi yılın en iyi öğretmenini seçmektedir ve F1 Özel Üniversitesi ödül olarak başarılı öğretmenlerini yurtdışına yollamaktadır. Diğer bazı okullar ise maddi ödül vermemekle birlikte öğretmenlerinin mesleki gelişimlerini olumlu tavırlar ile desteklemektedirler. Devlet ilköğretim okulundan bir öğretmen (A2), özel üniversiteden bir öğretmen(F3) ve devlet lisesinden (B1) iki öğretmen ise mesleki gelişimleri için bir okul tarafından bir destek görmediklerini belirtmişlerdir.

Öğretmen tarafından yapılan araştırma farkındalığı

Öğretmenlerin öğretmen tarafından yapılan araştırmalar hakkındaki farkındalıkları araştırıldığında, beş öğretmenin daha önceden bu araştırmayı yaptığı görülmüştür. İki öğretmen (Türkan, Pelin) öğretmen araştırmasına benzer çalışmaları sınıfta yaptıklarından fakat bu terimden ve yaptıklarının öğretmen araştırması olarak adlandırabileceklerinden haberdar olmadıklarını belitti. Öğretmenlerden bir tanesi öğretmen tarafından yapılan araştırmaya

dair hiç bir şey bilmediğini açıkladı. Öğretmenlerin çoğunluğu yapılmış ve yayımlanmış, öğretmen tarafından yapılan araştırmalara erişmeye çalışmamıştır. Öğretmen tarafından yapılan araştırmaları okumak öğretmenler arasında yaygın bir davranış değildir.

Öğretmen tarafından yapılan araştırmanın faydaları

Öğretmenler öğretmen tarafından yapılan araştırmaları özerkliklerini artırabileceğinden (3 öğretmen) ve öğretim yeteneklerini geliştirebileceğinden (6 öğretmen) yararlı bir mesleki gelişim aracı olarak değerlendirdiler. Öğretmenler ayrıca bu aracın problemlerini çözdüğünü ya da problem çözme potansiyeli olduğunu açıkladılar. Öğretimde farkındalığı artırdığı ve öğretim aktivitelerine bir dayanak olduğunu belirttiler. Öğretmenlere göre öğretmen tarafından yapılan araştırma daha iyi bir ders için öğretmenlere farklı yollar gösterdi. Öğretmen ve öğrenciler arasında bir kanal işlevi görerek eğitimin bu iki paydaşı arasındaki iletişimi güçlendirdi. Öğrencilerin derslere yönelik ilgilerinde artış oldu. Dersi planlama aşamasında öğrencilerin fikirlerinin alındığı ve bu fikirler ders esnasında uygulandığı için öğrencilerin kendilerine olan güvenleri de arttı.

Öğretmen tarafından yapılan araştırmanın zorlukları

Öğretmen tarafından yapılan araştırmaların zorlukları veri toplama süreci ve öğretmenlerin hâlihazırdaki iş yükünden kaynaklanmıştır. Öğretmenler işbirliği içindeki öğrencilerin ve okul yönetimi tarafından sağlanan izinlerin gerekliliğini vurguladı. Öğretmenlerin ders programları ve evrak işleri öğretmen tarafından yapılan araştırmaları hayata geçirebilmelerini zorlaştırmaktadır. Bazı öğretmenler ayrıca bu araştırmayı uygulamak için gerekli olan teknik bilgiden yoksundur. Son olarak bazı öğretmenler öğretmenlerin bu araştırma türünde statü olarak öğrencileri

etkileyebilecek pozisyonda olmasının araştırmanın güvenilirliğini olumsuz olarak etkileyebileceğinden çekinmektedir.

Öğretmen tarafından yapılan araştırma için öğretmen motivasyonu

Öğretmenlerin bu araştırma türünü gerçekleştirmelerindeki en büyük motivasyon onların gelişime ve derslerini daha iyi hale getirmeye olan içsel istekleriydi. Öğretmenler sınıflarındaki problemlerin varlığının ve onları çözmek istemelerinin de kendilerini motive ettiklerini söyledi. Bir öğretmen, öğretmen tarafından yapılan araştırmanın daha önceki faydalarını gelecekteki çalışmaları için motivasyon kaynağı olarak gösterdi.

Öğretmenlerin genel olarak bir mesleki gelişim aracı olarak öğretmen tarafından yapılan araştırmalara yönelik fikirleri

Öğretmenlerin genel olarak bir mesleki gelişim aracı olarak öğretmen tarafından yapılan araştırmalara yönelik fikirleri; "bu araştırma türünde olması gereken özellikler, bu araştırmanın uygulanabilirliği, aynı anda araştırmacı ve öğretmen olma özelliğini aynı anda barındırması ve bunun sonuçları" başlıkları altında toplanmıştır. Bazı öğretmenler öğretmen araştırmasını tamamlayabilmek için öğretmenlerde kararlılık ve deneyim gibi özelliklerin bulunmasının gerekliliğinden söz ettiler. Öğretmenler eğitim ve destek ile öğretmen tarafından yapılan araştırmaların okullarda uygulanabilir olduğunu savundular. Aynı anda hem araştırılan hem de araştıran kişi olmanın zor olmasına rağmen öğretmenlerin kendi sorunlarını kendi gözleriyle görmelerini ve daha gözlemci olmalarını sağladığından öğretmenler bu araştırma türünün kazançlarının zorluklarından fazla olduğunu belirtiler. Öğretmenler iyi bir öğretmen tarafından yapılan

araştırmanın farklı bakış açılarını yansıtması ve tekrar edilebilir olması gerektiğinin altını çizdiler.

İkinci soru ve onun alt sorusu aşağıdaki gibiydi:

2. Öğretmen tarafından yapılan araştırmalar İngilizce öğretmenlerinin görev yaptıkları yerde nasıl devam ettirilebilir?
    b. Öğretmen tarafından yapılan araştırmaların devamlılığının sağlanmasında ve öğretmenlerin bu araştırma türü ile tanıştırılmasında hangi faktörler önemlidir?

Öğretmen tarafından yapılan araştırmaları gerçekleştirmek için öğretmenlerin ihtiyaçları

Öğretmen tarafından yapılan araştırmaların gerçekleştirilmesinde öğretmenlerin ihtiyaçları veri toplama aşamasında yardım, gerekli kaynakların sağlanması, ders saatlerinin esnekliği ve bu araştırma türünü tanıtma amacı ile zorunlu olarak yaptırılacak öğretmen tarafından yapılan araştırma uygulaması idi. Bazı öğretmenler bu araştırma türü için eğitim ve araştırma süresince de uzmanların yardımının gerekli olduğunu savundular. Birkaç öğretmen kendilerini bu araştırmayı uygulayacak yeterlilikte göremediklerini belirttiler ve bunu bu araştırma türünü uygulamama sebebi olarak gösterdiler. Diğer önemli bir ihtiyaç da veri toplamaya yönelikti. Öğretmenler veri toplamaya başlayabilmeleri için gerekli olan izinlerin alınmasının zorluğundan bahsettiler. Bu süreçte ayrıca öğrencilerin işbirliği de büyük önem taşımaktaydı. Öğretmenler bu araştırma sürecinin amacına ulaşabilmesi için katılımcıların olumlu tavırlar içerisinde olması gerektiğini belirttiler. Öğretmenler ayrıca bu araştırma türünü etkili bir şekilde uygulayabilmeleri için esnek çalışma saatleri ve sadece araştırma yapmaları için ayrılan ek bir zaman ihtiyaçları olduklarının altını çizdiler. Daha önceden bu araştırma türünü uygulamış olan üç ve uygulamamış olan iki

öğretmen, öğretmen tarafından yapılan araştırmaların öğretmenlik mesleğini zorunlu bir parçası olması gerektiğini savunmuş ve bu araştırma sürecinin okul tarafından takip edilmesi gerektiğini belirtmiştir. Bu uygulamanın, öğretmenlerin bu araştırma türü ile tanıştırılması açısından büyük önem taşıdığını savunmuşlardır. Bu uygulamayı savunmalarının bir diğer nedeni de genel bir gelişmenin okullar arası genel bir birliktelik sağlayarak gerçekleşeceğine inanmalarıdır.

Okul desteği öğretmenlerin bu araştırma türünü yapıp yapmamalarında çok önemli bir yere sahiptir. Öğretmenler okul yönetiminin izni olmadan bu araştırmayı yapmanın hem etik olmayacağını hem de mümkün olmadığını belirtmişlerdir. Öğretmenler destekleyici bir yöneticinin ve okul ortamının önemine dikkat çektiler. Öğretmenler yenilikçi ve kararların desteklendiği bir okul ortamının gerekliliğine vurgu yaptılar.

Öğretmenlerin problem yaşadıkları ve üzerine araştırma yapmak ya da başkalarının araştırma yapmasını istediği konular listelenmiştir. Bu konular genel olarak öğrenci motivasyonu, dinleme ve konuşma yeteneklerinin daha etkili bir şekilde öğretimi, sınıf yönetimi, gramer ve kelime öğretimidir.

A) Bu çalışmadaki öğretmenler, öğretmen tarafından yapılan araştırmaları toplumsal bir değişim aracından çok sınıftaki problemleri çözme ve bir mesleki gelişim aracı olarak değerlendirdiler.

Çalışmada öğretmenler öğretmen tarafından yapılan araştırmaları öğretimdeki problemleri çözmek üzere ve mesleki gelişimlerini sağlayacak bir araç olarak değerlendirdiler. Anketlere ve mülakatlara verilen cevaplar öğretmenlerin bu araştırma türünden beklentilerinin eğitim aktivitelerini yönlendirecekleri bir geri dönüt aracı olduğunu gösterdi.

B) Öğretmen tarafından yapılan araştırma öğretmenler için etkili bir mesleki gelişim aracıdır.

Çalışmanın sonucunda elde edilen öğretmen tarafından yapılan araştırmaların yararları aşağıdaki gibi özetlenebilir:

- Öğretimde farkındalığı artırır ve eleştirel düşünmeyi destekler.
- Derslerdeki problemleri çözer.
- Özerkliği teşvik eder.
- Öğretim yeteneklerini geliştirir.
- İşbirliğini teşvik eder.
- Öğretmen ve öğrencilerin kendilerine olan güvenlerini artırır.
- Uygulama için öneriler sunar.
- İçinde bulunulan koşullara yöneliktir
- Öğrencilerin bakış açılarını yansıtır.
- Öğrencilerle olan iletişimi artırır.
- Öğrencilerin derse olan ilgisini artırır.
- Öğretmenlerin dersleri üzerine düşünmelerini daha etkili bir şekilde yapabilmelerine olanak sağlar.

C) Okul desteği öğretmen tarafından yapılan araştırmaların uygulanmasında çok önemli bir yere sahiptir.

Öğretmenlerin görev yaptıkları okulların bu araştırma türüne gösterecekleri destek öğretmenlerin bu araştırmayı yapmaları ve yaptıkları çalışmaların kalitesi üzerine etkisi büyüktür.

D) Öğretmen tarafından yapılan araştırmaya yönelik motivasyon çoğunlukla içseldir.

Bu çalışma öğretmenlerin neden öğretmen tarafından yapılan araştırmayı yapmak istediklerine yönelik çeşitli sebepler bulmuştur. Bu sebepler çoğunlukla öğretmenlerin gelişime dair olan içsel istekleridir. Öğretmenler daha etkili ve nitelikli öğretmenler olmayı istemektedirler.Öğretmenlerin bu araştırma türünde yer almak istemelerinin bir değer sebebi ise sınıflarında karşılaştıklar problemlerdir.

E) Öğretmen tarafından yapılan araştırmaların uygulanmasında zorluklar vardır.

Öğretmenler genel olarak bu araştırmanın yararları hakkında olumlu düşüncelere sahiptir. Ancak öğretmenlerin bu çalışmanın güvenirliği ve uygulanabilirliği hakkında çeşitli şüpheleri vardır. Öğretmenlerin bu araştırmayı yaparken karşılaştıkları ya da karşılaşmaları muhtemel olan zorluklar büyük ölçüde veri toplama, zamanın olmayışı, teknik bilginin yetersizliği ve var olan işyükü gibi fiziksel zorluklardır.

Son söz olarak eğitimsel politikalar ne ölçüde başarılı olursa olsunlar eğer onları uygulamada diğer bir deyişle öğretmenlerin cephesinde problemler varsa bu programın başarılı olması beklenemez. Öğrenilen bilgilerin uygulamaya geçirilmesinde sürekli geri dönüt ve sürekli gelişim gerekli olduğundan; öğretmen tarafından yapılan araştırma bu amacı gerçekleştirmede etkili bir yol olarak düşünülmelidir. Öğretmen tarafından yapılan araştırmalar öğretmenlerin içinde bulundukları şartlar ve alanın bilimsel dayanakları arasında bir aracı olarak işlev görmektedir. Bu araştırma türünün oldukça etkili olduğu inkâr edilemese de öğretmenler arasında yaygın bir uygulama olmadığı gözlenmiştir. Öğretmenlerin bu araştırma türünün yararlarını gözlemleyebilmeleri için öğretmen tarafından

yapılan araştırmalara yönelik farkındalık artırma çalışmalarına hız verilmelidir. Bu araştırma türünün teknik bilgisi ve felsefi temelleri öğretmen adaylarına ve çalışan öğretmenlere aktarılmalıdır. Bu araştırma türünün okullarda kullanılıp gelişebilmesi için gerekli koşullar okulların bünyelerinde sağlanmalıdır.

ÖNERİLER

Bu tez çalışan İngilizce öğretmenlerinin bir mesleki gelişim aracı olarak öğretmen tarafından yapılan araştırmalara yönelik görüşlerini incelemek ve bu araştırma türünün devamlılığını sağlamak için gerekli olan koşulları göz ününe sermek amacı ile yapılmıştır. Çalışmadaki 16 öğretmenin 11'i daha önceden öğretmen tarafından yapılan araştırmaları hiç yapmamıştır. Öğretmenlerin bu araştırma sürecindeki deneyim eksiklikleri, onların bu araştırmanın yararlarını ya da bu araştırma yapılırken karşılaşılabilecek problemleri tanımlarken derinlemesine bilgi vermelerini engellemiş olabilir. Buna ek olarak çalışmadaki bazı öğretmenler bu araştırma türünün felsefi temelleri ve bu araştırma türünün dayandığı fikirler hakkında eğitime ihtiyaç duymaktadır. Bu sebeplerden dolayı bu çalışma bahsedilen eğitim sağlandıktan ve gönüllü olan öğretmenler, öğretmen tarafından yapılan araştırmalarını tamamladıktan sonra tekrar gerçekleştirilebilir.

I: Tez Fotokopisi İzin Formu

TEZ FOTOKOPİSİ İZİN FORMU

ENSTİTÜ

☐

Fen Bilimleri Enstitüsü

Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü ☐

Uygulamalı Matematik Enstitüsü ☐

Enformatik Enstitüsü ☐

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YAZARIN

Soyadı :
Adı :
Bölümü :

TEZİN ADI (İngilizce) :

TEZİN TÜRÜ : Yüksek Lisans ☐ Doktora ☐

1. Tezimin tamamından kaynak gösterilmek şartıyla fotokopi alınabilir. ☐
2. Tezimin içindekiler sayfası, özet, indeks sayfalarından ve/veya bir bölümünden kaynak gösterilmek şartıyla fotokopi alınabilir. ☐
3. Tezimden bir bir (1) yıl süreyle fotokopi alınamaz. ☐

TEZİN KÜTÜPHANEYE TESLİM TARİHİ: