

LANGUAGE TEACHER COGNITION, CLASSROOM PRACTICES AND
INSTITUTIONAL CONTEXT: A QUALITATIVE CASE STUDY ON THREE
EFL TEACHERS

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ABSTRACT

LANGUAGE TEACHER COGNITION, CLASSROOM PRACTICES AND INSTITUTIONAL CONTEXT: A QUALITATIVE CASE STUDY ON THREE EFL TEACHERS

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This study examined the main sources of the participant EFL teachers' cognitions, their classroom practices and the impact of institutional context on these practices. The participants included three EFL instructors working at English preparatory programs of different state universities. The data were collected through three semi-structured interviews, four classroom observations for each participant with follow-up stimulated recall interviews, field notes taken during the observations, reflective journals that were written by the participants on their classroom practices and document analysis including their lesson plans and classroom materials. As for the data analysis, grounded theory design was used as a systematic data analysis process. Based on the narrations of the participants, the results showed that prior language learning experiences, the pre-service education, the years spent as a novice teacher, institutional atmosphere and experienced colleagues in the past and all teaching experiences were the main sources of the teachers' cognition on language teaching and their cognition was also the origin of their classroom practices. The other factors that shaped EFL teachers' practices were found to be the learner profile, institutional

factors including the organizational atmosphere, testing and curriculum policies, teachers' improvisational teaching acts, and the course book. It was found out that teachers experienced a decision-making process in which they had to take all these factors into account to decide on their classroom implementations. Based on these findings, the study puts forward a language teacher cognition model, Clusters of Language Teacher Cognition, which not only presented a figurative conceptualization of the elements which EFL teachers had cognition about but also provided a research agenda for both national and international scholars interested in this field.

Keywords: Language Teacher Cognition, Classroom Practices, Institutional Context, EFL Teachers

ÖZ

DİL ÖĞRETMENİ BİLİŞİ, SINIF UYGULAMALARI VE KURUMSAL BAĞLAM: ÜÇ İNGİLİZCE ÖĞRETMENİ ÜZERİNE NİTEL BİR DURUM ÇALIŞMASI

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Yorumlayıcı bir yaklaşım izleyen bu çalışma, İngilizceyi yabancı dil olarak öğreten Türk öğretmenlerin bilişlerinin temel kaynaklarını, sınıf uygulamalarını ve kurumsal bağlamın bu uygulamalar üzerindeki etkisini incelemektedir. Araştırma deseninde nitel çoklu durum çalışmasına bağlı kalınarak, çeşitli veri toplama teknikleri kullanılmıştır. Amaca dayalı örneklem metoduna bağlı olarak, çalışmanın katılımcılarını farklı devlet üniversitelerinin İngilizce hazırlık programlarında çalışan üç İngilizce okutmanı oluşturmuştur. Çalışmanın verileri 2014-2015 akademik yılı bahar dönemi boyunca yapılan üç yarı yapılandırılmış görüşme, her bir katılımcı için dörder saatlik sınıf gözlemi takiben yapılan çağrışım tekniğine dayalı görüşmeler, katılımcıların sınıf içi uygulamaları üzerine yazdıkları yansıtıcı yazımlar ve katılımcıların ders planları ile sınıf içinde kullandıkları materyalleri içeren doküman analizi ile toplanmıştır. Verilerin analizinde ise sistematik bir veri analiz süreci olan kuram oluşturma tekniği kullanılmıştır. Analiz süreci açık kodlama, eksensel kodlama ve seçici kodlama olarak 3 aşamadan oluşmuş ve karşılaştırmalı içerik çözümlemesi kullanılmıştır. Sonuçlar öğretmenlerin geçmişteki dil öğrenme

tecrübelerinin, üniversitede aldıkları hizmet-öncesi öğretmenlik eğitiminin, mesleğin ilk yılındaki öğretmenlik tecrübelerinin, geçmişteki kurum ve iş arkadaşlarının ve tüm öğretmenlik tecrübelerinin İngilizce öğretmenlerinin bilişini oluşturan temel unsurlar olduğunu ortaya koymuştur. Öğretmenlerin, bu unsurları içeren bir süreç sonunda dil öğretmeni bilişini oluşturduğu ve bu bilişin tüm sınıf uygulamalarının temeli olduğu görülmüştür. İngilizce öğretmenlerinin sınıf uygulamalarını şekillendiren diğer unsurların öğrenci profili, kurumsal atmosfer, müfredat ve ölçme-değerlendirme uygulamalarını içeren kurumsal faktörler, öğretmenlerin doğaçlama kararları ve ders kitabı olduğu belirlenmiştir. Ayrıca öğretmenlerin ders esnasında tüm bu faktörleri göz önüne alarak bir karar verme süreci yaşadıkları gözlemlenmiştir. Bu sonuçlara bağlı olarak, öğretmenlerin biliş sahibi olduğu faktörleri kavramsal bir çerçeveye oturtan ve alandaki araştırmacılara rehberlik edebilecek bir araştırma altyapısı hazırlayan bir biliş modeli olan Dil Öğretmeni Biliş Kümeleri ortaya koyulmuştur.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Dil Öğretmeni Bilişi, Sınıf Uygulamaları, Kurumsal Bağlam, İngilizce Öğretmenleri

To the Fountains of My Life;
My beloved wife, Elçin & My pretty daughter, İpek

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1. 1. Background to the study: A historical look on second language teacher education

“We need to understand more about how language teachers conceive of what they do, what they know about language teaching, how they think about classroom practices and how that knowledge and these thinking processes are learned through formal teacher education and informal experience on the job” (Freeman & Richards, 1996, p. 1).

Parallel to the growing recognition of English as the contemporary lingua franca, there has been an increasing interest in training effective teachers who can meet the needs of their learners based on the requirements of the current era. To achieve this aim today, Second Language Teacher Education (SLTE) is at the heart of the central activities in ensuring the quality of various language learning situations (Wright, 2010).

In a general sense, teacher education “describes the sum of various interventions that are used to develop professional knowledge among practitioners” (Freeman & Johnson, 1998, p. 398). According to Richards (1990, p. 15), SLTE “must provide the required opportunities for the novice to acquire the skills and competencies of effective teachers and to discover the working rules that effective teachers use.” Adapting a general intent to grow up effective teachers, SLTE has been considerably influenced by various theories and paradigms. These trends have been influential on how we think about language teachers, what they know, how they learn to teach and how they transform this knowledge into their classroom practices. Though the current trend in SLTE is largely dominated by a socio-cultural paradigm (Johnson, 2006) which views learning to teach as a dialogic process shaped by teachers’

interaction with their socio-cultural contexts, community of practice and their reflective movements, SLTE has been shaped and reshaped for about a half century in terms of its scope and research base by various theories. Freeman (2009) synthesizes this period in four phases with his model of widening gyre (Figure 1), but to understand better how this formation process occurred, it would be better to have a historical look on SLTE in detail.

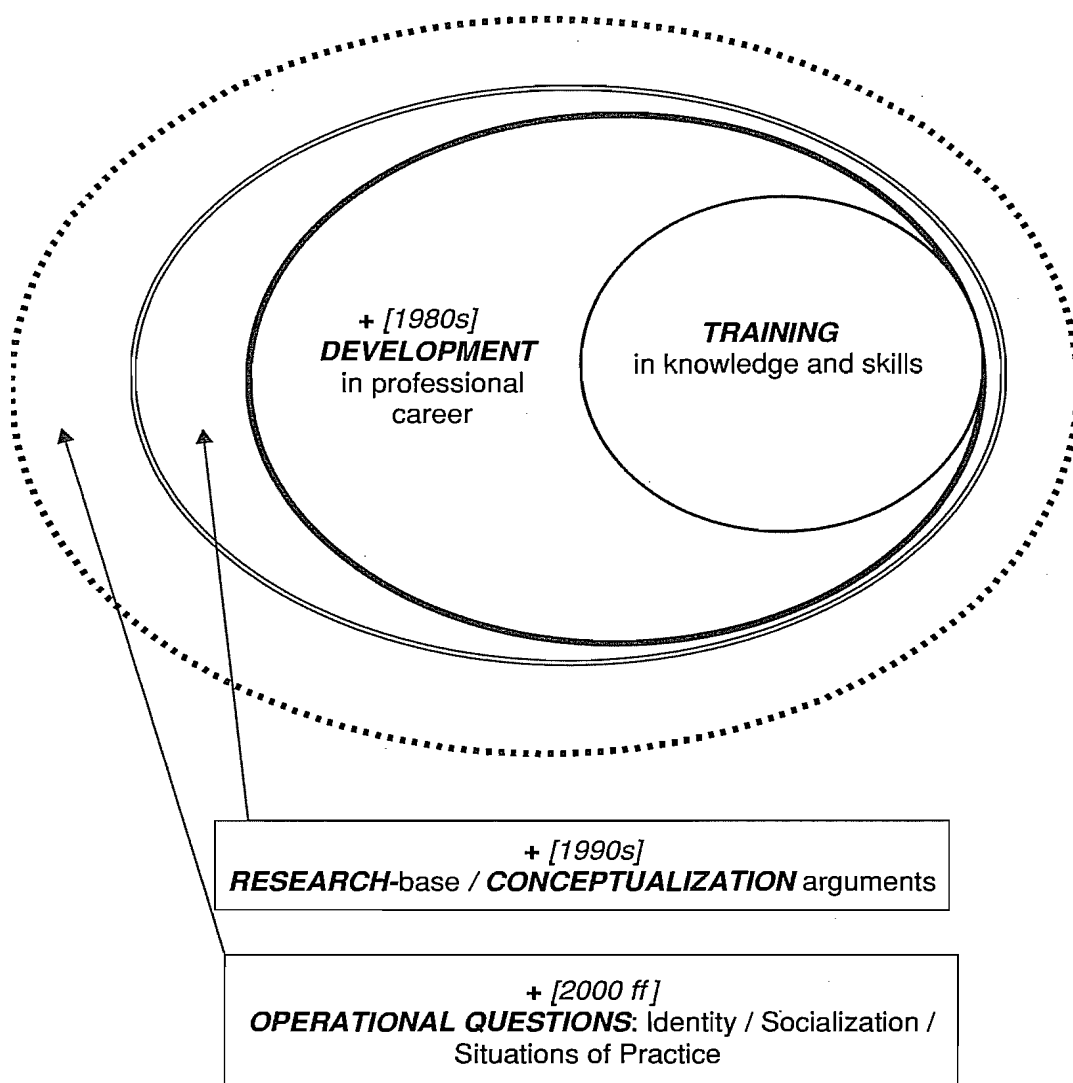


Figure 1. The widening gyre of SLTE (Freeman, 2009, p. 14)

For many scholars in the field, SLTE is regarded as a relatively new phenomenon (Freeman, 2002; Borg, 2003; Richards, 2008), but the origins of the field dates back late 1960s and early 1970s when language teaching began to be an autonomous field of study. The initial programs in those years provided for language teachers included several training or higher education courses which aimed to give candidate teachers the content courses such as grammar or literature and classrooms methodologies for gaining the necessary skills to teach the new methods. Such programs were generally organized around the idea that prospective teachers should be equipped with a body of knowledge including theories and methodologies which they could implement in any language teaching situation (Freeman & Johnson, 1998). According to Freeman (2002, p.4), “learning to teach involved mastering the specific content one was to teach and separately mastering methodologies for conveying that content to learners.” New teachers were believed to enter the programs with no existing knowledge and working teachers were viewed as classroom implementers who used the necessary method and techniques that were assumed to ensure student learning. How such a view of teaching and learning was reflected in research was summarized by Freeman (1996, p. 354):

Teaching was regarded as a mode of transmission through which teachers conveyed knowledge via several techniques and what teachers did in the classroom would automatically led what students learnt. Such a view led to the emergence of a process-product research which conceptualized the view of teaching as behaviours.

Associated with such a model of transmission, the process-product research focused on teaching with a special emphasis on its outcomes. Studies conducted around this paradigm often examined the relationship between teachers’ behaviours and their effect on students’ achievements. The view of teaching as discrete behaviours and the process-product research paradigm had a dual relationship in these years because it was believed that when teachers were provided the knowledge driven by research, their teaching effectiveness would increase.

Towards the late 1970s, there were some critical turning points regarding the view of teachers and teaching. Influenced by Walberg’s (1977; cited in Freeman, 2002) coining the term “teachers’ mental lives”, and the groundbreaking work of Lortie

(1975), scholars began to question that teaching was more than simple set of behaviours and the complexity of learning to teach could not be explained by the dominant process-product research having a behaviouristic standpoint. It was also argued that the paradigm undervalued the previous lives and experiences of teachers by conceptualizing teaching as “abstract, decontextualized body of knowledge and a quantifiable set of behaviours” (Freeman & Johnson, 1998, p. 399).

Informed with these theoretical movements, a body of research which examined teachers’ beliefs, cognitive processes and their relation with behavioural aspects began to emerge (Denscombe, 1982; Shavelson & Stern, 1981). Teachers were no longer regarded as just the implementers of others’ theories, but individuals having thoughtful processes, making critical decisions on what to do in classrooms, and whose decisions were shaped by multiple factors such as prior knowledge called apprenticeship of observation (Lortie, 1975) and contextual factors. Their perspectives, experiences and thought processes gained more importance in the eyes of researchers and research began to investigate why teachers did what they did rather than simply examining their behaviours in classroom.

The decade of 80s, called as the decade of change, witnessed the emergence of all concepts which are currently taken for granted in SLTE (Freeman, 2002). Criticism of the process-product paradigm and its inadequacy in explaining the inherent nature of teaching created the necessity of repositioning the study of teaching and embarking on a quest for research methods to investigate this new view of teaching. This move led to a shift from the predominant product-process paradigm towards a more qualitative or hermeneutic studies of teaching and learning which investigated teaching from the perspectives of teachers and focused on what they thought and how they understood the context they worked in. According to Freeman (2002), the move towards more qualitative studies of teaching and learning that investigated teachers’ mental processes and how it shaped their actions depended on several redefinitions; a) a shift in how teachers and their behaviours were viewed socio-politically and b) a shift towards a conceptual research agenda that would define teachers’ mental lives. Initial research from general education in these years, as a product of newly emerged research paradigm, focused on teachers’ decision making

(Shavelson & Stern, 1981), but some other studies which examined teachers' mental lives with a broader perspective became more influential. Shulman (1987) proposed the term pedagogical content knowledge which "represents the blending of content and pedagogy into an understanding of how particular topics, problems, or issues are organized, represented, and adapted to the diverse interests and abilities of learners, and presented for instruction" (p. 8). He further identified that teachers' pedagogical content knowledge is formed by seven constructs which are subject matter knowledge, pedagogical content knowledge, curricular knowledge, general pedagogic knowledge, knowledge of learners, knowledge of education context, knowledge of educational ends. Other frameworks that were as influential as the previous one were proposed by Clandinin and Connolly (1987) and Elbaz (1981). They put forward the notion of "personal practical knowledge" and asserted that it was an accumulation of knowledge continuously shaped and constructed by the lived experiences of teachers in their working context. Those studies had a big impact on the conceptualization of teacher knowledge in this decade as stated by Kennedy (1991, p. 2):

The bulk of this research revealed that what teachers know about teaching is largely socially constructed out of their experiences and classrooms from which teachers have come. Furthermore, how teachers actually use their knowledge in classrooms is highly interpretive, socially negotiated and continually structured within the classrooms and schools where they work.

Such a shift in the research paradigm and the conceptualization of teachers and teaching had a direct effect on the scope of teacher education programs in general. The image of "teacher as a person" gained importance and many began to argue that the procedural aspect of teacher training should be balanced with this notion of teacher as a person. According to Freeman (2009), this perspective extended the scope of teacher education beyond initial preparation in knowledge and skills to the development of the individual as a teacher throughout a career. Besides, scholars came to recognize the issue of context as one of the bases for learning to teach rather than the place of application.

Compared to the previous decade which witnessed fundamental changes in how learning to teach was conceptualized, the period from 1990s to 2000s deepened the understanding of 80s and consolidated the existing tendencies (Freeman, 2002). Accumulated with hermeneutic research base, 90s were identified with four main changes according to Crandall (2000).

- a) A complete shift from a behaviouristic view of teacher learning to a constructivist one which started to view teachers as reflective practitioners
- b) The view that prospective teachers' beliefs coming from their experiences as language learners affect their perception of learning and teaching
- c) The realization of the inefficacy of SLTE programs in preparing student teachers for the realities of classroom atmosphere
- d) A more professional view informed by research components among practitioners of language teaching field

Based on all these significant realizations, researchers' main focus dramatically turned to how teachers learn what they know rather than what they need to know. Numerous research studies (see Borg, 2003 for a detailed review) were conducted to investigate the knowledge base of language teachers. Informed by this research agenda and the current tendencies in SLTE, Freeman and Richards (1998) reconceptualised the knowledge base of language teacher education asserting that:

The core of new knowledge base must focus on the activity of teaching itself; it should centre on the teacher who does it, the contexts in which it is done and the pedagogy by which it is done. Moreover, this knowledge base should include forms of knowledge representation that document teacher learning within the social, cultural and institutional contexts in which it occurs (p. 1).

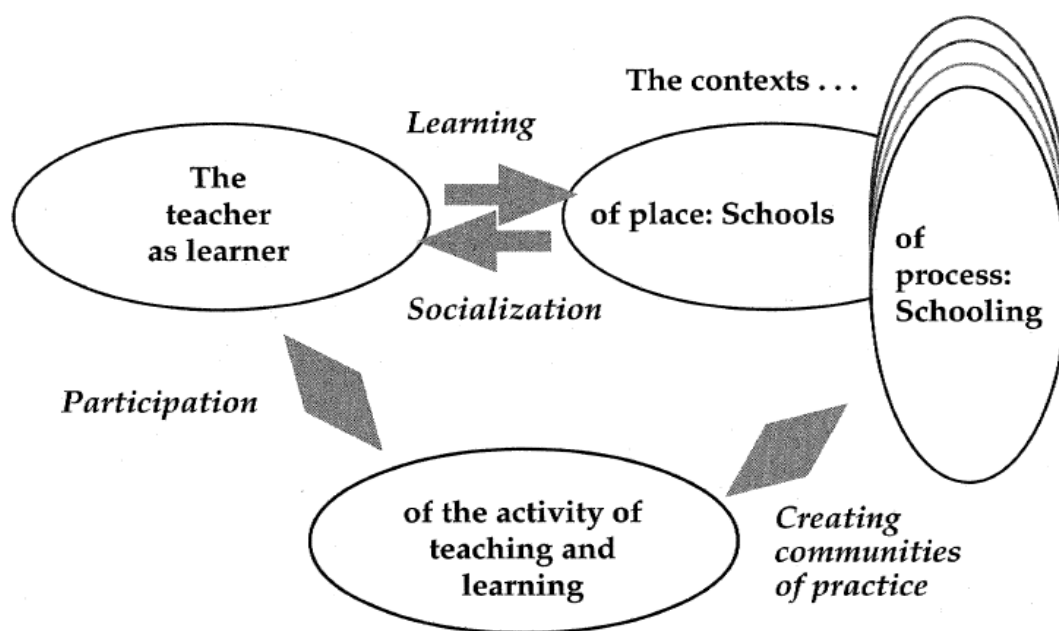


Figure 2. Framework for the knowledge base of language teacher education
(Freeman & Johnson, 1998, p. 406)

With this seminal framework which consisted of three interdependent domains as *the teacher as learner of teaching, schooling as the social context and the pedagogical process*, the activity of SLTE was professionally labelled, its scope was well-defined and an independent research base was created in those years (Freeman, 2009). However, as Wright (2010) maintains, an urgent need for research became evident due to the discussion of these notions in the framework. This research led to the emergence of various investigations on language teacher cognition, a field which began to be established starting from early 1990s.

1.2. Language teacher cognition

Towards the early 80s, the common view that successful outcomes of teaching highly depended on teachers' being well-trained to apply language teaching theories and methods was superseded by the view of teaching as a multifaceted profession. In this sense, the ones involved in this field were occupied with the questions on what teachers actually knew, how they gained and accumulated this knowledge and what kind of a relationship this knowledge and teachers' practice had. This increasing recognition regarding teachers and the teaching itself led to the emergence of a new

research orientation, language teacher cognition, which investigates “what language teachers think, know and believe and of its relationship to teachers’ classroom practices” (Borg, 2006, p. 1).

During 1990s, research on language teacher cognition blossomed based on the idea that it was not possible to fully understand teachers and teaching without focusing on their beliefs, thought and knowledge that informed their practice (Borg, 2009). Studies which were influential and the results of which are still taken for granted are shown in Figure 3.

Much of this research (mentioned in detail in the next chapter) aimed to investigate the knowledge base of language teachers with a special emphasis on its relationship with cognitive processes and classroom practices. It is an undeniable fact that this research has broadened the perspectives of both scholars and practitioners and has served to the understanding of teachers’ mental lives and their learning-to-teach process significantly. However, the terminological variability they caused has led to misconceptions and overlapping in the field as stated by Borg (2003) in his seminal review:

While perhaps terminological innovation is a necessary process in the conceptualization of an emerging domain of educational inquiry, this proliferation of terms has led to a ‘definitional confusion’ (Eisenhart, Shrum, Harding & Cuthbert 1988). This conceptual ambiguity has been further complicated by the fact that, as Clandinin & Connelly (1987) point out, identical terms have been defined in different ways and different terms have been used to describe similar concepts (p. 83).

Though covered with a terminological variability as mentioned above, language teacher cognition and language teachers’ knowledge base are still popular research areas in 2000s for the scholars in the field. Many researchers (e.g. Akbari & Tajik, 2009; Mullock, 2006; Johnston & Goettsch, 2000) aimed to investigate this issue through replicating previous studies conducted in 90s, but how language teachers learn to teach and the sources of their knowledge base and practices are still at the heart of discussion.

Source	Term	Description
Borg (1998c)	Personal pedagogical systems	Stores of beliefs, knowledge, theories, assumptions and attitudes which play a significant role in shaping teachers' instructional decisions
Breen <i>et al.</i> (2001)	Pedagogic principles	Shaped and generated by underlying and more abstract beliefs, these service to mediate between beliefs and on-going decision-making in particular instructional contexts
Burns (1996)	Theories for practice	The thinking and beliefs which are brought to bear on classroom processes
Crookes & Arakaki (1999)	Routines	Habitualized patterns of thought and action which remove doubts about what to do next, reduce complexity, and increase predictability
Freeman (1993)	Conceptions of practice	A set of ideas and actions teachers use to organise what they know and to map out what is possible; they guide individual action but are also affected by new situations
Gatbonton (1999)	Pedagogical knowledge	The teacher's accumulated knowledge about the teaching act (e.g. its goals, procedures, strategies) that serves as the basis for his or her classroom behaviour and activities
Golombek (1998)	Personal practical knowledge	A moral, affective, and aesthetic way of knowing life's educational situations
	Image	A personal meta-level, organising concept in personal practical knowledge in that it embodies a person's experience; finds expression in practice; and is the perspective from which new experience is taken
Johnson (1992b)	Theoretical beliefs	The philosophical principles, or belief systems, that guide teachers' expectations about student behaviour and the decisions they make
Johnson (1994)	Images	General metaphors for thinking about teaching that not only represent beliefs about teaching but also act as models of action
Meijer <i>et al.</i> (1999)	Practical knowledge	The knowledge teachers themselves generate as a result of their experiences as teachers and their reflections on these experiences.
Richards (1996)	Maxims	Personal working principles which reflect teachers' individual philosophies of teaching
Richards <i>et al.</i> (1992)	Culture of teaching	The nature of teachers' knowledge and beliefs systems, their views of good teaching, and their views of the systems in which they work and their role within them
Richards <i>et al.</i> (1998)	Pedagogical reasoning	The process of transforming the subject matter into learnable material
Sendan & Roberts (1998)	Personal theories	An underlying system of constructs that student teachers draw upon in thinking about, evaluating, classifying, and guiding pedagogic practice
Spada (1992)	Specific pedagogical knowledge	Knowledge related specifically to the teaching of a particular subject
Woods (1996)	BAK	A construct analogous to the notion of schema, but emphasizing the notion that beliefs, assumptions, and knowledge are included

Figure 3. Terminology in language teacher education (Borg, 2003, p. 87)

1.3. Significance of the study

The current paradigm in the field of SLTE views teachers as the creators and users of knowledge who act as decision-makers on how best to teach in a social and cultural context through negotiation with their community of practice and reflective inquiries (Johnson, 2009). Though this view has been shaped by an expanding research in the last two decades, the central question of how people learn to teach languages is still at the heart of discussion and it is crucially important to amplify already known constructs to operationalize the findings of previous research (Freeman, 2009; Meijer et. al., 1999).

In language teacher cognition research, much effort has been paid on studying the cognition of pre-service teachers or ESL teachers and little is known regarding the practices and cognitions of EFL in-service teachers both in international contexts where languages are taught by non-native teachers (Borg, 2009) and in the national context (Taner & Karaman, 2013). Furthermore, research studies conducted on Turkish EFL teachers mostly focus on their teaching beliefs and are descriptive in terms of their findings. In that sense, there is a paucity of research investigating the cognition of in-service EFL teachers with a broader focus and studies that would conceptualize their cognition are urgently needed.

Another issue which needs a greater attention is the role of contextual factors and classroom practices on language teachers' cognition. According to Burns (1996), contextual factors may have facilitative or hindering effects on teachers' decision-making processes, but there has been little attempt to explore this relationship. Furthermore, a bulk of research (Bailey, 1996; Breen et. al., 2001, Golombek, 1998) revealed that language teachers' cognition and their practices are mutually informing. For these reasons, research that would draw on classroom practices of teachers and contextual factors would remarkably contribute to our understanding of language teacher cognition.

More importantly, the aforementioned drawback related to terminological variability in language teacher cognition research is one of the primary issues to be figured out since the studies so far have explained similar things in different ways. As Borg

(2003) states below, there is a need for a unifying framework which explains these constructs more holistically.

The body of work is characterized by conceptual, terminological and definitional variability. Though understandable during the decade of change in this field research, the emergence of unifying, rather than disparate, frameworks for understanding language teachers' cognitions and practices would seem to be an appropriate goal in this domain of research (p.98).

1.4. Aims of the study and research questions

Following a hermeneutic interpretive approach, this study aims to examine the cognition of in-service EFL teachers in Turkish university context with a broader perspective. A special focus is given on how their language teacher cognition is formed, the characteristics of their classroom practices that they utilize in their classrooms and the role of institutional context that has an impact on their classroom practices. The main goal is to reach a unifying framework that would be helpful to conceptualize the language teacher cognition of EFL teachers. The following research questions are addressed throughout the study:

1. What are the main sources of the participant EFL teachers' language teacher cognition?
2. What are the characteristics of their classroom practices?
3. What institutional factors influence the teachers' classroom practices?
4. How are language teacher cognition, classroom practices and institutional context interconnected?

1.5. Definition of terms

The current study examines a multifaceted phenomenon, so it involves several key terms. These terms that will be touched upon throughout the study, will be followed based on the definitions below:

Second language teacher education: “The sum of various interventions that are used to develop professional knowledge among language teaching practitioners” (Freeman & Johnson, 1998, p. 398).

Language teacher cognition: Accumulated form of pedagogical knowledge, beliefs, attitudes and expertise regarding the act of language teaching and its influence on language teachers’ behaviour in classroom atmosphere.

Classroom practice: Any instructional act made by teachers during classroom sessions with an attempt to teach a point or proceed towards it.

Institutional context: A covering term for the factors originally deriving from conditions in the working place and having an impact on teachers’ decisions and practices regarding language teaching activity.

Hermeneutic approach: The research paradigm which examines a phenomenon based on the meanings that the participants attach to it (Freeman, 1996).

Case study: Case studies “investigate a contemporary phenomenon within its real context when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident and in which multiple sources of evidence are used” (Yin, 1994, p. 23).

Grounded theory: A systematic data analysis process consisting of three steps; open, axial and selective coding, through which a theory grounded in the data is emerged (Charmaz, 2005; Dörnyei, 2007).

CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

2.1. Introduction

Research on second language teacher education (SLTE) emerged in early 1990s and it has shown a considerable growth since then (Borg, 2009). Influenced by changing paradigms in mainstream educational research which moved from viewing the act of teaching as discrete set of behaviours to be learnt to conduct necessary classroom implications to complex set of behaviours learnt through a multifaceted process, SLTE research blossomed during 1990s leading to the emergence of concepts that are still popular in the field. Most of these research studies take their roots from mainstream educational research during 1980s, the impact of which cannot be disregarded due to the significant conceptualizations created in those years.

With the groundbreaking work of Lortie (1975) in which he argued that teachers' past experiences as learners played a significant role in their mental lives and classroom practices (apprenticeship of observation), there has been an increasing interest in examining teachers' knowledge base. This interest led to the emergence of several conceptualizations during 1980s which are still taken for granted. The earliest of these works was conducted by Elbaz (1983) who proposed the notion of practical knowledge. According to her, practical knowledge "encompasses first-hand experience of students' learning styles, interests, needs, strengths and difficulties, and a repertoire of instructional techniques and classroom managements skills" (p. 5). In the framework, the notion of practical knowledge included knowledge of self, the milieu of teaching, subject matter, curriculum and instruction. Her work was influential in the sense that organization of teachers' knowledge base and its relationship to classroom practices were put into a guiding framework for researchers. As Clandinin (1986) states, "Elbaz's work on practical knowledge is an attempt to define the form of practical knowledge, knowledge in its own terms rather

than in terms derived from theory.... Her work opens the way for looking at knowledge as experiential, embodied and based on the narrative of experience” (p. 19).

Clandinin and Connelley (1987) broadened the notion of practical knowledge and proposed the construct of personal practical knowledge which is defined as “moral, affective, and aesthetic way of knowing life’s educational situations” (p. 59). According to their construct, personal practical knowledge is composed of personal philosophy, images, metaphors, practical principles and rules. In this framework, teacher knowledge was identified as being dialectical, situated and shaped by teachers’ reoccurring experiences (Golombek, 1998).

Another seminal study on the knowledge base of teachers was conducted by Shulman (1987), and he proposed the term pedagogical content knowledge (PCK). According to Freeman (2002, p.6) “PCK argued that teachers operate from a form of knowledge that derives from neither discipline-based content nor training-based pedagogy, but is a hybrid of the two.” Carter (1990), on the other hand, states that “PCK refers to what teachers know about their subject matter and how they translate that knowledge into classroom curricular events” (p. 305). His framework included seven constructs which are subject-matter content knowledge, pedagogical content knowledge, curricular knowledge, general pedagogical knowledge, knowledge of learners and their characteristics, knowledge of educational contexts, and knowledge of educational ends. Due to its subject-specific nature, these constructs have guided scholars in various educational fields through their investigations of teachers’ knowledge base.

Though originally conducted under the umbrella of mainstream educational research, the studies mentioned above have inspired the scholars in the field of second language teacher education, and with the start of 1990s, research on exploring the knowledge base of language teachers has been quite popular in the field.

2.2. Research on Language Teachers’ Cognition

Starting with early 90s and under the dominant perception that viewed teachers as individuals having complex learning-to-teach processes, scholars in the field of

SLTE have begun to examine this process with regard to language teachers. Their investigations generally focused on prior language learning experiences of language teachers, the impact of teacher education programs and language teachers' classroom practices.

2.2.1. Research on the impact of prior language learning experiences

Lortie (1975), in his seminal work, proposed a groundbreaking term – apprenticeship of observation – emphasizing the role of prior learning experiences on teachers. Having a significant impact on the perspectives of scholars in the field of teacher education, this term made people believe that student teachers had already developed several perspectives, attitudes and images before coming to teacher education programs unlike the previous paradigm which viewed prospective teachers having no existing knowledge. According to Grossman (1991), “prospective teachers do not enter teacher education as blank states; they arrive with an extensive apprenticeship of observation in teaching methods and with prior knowledge and beliefs about their subject area” (p. 260). The term apprenticeship of observation also influenced the field of language teaching remarkably. It was defined by Borg (2004, p. 274) as “the phenomenon whereby student teachers arrive for their training courses having spent thousands of hours as school children observing and evaluating professionals in action.” He also states that “teachers’ prior language learning experiences establish cognition about language learning which form the basis of their initial conceptualization of L2 teaching during their teacher education and which may continue to be influential throughout their professional lives” (Borg, 2003, p. 88).

In the field of SLTE, a bulk of research provides ample evidence regarding the impact of prior language learning experiences on teachers’ cognition. Bailey et. al. (1996) examined seven teachers’ in an MA course in terms of the role of their language learning experiences on their teaching philosophies. Using autobiographical writings and reflections, the researchers identified several categories which had positive influences on participants’ language learning and shaped their teaching philosophies as well: a) teachers’ personality and style, b) teachers’ caring and commitment, c) mutual respect between students and teachers, d) motivation to learn as students, e) the effect of a positive classroom atmosphere. They also came up with

the conclusion that “the instructional memories gained through the apprenticeship of observation guide teachers in what they do in classroom” (p. 11).

Numrich (1996), in a diary study, tracked 26 ESL teachers and the study provided evidence that teachers used or avoided several instructional strategies based on their negative or positive learning experiences in the past. It was revealed that some of the teachers used the techniques or activities which they liked when they were learners. On the other hand, they refused to adopt several methods or instruments, like teaching grammar explicitly or correcting oral errors, which has negative influences on their language learning memories.

In her study on three ESL teachers’ personal practical knowledge, Golombek (1998) also investigated how the participant teachers’ current classroom practices were influenced by their prior language learning experiences. The main conclusion drawn from the narratives of participants was that they avoided transferring their negative language learning experiences into their own classrooms. For instance, recalling a memory from the past, one of the participants shared an experience: “I could talk like anything, but when he started to check my grammar, I became terrified in his class..... so I can’t do that now, I guess.” (p. 454). As it is seen, teachers may sometimes reject or adopt several practices due to the experiences they had as language learners. In addition to this, some other studies in the literature showed that teachers’ learning experiences in the past may influence their experiences on skill-based. For instance, studies conducted by Woods (1996) and Ebsworth and Schweets (1997) revealed that teachers may prioritize several skills over others, like having a more communicatively oriented classes rather than a traditional grammar-teaching based ones, due to their negative / positive learning experiences.

The results of these studies demonstrate that teachers, consciously or unconsciously, establish several beliefs, attitudes and cognition about language teaching and learning based on their language learning experiences. These experiences which serve as their initial conceptualizations for language teaching may influence their future practices.

2.2.2. Research on the impact of pre-service and in-service teacher education

For many scholars in the field, pre-service teacher education is the first important step in teachers' professional career. Though it is regarded as significantly important, few studies investigate the impact of pre-service education on language teachers' cognition. Cabaroglu and Roberts (2000) conducted a study on the belief development of 20 modern language student teachers using a detailed qualitative framework. The findings showed that the program was effective in changing the belief systems of student teachers. Moreover, they proposed categories of belief development processes referring to the stages prospective teachers went through during the study. Finally, the authors concluded that teacher education programs should offer early opportunities for students in which they would face with their existing beliefs and evaluate them in the scope of their programs.

Brown and McGannon (1998) investigated the impact of a practicum on 35 student teachers using surveys and response papers administered before and after the practicum. The results demonstrated that the participants benefited from the teaching experience provided by the practicum and they began to take such experiences as "the basis for reviewing and establishing beliefs about language teaching and learning" (p. 8).

A large-scale longitudinal study on the impact of pre-service education was conducted by Peacock (2001) on 146 ESL student teachers during their three-year TESL program. Using an inventory of language learning beliefs, the author compared first year trainees' beliefs with that of experienced ones. Contradicting with many of the studies in the literature, the results showed that there was a very little change on their beliefs about grammar and vocabulary and no significant data was found regarding the impact of methodology courses on trainees' beliefs of language learning.

Some other studies in the literature of SLTE focused on the degree of cognitive change student teachers experience during their pre-service education. Almarza (1996) examined the growth of four student teachers in a post-graduate certificate course. The results revealed the fact that prospective teachers may adopt several

teaching methodologies and apply them during their teaching practices just for conforming to certain standards like being evaluated or assessed by their supervisor and this is called as a behavioural change, not a cognitive one. For this reason, the author concluded that teacher education programs do have an effect on prospective teachers, but it may not lead to a significant change on their cognition.

The impact of in-service training on language teachers has been more popular among researchers and studies carried out on this issue yielded more significant results compared to pre-service education. Richards, Ho and Giblin (1996) examined how five EFL teachers' ideas changed during a training course in Hong Kong. Their study put forward that the training course was effective in changing and developing the perceptions of teachers regarding their roles in classroom, their knowledge of professional discourse, their ability to promote continuity during classes, their management of problematic teaching points and the evaluation of their own teaching. According to the authors, "teachers began to generate their own questions about teaching and learning that might help their further understanding of teaching and their own development as teachers" (p. 258). They thought that such trainings may lead to positive future changes among teachers regarding their classroom practices.

In his longitudinal study, Freeman (1993) examined the changes on the cognition of four teachers in an in-service training course that was designed to improve teachers' understanding of the professional classroom discourse. Using classroom observations, interviews and document analysis as the main data collection tools, the author came up with the finding that although it was not clear that the program had an effect on the classroom practices of teachers, it had an obvious impact on their understanding and beliefs regarding the development of their professional discourse since they began to reconceptualise their understanding of their own practices through articulation and reflection (p. 488).

Briefly, though review studies in the literature (Kagan, 1991; Dunkin, 1995; cited in Borg, 2003) have contradictory results regarding the impact of teacher education on teacher cognition, studies mentioned above show that teachers' beliefs, perceptions and knowledge are significantly changed and shaped by teacher education and, but

its impact on their classroom practices is still a central issue in the study of language teacher cognition.

2.2.3. Research on language teacher cognition and classroom practices

In general, studies focusing on the relationship between classroom practices and teacher cognition in the field of SLTE demonstrate that teachers' classroom practices are shaped by numerous interacting and sometimes conflicting factors (Borg, 2003). Many of these studies examine teachers' classroom practices in various aspects such as decision making, planning, sources of their practical knowledge etc., and put forward several frameworks that conceptualize the relationship between classroom practices and teacher cognition.

Woods (1996) investigated the planning and decision-making processes of a sample of ESL teachers working in Canada through a longitudinal data collection process which included classroom observations, stimulated recalls, interviews, and document analysis. Elaborating on decision-making processes of teachers, the study concluded that there are several external and internal factors which are influenced by both immediate conditions and teachers' professional experiences, and shape their decision-making processes. The author describes these factors as follows

External factors are situational factors which teachers take into account in making decisions (or to be accurate, what teachers know, assume and believe about these factors). Internal factors are ones internal to the decision-making process itself, i.e., the internal structuring of decisions and the relationships of decisions to each other (p. 128).

Nunan (1992) examined decision-making strategies of experienced and novice teachers in an ESL context. The participants of the study included nine teachers having various levels of teaching experiences. Drawing on teachers' lesson plans, audio-recordings and field notes, the study concluded that rather than having language focus, teachers' concern during class hours were related to pacing the lesson plan, timing and quality of teacher talk. It was also found that novice teachers paid more attention to decision-making strategies related with classroom management whereas experienced ones were more concerned with language issues.

These results show that teaching experience plays a significant role on the type and content of decisions teachers make during their class hours. In another study which focused on the pedagogical thought units, Gatbanton (1999) examined seven ESL teachers through qualitative and quantitative analyses of verbal protocols obtained from stimulated recall interviews. The results revealed that teachers frequently made decisions during interactive teaching and most of their decisions were related with language management, knowledge of students, smooth transition between activities and assessing students' participations.

Another issue that attracted the attention of researchers on decision-making was teachers' departure from their lesson plans and the underlying reasons behind it. In her study, Bailey (1996) included a sample of ESL teachers having various levels of experiences to find out the reason of their departure from lesson plans. The data were collected through lessons plans, audio-recorded lessons and follow-up interviews. The results put forward several circumstances for which teacher depart from their lesson plans; "to serve the common good, to teach the moment, to further the lesson, to accommodate students' learning styles, to promote students' involvement and to distribute the wealth" (Bailey, 2006, p. 275). Some other studies investigating teachers' improvisational teaching revealed the facts that teachers may start with their specific plans to their lessons but modify them due to some unexpected conditions during the class hour (Ulnichy, 1996), and they make immediate modifications to maintain the interest and attention of learners (Richards, 1998).

The interest on the classroom practices of teachers and their relationship with teachers' mental processes has created an urgent need to put this relationship into a conceptual framework that would guide researchers to focus on the phenomena in a more systematic way. This urgent need led to the reflection of the notion personal practical knowledge into the field of second language teacher education.

2.2.3.1. Research on personal practical knowledge of language teachers

First introduced by the seminal study of Elbaz (1981) and then expanded with the works of Connelly and Clandinin (1986;1987) in the literature of mainstream educational research, the notion of personal practical knowledge also gained

importance in the field of SLTE with the increasing interest of scholars on teachers' classroom practices. The term was first used in the field by Golombek (1998). Aiming to find out how teachers' personal practical knowledge (PPK) informs their classroom practices, Golombek examined two ESL university-level college teachers through classroom observations, interviews and stimulated recall reports. After a four-month data collection process, the author maintained that teachers' practical knowledge helped them filter their experiences so that they could reshape them and acted in response to the challenges of a teaching situation and gave physical form to their practice. According to her, "teachers' PPK informed their teaching practice by serving as a kind of interpretive framework through which they made sense of their classrooms as they recounted their experiences and made this knowledge explicit" (p. 459). The components of this knowledge were identified as the knowledge of self, knowledge of context, knowledge of instruction and knowledge of subject matter. Putting PPK into a well-defined framework, this study guided many researchers to focus on PPK and its relationship with some other constructs, which will be mentioned in following chapters.

2.2.4. Research on the impact of contextual factors

Despite the common view among practitioners that contextual factors play a significant role on teachers' classroom practices, quite few studies in the literature aimed to investigate this impact. According to Borg (2003), there are several studies in mainstream educational research revealing the fact that classroom practices are also shaped by institutional and environmental factors, but the issue still needs more investigation in the field of language teaching.

Probably the most significant evidence on the impact of contextual factors comes from the work of Richards and Pennington (1998) who examined five teachers of English in Hong Kong during their first year of English. Though trained and equipped to teach in a communicative way, the participant teachers seemed to depart from all these principles and cover all the required traditional materials instead. Richards and Pennington (1998) summarize their findings as below:

None of the teachers departed from their lessons for more than a brief moment to pursue a topic or an example raised by a student, and none allowed spontaneous communicative tangents to develop to any extent as part of their lessons. In fact, more often than not, they followed their textbooks or lesson materials closely and did little teaching that was genuinely communicative. Much of the philosophy of the teacher education course was thus stifled by the overriding concern to maintain an orderly class and to cover the prescribed material of the school syllabus (p. 183)

The authors argue that teachers' decisions to depart from the principles they had been equipped with were influenced by several factors such as the low motivational level of students, testing policies, proficiency level of learners, heavy workload, institutional curriculum policies and resistance to new ways of learning.

Burns (1996) puts forward the term institutional exigencies referring to principles of the context and argues that awareness of these exigencies shapes teachers' decisions on lesson planning and content. In the same vein, Crookes and Arakaki (1999) examined the case of a group of ESL teachers in an intensive English program in the USA and found that heavy workloads of the participant teachers limited their times for being prepared for the lesson, and this situation had a considerable influence on their pedagogical decisions.

While investigating the extent of knowledge transfer from pre-service programs to actual classroom practices, Spada and Massey (1992), in an earlier study, found significant evidence regarding the role of contextual factors on novice teachers' pedagogical decisions. Besides, the authors maintained that this knowledge transfer might have been hindered due to the contextual factors comparing the cases of two participant teachers:

Alice was teaching in a private school and given considerable flexibility as to what she could do in her classroom. It was a tranquil school setting with exemplary behaviour exhibited on the part of the students. It is possible that this factor was an important one in that it enabled Alice to use the knowledge she obtained in her training and concentrate on the development and application of her lessons in creative ways without any distractions. Neil, on the other hand, was teaching in a public school known to have serious discipline problems. As indicated earlier, this meant that he

was rarely able to follow through with his lesson plans and spent most of his time managing student behaviour (p. 33).

As these studies suggest, contextual factors including institutional policies, physical conditions, colleagues, school type etc. are likely to play a significant role on language teachers. However, the literature of SLTE still needs more research that would focus on institutional factors and its relationship with other variables such as teachers' knowledge base and their classroom practices.

2.3. Language teacher cognition research in 2000s

During 1990s, called as the decade of consolidation in SLTE research, studies on language teachers' mental processes blossomed and the results of them are still referred and taken for granted. During 2000s, on the other hand, this trend has continued and language teacher cognition research has received an increasing attention as well. Although, most of the studies conducted in these years have followed the traces of the previous ones or replicated their research models, they have contributed to the literature of SLTE remarkably. As in 1990s, research in this decade generally focused on how language teachers' cognition was formed, what factors contributed to the formation of it and what shaped their classroom practices. The results, in general, validated the ones in the previous decade and the existence and the impact of several constructs on language teachers' cognition began to be well-known.

2.3.1. Research on the impact of apprenticeship of observation

Though the notion of apprenticeship observation were investigated by few studies in the literature of SLTE during 1990s, the decade ended up with a call for research on the impact of this phenomenon on language teachers' cognition and classroom practices. This call has led to the emergence of several studies during 2000s that focused on the impact of it.

In a single case study, M. Borg (2005) examined the development of a trainee, Penny, during a pre-service CELTA course through a mixed-method approach which included interviews, observations and questionnaires. The results showed the significant effect of the notion of apprenticeship of observation:

Penny arrived on the CELTA course with a variety of beliefs about teaching and learning, despite the fact that she had never taught before. These beliefs came from a variety of sources but the major areas were her schooling and work experience..... Penny expressed a general rejection of the kind of didactic teaching methodology which she associated with school learning. She talked about teachers who stood at the front talking whilst learners were bored, sitting at their desks copying things down.

The author also argued that the role of previous schooling experiences equips the trainees with beliefs about how to be a teacher before they come to initial teacher education programs. In her case, Penny had already had some beliefs on the aspects of being a good or bad teacher and she was not happy with the didactic features of her previous learning experiences. For this reason, she tried a lot not to use didactic elements during her classroom teachings, which showed the influence of her previous schooling experiences of her teaching practices.

In Brazilian EFL context, Da Silva (2005) aimed to identify the sources of the perceptions of pre-service teachers on teaching language skills. She tracked the development of three prospective teachers during their practicum with the help of qualitative sets of data. The findings demonstrated that perceptions of pre-service teachers were formed by two types of knowledge, one of which was referred as experiential knowledge that was built up on the lived language learning experiences of pre-service teachers. The author also argued that “the teaching practicum was, in some cases, painful for the participants because their experiential knowledge which they formed through the experiences they had during their lives was not taken into consideration during this developmental process.” (p. 16). Thus, she proposes that identification and integration of pre-service teachers’ already existing beliefs about language learning and teaching is crucially important for the effectiveness of teacher education programs.

Investigating the motivation and circumstances of EFL teachers working at state schools in Thailand, Hayes (2008) conducted unstructured life history interviews with 7 teachers having various backgrounds in their profession. The results derived from the in-depth interviews revealed that teachers’ primary preferences to be English teachers stemmed from their school experiences and aptitudes for learning

English. Almost all participant teachers of this study uttered similar sentences like “I think the first thing was that I was good at English language and I like it” or “I’m not that good but I love it, that’s the main point for me to decide to be an English teacher” (p. 481). Besides, the teachers they had during their school years and their experiences with them had also been influential in their decisions to be an English teacher. One of the participants in the study uttered that:

The first teacher that taught me in elementary school, she’s very lovely. She used the materials, the pictures, the park and whatever. She never sat at the table, she walked around the classroom and her voice is very loud. Whatever she taught in the class I remember (p. 481).

Based on these results, the author argues that given that the influence of such previous schooling experiences of teachers, the knowledge base of TESOL can be strengthened through the encouragement of such research and identification of all these factors.

With a purpose of making the already existing beliefs of pre-service teachers explicit through metaphor analysis, Farrell (2006) examined the beliefs of three pre-service teachers in Singapore before, during and after the practicum experience. The data were collected via open-ended questions and journal entries. Revealing several meaningful metaphors regarding the existing and changing beliefs of pre-service teachers on language teachers, language classrooms and language teaching, the author suggests that “language teacher education programs should therefore provide activities for pre-service teachers that can enable them to articulate their prior beliefs about teaching and learning” (p. 245).

The general picture that all these studies show us is that prior language learning experiences including school performances, teachers in the past, language aptitude as learners establish certain beliefs on language learning and teaching and influence the cognition of language teachers throughout their careers. With the studies conducted in this decade, this impact, in one way or another, has been validated in various ESL and EFL contexts.

2.3.2. Research on the impact of teacher education and training programs

According to Crandall (2000), the decade of consolidation, 1990s, was identified with the realization that SLTE programs were inefficient in preparing student teachers for the realities of classroom atmosphere. Parallel to this, scholars in the field of SLTE began to question the extent to which such programs had an impact on the cognition of language teachers, and this led to the emergence of various studies that focused on this issue.

In a longitudinal study, Mattheoudakis (2007) investigated the belief changes of pre-service EFL teachers during their three-year teacher education program and teaching practice. The data were collected through Beliefs About Language Learning Inventory (BALLI) and self-reflection questionnaires from 66 participants. The results revealed that though several beliefs of student teachers remained stable during the programs, there occurred gradual and significant development in most of their beliefs regarding language teaching and learning. On the other hand, it was also found that teaching practice did not lead to the expected changes in prospective teachers' beliefs.

Having just the opposite results with the study mentioned above, Chiang (2008) reported the impact of the practicum and a language teacher training course having fieldwork elements such as purposeful classroom observations, volunteer services provided to the cooperating teachers. The participants included 13 female student teachers in an EFL teaching methodology course and the data were collected through a mixed method approach. The results demonstrated the positive influence of the course in 1) providing valuable learning experiences to the student teachers, 2) showing the classroom reality to student teachers, and 3) enhancing student teachers' efficacy of teaching English. As the author states below, integration of fieldwork components into teacher education programs would have positive influence on growing up better teachers.

Integrating fieldwork components into the conventional TEFL methods course created a learning environment conducive to bringing about reflective second/foreign language teachers. Findings from the study point to the potential benefits of this fieldwork-incorporated, multi-faceted TEFL methods course. These benefits include

increased understanding of the field, enhanced efficacy of teaching English, and affirmed career path for the student teachers. This project met with hurdles but reaped fruitful results with several meaningful lessons (p. 1283).

In another study focusing on the impact of teacher education programs, Li (2012) outlined the belief construction and development of two non-native teachers attending a one-year TESOL programme of a university in the UK. Revealing the significant effect of the programme on student-teachers' development regarding beliefs about teaching and beliefs about the relationship between teacher and learner, the researcher also put forward that several beliefs of participants remained stable, but that should not refer to the inefficiency of the programme.

In an evaluative study, Peacock (2009) examined the effectiveness of a language teacher education programme through the eyes of several stakeholders such as students, teachers and alumni. Following a mixed-method data collection design, the study aimed to identify the weaknesses and strengths of the programme and propose an evaluative scheme for further studies that would be conducted to evaluate such programs. According to the results, it was reported that the program was effective in teaching pedagogical skills and promoting reflective practice and self evaluation whereas it was regarded as weak in terms of the opportunities for practice teaching and teaching how to manage classrooms in their own socio-cultural contexts. Proposing that "all teacher-education programmes should incorporate a built-in procedure for overall internal evaluation, and use it regularly" (p. 276), Peacock presents a useful and practical framework in the study through which scholars can measure the effectiveness of language teacher education programs in different countries.

Another important topic which attracted the attention of scholars regarding SLTE programs is the practicum since it is regarded as one of the most important elements of initial teacher education (Gebhard, 2009). In a recent study, Gan (2013) aimed to identify the challenges that teacher candidates may face through their practice teaching. The data were collected from 16 non-native prospective ESL teachers in Hong-Kong through semi-structured interviews and weekly reflections during an eight-week practicum. Being parallel with the results of the previous studies in the

literature, the study revealed that pre-service teachers experienced an initial reality shock during practicum due to the lack of ability to realize the pedagogical principles they were taught in the program and to control the classroom atmosphere. Highlighting the importance of practicum experience for pre-service teachers, the author concluded that more research studies should be conducted on this issue and their results should be integrated into teacher education courses so that teacher candidates could be more aware of a real classroom atmosphere and potential practices they could implement in a real atmosphere.

Yuan and Lee (2014), on the other hand, focused on how teaching practicum led pre-service teachers to go through a cognitive change in their case study conducted on three pre-service language teachers in Chinese context. The participants were in the fourth year of a teacher education program in which they were required to engage in ten-week teaching practice. The data were collected through interviews, classroom observations followed by stimulated recalls and weekly journals integrated as a course component. Unlike the ones in Gan (2013), the results demonstrated that participants had gone through a significant change which helped them develop their beliefs about language teaching and their self-understanding as a language teacher. It was also revealed that practicum served as a process in which prior beliefs of pre-service teachers interacted with new input and experiences they had in a real atmosphere, and this interaction contributed to their development as prospective teachers. As a conclusion, the authors put forward that on the condition that an open and supportive environment is provided for pre-service teachers, the practicum is a unique opportunity to improve their teaching skills and to maximize their practice and learning during this process.

Responding to the call-for-research made towards the end of 1990s, the studies conducted during these fifteen years aimed to reveal the impact of teacher education programs on pre-service and in-service teachers' cognition. It is seen that studies carried out so far have conflicting results regarding the impact of teacher education programs. Some of them highlight that they contribute to prospective teachers' cognitive development whereas some others maintain that they do not influence their already existing beliefs significantly. This lack of consensus creates the need for

research studies that would be conducted in different contexts and focus on different components of these programs. In this way, scholars and practitioners can have more concrete ideas regarding the effect of them and more data to make necessary revisions for the betterment of these programs.

2.3.3. Research on classroom practices and teacher cognition

Starting from early 1980s, classroom practices of teachers, how they were shaped and what factors had an influential role on this shaping have received an increasing attention in SLTE literature. During 2000s, this attention continued to extend among scholars leading to the emergence of numerous studies which broadened the understanding of the notion of personal practical knowledge and factors shaping the classroom practices of language teachers.

In early 2000s, probably the most striking study was conducted by Breen et. al. (2001) and it received a special focus by scholars since it significantly contributed to the issues of teacher cognition and classroom practices significantly. In their study, 18 ESL teachers in Australia described and explained their classroom practices in relation to their underlying language teaching principles through observations, interviews and elicitation procedures. The most important result of this study was that individual teachers have unique pedagogical principles and they make these principles realized through certain sets of classroom practices. It was also found that the set of practices related to a certain principle are different from the practices of other principles, and the pedagogical principles might show similarity among teachers who work in the same context. Based on their findings, the authors conclude that “despite individual diversity in the teachers’ enacting of their role, as collective, there is an underlying and consistent pattern between the ways they think about their work and the ways in which they act in the language class” (p. 496), and this consistency is realized by experience through which, they believe, teachers develop understanding of how certain classroom activities lead to desired outcomes.

The notion of personal practical knowledge, which dates back to early 1980s and was introduced to the field of language teacher education by Golombek (1998), has been a popular topic for researchers due to its direct relationship with classroom practices.

The studies aiming to explore the personal practical knowledge of teachers were mainly case studies and they examined a number of teachers as participants. For instance, Chou (2003) identified the personal practical knowledge of three EFL teachers in Taiwanese context through interviews, classroom observations and journal writing. The results revealed that teachers' practical knowledge is a direct result of their experiences as teachers and their reflections on these experiences, and Elbaz's (1983) orientations of practical knowledge as situational, personal, experiential, theoretical and social were confirmed. In a recent study, on the other hand, Sun (2012) investigated the personal practical knowledge of an immigrant Chinese language teacher in a single case study. Being in line with the findings of Chou (2003) which highlight the impact of experience and personal background on teachers' practical knowledge, the study revealed that the teacher's identity and cultural heritage also had an influential role on the formation of teachers' practical knowledge.

In another study, Tsang (2004) reported to what extent three pre-service non-native ESL teachers applied their personal practical knowledge in their interactive decision-making processes. Utilizing a variety of data collection tools as autobiographies, interviews, video-based elicitation procedures, lesson plans and journals, the study yielded important results on the application of practical knowledge in classroom context. First of all, the results were in line with the previous studies in the sense that teachers applied their personal practical knowledge in their interactive decisions. However, it was revealed that teachers have limited access to their practical knowledge during classroom teaching and this may play a significant role in post-teaching decisions which may help teachers evaluate themselves and improve future planning (p. 194).

Along with the notion of personal practical knowledge, another important term related to the classroom practices of language teachers was the notion of "pedagogical thought units" which, Gatbanton (1999) states, serves as unique opportunity to understand teachers' pedagogical knowledge guiding their teaching. During 2000s, two studies replicating the framework developed by Gatbanton (1999) were conducted. Mullock (2006) examined 4 teachers with various teaching

experiences during their actual classroom hours. The data were collected through stimulated recall interviews and the analysis was conducted based on the coding scheme of Gatbanton (1999). Incorporating a few key changes into Gatbanton (1999), the findings validated her study and it was reported that the most frequent pedagogical thought unit categories included language management, knowledge of students and progress review, and teachers' classroom practices were mainly shaped around these factors. In a later study, Gatbanton (2008) compared the pedagogical thought units of more experienced teachers obtained in an earlier study (Gatbanton, 1999) with novice teachers who just finished their internship and had little experience of teaching and completed a four-week training before the study. Following the same research design as in the previous studies (Gatbanton, 1999; Mullock, 2006), Gatbanton (2008) specifically focused on the most frequent pedagogical thought categories (language management, knowledge of students and procedural issues) while comparing novice and experienced teachers. The findings revealed that even though there are several differences between novice and experienced teachers in terms of the details in pedagogical thought categories, novice teachers demonstrated similar categories with their experienced counterparts. The author concluded that trainings could be used effectively to help novice teachers gain necessary teaching skills in a shorter period:

....novice teachers seem able to acquire, after only a few years of training and minimal teaching experience, the larger categories of pedagogical knowledge that can underlie active teaching behaviours, in addition to knowledge about passive teaching activities such as observing and taking note of what students do early in the learning process. These novice teachers, however, may need more time and experience to attain the ability to apply this knowledge. An important next step in this research agenda is to test the hypothesis that teacher training may accelerate the speed with which teachers can acquire the knowledge and skills needed for active teaching rather than waiting for long term accumulation of this knowledge and skills through experience (p. 178).

Yielding significant results on teacher cognition and classroom practices, studies conducted during 2000s not only validated the findings of previously explored notions such as personal practical knowledge or pedagogical thought units but also extended the understanding of scholars and practitioners on how teachers' classroom

practices are shaped by numerous factors. All these studies contributed to the view that decisions teachers make during their classroom practices are multifaceted and more research is needed to enlighten all the aspects having effects on the formation of these decisions.

2.3.4. Research on teacher cognition and contextual factors

The role of contextual factors on teachers' classroom practices were investigated by few studies (Bailey, 1996; Burns, 1996; Woods, 1996) during 1990s. Though they put forward significant results and ended up with a call-for-more-research on this issue, contextual factors have probably received the least attention during 2000s among the topics that were proved to have an impact on teacher cognition and practices. Besides, existing studies focusing on contextual factors do not directly focus on the issue but present it as one part of their findings.

Valencia (2009) examined the knowledge base of five in-service EFL teachers during a seven-month data collection period as part of an MA programme in applied linguistics in Colombian context. The results revealed that teachers' knowledge base included content knowledge, general pedagogical knowledge, the knowledge about their role and their students, and the teaching context played a significant role in the formation of this knowledge base. The participants in this study stated that the experiences they had during their career contributed to their teaching skills, but most of the time their classroom practices were significantly shaped by the contextual factors such as learner profile, schooling, testing policies, etc. Based on this, the author concluded that the role of contextual factors should be taken into consideration in language teacher education programs of the Colombian context.

In a recent study, Nishino (2012) investigated Japanese high-school EFL teachers' beliefs and practices regarding communicative language teaching and their relationship with contextual factors. Using both qualitative and quantitative data collection and analysis methods, the study showed that examination policies in Japan (especially the university entrance exam) and students' exam related expectations significantly influenced the CLT practices of teachers. All the participant teachers in this study expressed that though they were trained to implement CLT practices in

classroom and they favoured to do so, they used Japanese and taught grammar and reading comprehension due to students' tendency to get prepared for the entrance exam. Confirming the findings of other studies (Gorsuch, 2000; Schulz, 2001; cited in Nishino, 2012) which also highlighted the impact of educational policies on teachers' practices, the study concluded that due to their direct influence on students' expectations and teachers' classroom practices, the type and content of high-stakes examinations in Japanese context should be re-examined.

Among contextual factors, the role of the workplace or institutional context on teacher cognition or practices has rarely been handled by scholars in this field. On this issue, the most recent and significant contribution was probably made by Kang and Cheng (2014) who tracked the development of a novice EFL teacher's cognition and practices in relation with the workplace. The data were collected in a seven-month period through a multi-method approach including interviews, observations, field notes, lesson plans, and school documents. Based on the results, the teaching context was found to be the third factor which led to behavioural changes on teachers. The teaching context included factors such as school culture, colleagues and parents and each of them had distinct impacts on teachers' cognitive and behavioural change in the school culture. In the paragraph below, the authors summarized the extent of contextual impact on teachers' practices.

For the novice teacher, learning to teach has become a process of understanding the social context of teaching and creating the conditions that would allow her to survive in the particular institutional culture..... On the other hand, the teaching context decides which idea can be put into practice and stay in the classroom (p. 180).

As the studies above illustrate, the context teachers work in and the factors related to it might have a significantly influential role on teachers' cognitive development and classroom practices. Especially institutional factors, as stated in Kang and Cheng (2014), have the potential of shaping what teachers should do in classrooms to teach a language. However, the number of studies on this topic is really scarce in the literature and more research is needed to broaden the understanding of scholars and practitioners in the field.

2.4. Related studies in Turkish context

In Turkish education system, issues in foreign language teaching have always been a primary concern which has led to a number of policy changes and implementations in the last twenty years (Kırkgöz, 2007). However, concerns related to SLTE fell behind all other issues in the field of foreign language teaching both in theoretical and practical levels. It can be said that although the field of SLTE has broadened its research perspectives throughout the world in early 1990s, it gained popularity as a field of research with the beginning of 2000s among researchers in Turkey. In addition to this, to the best knowledge of the researcher, there have been very few studies conducted on the cognition of language teachers, their classroom practices and the institutional impact. In this regard, the current studies carried out in this field usually focused on the impact of in-service training programs on teachers and pre-service teachers' evaluation of their teacher education programs.

Uysal (2012) evaluated the impact of a one-week in-service training program (INSET), organized by The Ministry of Education, on primary school language teachers' attitudes, knowledge base and classroom practices. The data were collected through interviews and a questionnaire administered 18 months after the course to reveal the long-term effect of it. The results revealed that although teachers had positive attitudes towards the training program and its implementation in general, the lack of connection between the teachers' own realities and the INSET resulted in low sustained impact especially on the classroom practices of teachers. Based on these results, the author draws a general advisory picture to organize more effective in-service programs:

....in-service teacher education programs in general should be planned in not a top-down one-shot manner, but as an ongoing professional learning process with a follow-up component. Teachers should be allowed to participate and reflect on what they learn, they should be introduced with various new techniques and methods through different models, they should be provided rich resources and materials, and they should be valued and additionally supported and monitored in their own contexts so that they will develop a sense of ownership of the change process, which is likely to result in changes in teacher beliefs and behaviours (p. 26).

Another study on the impact of in-service programs on teachers' beliefs and practices was conducted by Dikilitaş (2013) in his doctoral dissertation. In this more comprehensive study, the data were collected through pre and post-course observations and interviews to reveal the impact of the course on both practical and cognitive levels. Revealing the significant influence of the training on teachers' practices and cognition, the study proposed that on the condition that such training programs are designed with pre and post-monitoring activities and follow-up support is provided, these programs could lead to cognitive and practical changes in both in-service and pre-service levels. Similarly in a very recent study, Ortaçtepe and Akyel (2015) investigated how an in-service training course on communicative language teaching improved teachers' self-efficacy and actual practice regarding the implementation of the method. The results, like the ones mentioned above, highlighted the importance of awareness-rising on teachers' professional development.

Another popular research topic in the field of SLTE has been pre-service teachers' evaluation of their teacher education programs and how these programs contributed to their teaching skills. In this sense, Seferoğlu (2006) aimed to explore senior pre-service teachers' reflections of the methodology and practice components of a teacher education program in Turkey through reflection reports. The participants of the study expressed a lack of close connection between the classroom materials and practical implications in real classrooms. They also believed that these components were insufficient in providing opportunities for practice teaching. In their evaluative study which aimed to reveal the components of the existing pre-service language teacher education program that needed improvement, Coşkun and Daloğlu (2010) also revealed that the pedagogical side of the program was weak and it did not allow sufficient teaching practice opportunities. Finally, Özmen (2012) conducted a four-year longitudinal study on pre-service teachers to track the development they went through during their teacher education program. The results showed that whereas the initial years of the program which mainly included the theoretical course did not lead to a significant change on student teachers' language teaching beliefs, teaching methodology courses and practicum significantly shaped their language teaching practices.

Among the studies focusing on pre-service teachers, the doctoral dissertation conducted by Şallı-Çopur (2008) merits a special attention due to both its large-scale evaluation of the effectiveness of the program and its impact on teachers' competencies. Reaching a number of stakeholders like graduate teachers and employers, she aimed to reveal to what extent the graduate teachers perceived themselves competent as EFL teachers and to what extent they found the teacher education program components successful in helping them gain necessary competencies. According to the results, the graduate teachers participated in the study perceived themselves as competent in general, but they also stated the need for improvement in several competencies such as language knowledge, spoken use of English, classroom management, and assessment. Besides, while the participants, in general, reported a strong and positive role of the program on developing their competencies, they also thought that some components of the program, especially the practicum, needed revision in terms of their content. Based on these findings, the researcher came up with a list of recommendations that would be useful in the revisions and betterment of pre-service teacher education programs in Turkey.

As mentioned before, research on knowledge base of EFL teachers, what factors form and contribute to their knowledge of teaching, how their classroom practices are shaped is really scarce in Turkish EFL context. The present studies examined Turkish EFL teachers' practical knowledge (Arioğul, 2006), the sources of pre-service teachers' instructional decisions (Gülden, 2013), and how novice teachers language teaching beliefs and classroom practices are formed (Erkmen, 2014).

In her three-month qualitative case study, Arioğul (2006) reported on three Turkish EFL teachers' practical knowledge and background sources shaping their knowledge base. The data for this study included classroom observations, stimulated-recall interviews based on video-recorded classes, formal and informal interviews with teachers, thick field notes, and curriculum documents. According to the results, the components of Turkish EFL teachers' practical knowledge confirmed the components of Elbaz (1981)'s model of practical knowledge and consisted of general pedagogical knowledge, subject specific pedagogical knowledge, knowledge of content and knowledge of self. It was also found that teachers' knowledge has a

dynamic feature which is constantly shaped through personal and professional experiences, and teachers are able to adapt this knowledge according to learners' changing needs.

Following a mixed-method approach, Gülden (2013) examined the influence of the factors which are influential on pre-service teachers' instructional decisions. The data were collected through questionnaires, classroom observations in the practicum, interviews and autobiographical reports. The results revealed that the input they got during the teacher education programs and their prior language learning beliefs as a result of their past experiences had a significant impact on pre-service teachers' instructional decisions in the classroom. The author concluded that what student teachers brought to teacher education programs in their minds as language teaching beliefs should be taken into consideration in order to design more effective programs that would appeal to their existing cognition.

Erkmen (2014) studied another group, nine novice Turkish EFL teachers, to investigate their beliefs about teaching and learning, and their relationship with classroom practices during a nine-month data collection process which included semi-structured interviews, classroom observations, post-lesson reflection forms, and stimulated recall interviews. At the end of the study, it was reported that teachers' past language learning experiences as language learners had an important role in the formation of their beliefs about language teaching. It was also revealed that teachers were not always able to reflect their teaching beliefs into classroom atmosphere and they sometimes performed several practices contrary to their beliefs due to their students' needs and expectations. As a conclusion, the researcher calls for further research that will explore teachers' beliefs and practices in relation to other variables such as contextual opportunities and constraints, school culture and collegiality.

2.5. Conclusion

This chapter aimed to present a detailed review of the studies in SLTE which aimed to focus on language teachers' cognition; how it is formed, what factors contributed to this formation and how it is shaped by contextual, especially institutional factors. In the presentation of these studies, a partly chronological sequence was followed in

order to highlight how research foci on the issues mentioned above have changed from 90s, when studies on teacher cognition blossomed, to 2000s when language teacher cognition as a field of inquiry was consolidated. Besides, related studies in the national context also took place towards the end of this chapter.

When the literature review is carefully examined, the following important points are acknowledged. The first one is that SLTE is currently a well-defined area of study and language teacher cognition is a considerable element of this field. There have been numerous studies focusing on this issue taking several elements (pedagogical components, classroom practices, contextual factors) into consideration. However, all these elements are examined separately in different studies and this creates a need for research that will handle all these elements in one study with a unifying purpose to present a better understanding of relationship with teachers' cognition and their inter-relationship. Secondly, as it is quite clear from the review in this chapter, there is a paucity of research focusing on Turkish EFL teachers' cognition. The ones conducted so far either examine the impact of in-service training programs on teachers' practices or only report on the teaching and learning beliefs of pre and in-service teachers. Research that will reveal how Turkish EFL teachers' cognition is formed and its relationship with classroom practices is urgently needed in Turkish SLTE literature. To conclude, a unifying research perspective on the aforementioned issues will both contribute to the literature of SLTE significantly and help local scholars broaden their understanding of Turkish EFL teachers' cognition.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

3.1. Research Design

Starting from early 1980s, interpretative hermeneutic approach which focuses on a phenomenon from the perspectives of participants with a special emphasis on the meanings they attach to the world they are acting in became more dominant in teacher cognition research. Parallel to this approach, studies that aimed to investigate teachers' mental lives and cognitive processes began to use different data collection tools to elicit information from teachers' perspectives. As Hamilton (1983; cited in Chou, 2003) indicates, interpretive research assumes that a) the interaction between people and their environment is reciprocal, b) rather than being isolated set of behaviours, teaching and learning are interactive processes, c) unobservable side of teaching (cognitive processes, attitudes, etc.) are rich sources for data collection.

Following such an interpretive hermeneutic research approach, this study was based on a qualitative design examining multiple cases through a rich repertoire of data collection. According to Yin (1994, p.23), case studies "investigate a contemporary phenomenon within its real context when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident and in which multiple sources of evidence are used." As Hitchcock and Hughes (1985; cited in McKay, 2006, p.71) state, case studies have the following distinctive characteristics which enable researchers to obtain in-depth data on the phenomena under investigation.

1. It is concerned with a rich and vivid description of event relevant to the case.
2. It provides a chronological narrative of events relevant to the case.
3. It blends a description of events with the analysis of them.
4. It focuses on individual actors or groups of actors and seeks to understand their perceptions of events.
5. It highlights specific events that are relevant to the case.

6. An attempt is made to portray the richness of the case in writing up the report.

According to Creswell (2011), in multiple case studies, the researcher aims to provide insight into an issue through describing and comparing multiple cases with the help of various forms of data collection tools. He further asserts that providing such an in-depth perspective into an issue could be achieved via in-depth focus on a few cases. The figure below presents how a multiple case study serves its purpose.

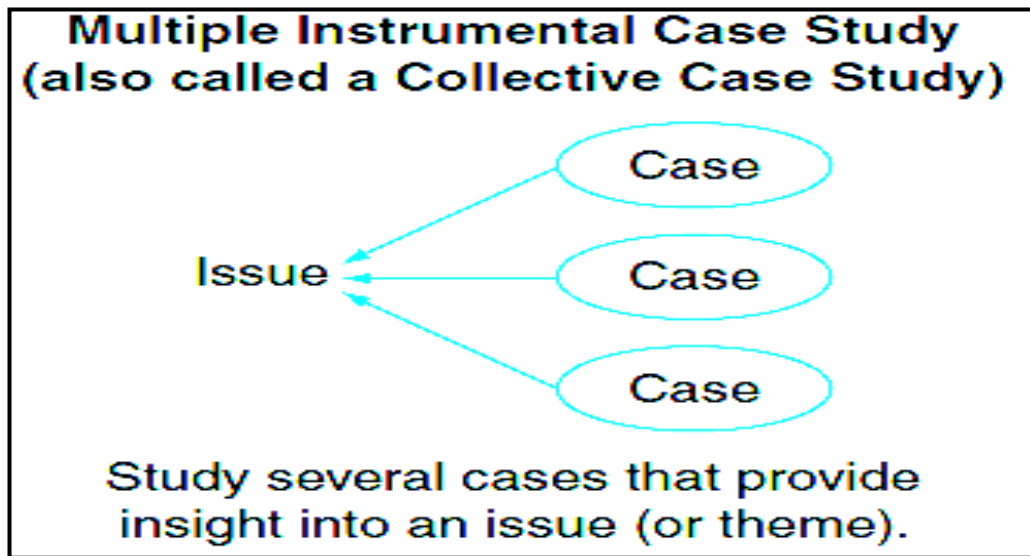


Figure 4. Qualitative multiple case study design.

3.2. Research Setting

In Turkey, English does not have an official status and is taught as a foreign language (EFL) in mainstream state schools during primary, secondary and higher education. English preparatory programs at universities are probably one of the most important periods in which students learn English intensively and in a systematic way. Though there are few universities in which the medium of instruction is English, most of the universities offer these preparatory programs for students who will have their education via 30% or 100% English in their departments. Based on their background knowledge they gained during primary and secondary education, students at these programs are placed according to their levels and they have to pass a proficiency exam at the end of the year to go on their departments. The general

regulations for these programs are determined by the Council of Higher Education (YÖK), but the educational decisions (curriculum, testing, etc.) may differ based the universities' policies.

The participants of the study work at English preparatory programs of different universities. In all these programs, English is taught integratively in different levels in which students are assigned by a placement test administered at the beginning of the academic year. During this academic year, they follow a main course book supported by several materials prepared by material offices of the departments. At the end of the year, students have to take a proficiency test and they have to get at least 60 to go on their departments at faculties. Otherwise, they have to repeat one more year in the preparatory department.

3.3. Participants

As Dörnyei (2007, p. 126) states, “qualitative inquiry is not concerned with how representative the respondent sample is. Instead, the main goal of sampling is to find individuals who can provide rich and varied insights into the phenomenon under investigation so as to maximize what we can learn.” For this reason, this study employed purposeful sampling in which the researcher intentionally chose individuals who were believed to be “information rich” (Patton, 1990, p. 169). In determining the participant individuals, the researcher followed concept sampling, “which is a purposeful sampling strategy in which the researcher samples individuals because they can help the researcher generate or discover a theory or specific concepts” (Creswell, 2011, p. 208), based on some specific pre-determined criteria (Patton, 1990). These criteria are as follows:

- Being the graduate of an English language teaching department
- Having at least five years of language teaching experience
- Currently teaching full-time at an English preparatory program of a state university.
- Having at least 15 hours of weekly course load
- Willing to participate eagerly and voluntarily

Within this theoretical background, participants of this study included 3 EFL teachers working at English preparatory programs of different universities. They were intentionally selected based on the criteria above and they were believed to provide a rich amount of data for this study. Each of the participants was described in detail below with their pseudonyms to have a better understanding of them.

Eda is a 30-year-old female teacher who has been working in the program for 6 years but has been teaching English for 8 years. She previously taught in primary and secondary school contexts. She holds an MA in ELT. During the data collection process, she was teaching elementary students for 21 hours weekly. Though she was in the testing office of her institution last year, she has no office duty this year. She has been to England once for a teacher training course for a couple of weeks.

Mert has been teaching English for 8 years. He taught for one year in a private school in his hometown when he graduated from university. After that, he started to work in his current institution and has been there for about 5 years. He does not have a post-graduate study. He is teaching intermediate students in the program. He has sixteen hours of teaching every week and is also in the testing office of the program. He loves travelling and has been to many countries in Europe including Germany, France, Austria and England.

Zeynep is the most experienced teacher among the participants. She has been teaching English for 10 years and spent all these years in the department she is currently working in. She holds an MA degree in educational sciences which she completed about 7 years ago. She is teaching pre-intermediate students for twenty two hours weekly and does not have office duties in the program. She has been abroad only once, the USA, to make an oral presentation in a conference.

3.4. Data Collection Instruments

The current study used a variety of data collection tools to examine the participant teachers' cognition, their classroom practices and the effect of institutional context on them. The multiple sources of data in this study included semi-structured interviews, classroom observations, stimulated recall interviews, reflective journals

and document analysis. The foci of these data collection tools are presented in Table 1.

Table 1. The foci of the data collection instruments

Data Collection Instrument	The focus
1 st Interview	Detailed background information regarding the previous language learning and teaching experiences
2 nd Interview	Detailed information regarding the teachers' classroom practices based on the preliminary findings from the first two classroom observations
3 rd Interview	Detailed information on the teachers' language teaching philosophies based on all classroom observations
Classroom Observations	The participant teachers' classroom practices
Stimulated Recall Interviews	The teachers' verbal narrations on their teaching acts in classroom
Weekly Reflection Reports	The teachers' classroom practices throughout the semester
Document Analysis	The teachers' lesson plans and the materials they use during classroom practices

3.4.1 Semi-structured interviews

Interviewing is one of the most widely used data collection instruments in educational sciences. According to Creswell (2011, p. 218), interviews “provide useful information when you cannot directly observe participants, and they permit participants to describe detailed personal information.” In semi-structured interviews, the researcher prepares several guiding questions and prompts in advance, and the

interviewee is encouraged to elaborate on a central issue with an exploratory manner (Dörnyei, 2007).

During the data collection process, the researcher conducted three interviews; at the beginning, in the middle and at the end of the term. The first interviews (Appendix A) were conducted at the beginning of the term with a main purpose of collecting background information about the participants. The main focus was on their past experiences as language learners, the reasons why they chose to study language teaching (bachelor years), and their previous teaching experiences.

The second interviews (Appendix B) were carried out in the middle of the term. Since the study had an emerging design (mentioned in detail in the following sections), the details of second interviews were shaped by the preliminary analysis of first interviews and two classroom observations. Drawing from the preliminary analysis of each case, the researcher prepared separate interview questions for each participant so as to appeal to their own knowledge base and teaching practices, and accordingly to get more valid data. The questions in these interviews mainly focused on teachers' language teaching philosophies, their classroom practices, underlying beliefs on these practices and how the context has an effect on them. The third and final interviews (Appendix C) were conducted at the end of the term. The questions that were mainly formed around the major findings of the study encouraged participants to elaborate on the factors that were found to be influential on their cognition and classroom practices.

3.4.2. Classroom observations and stimulated recall interviews

Video-recorded classroom observations and follow-up stimulated recall interviews were used as other data collection tools. Observations are popular data collection tools in second language research in which “the researcher takes field notes on the behaviour and activities of individuals at the research site” (Creswell, 2009, p. 181). As a form of data collection tool, observations enable first-hand information and allow researchers study on individuals in their natural setting. Along with the observations, stimulated recall (SR) interview is another way of gathering data from the participants in their setting. In SR interviews, the researcher uses some sort of

stimulus as a support for the recall in order to help the participant to retrieve their relevant thoughts on the targeted process or event. In this way, the participant can retrieve and verbalize what was going on in their minds during the event (Gass & Mackey, 2000; cited in Dörnyei, 2007, p. 149).

During data collection process, each of the participants were video-recorded for four hours (12 hours in total) during the term based on a pre-determined schedule arranged according to the programs of the participants. In each video-recorded class hour, the researcher was present in class, sitting at the back and taking field-notes on classroom atmosphere and teachers' practices. After each recorded class hour, the researcher conducted stimulated recall interviews with the observed participant teacher based on the field notes and the videos that were used as reminders. The foci of these observations and recall interviews were on the reasons teachers had for their classroom decisions, practices and actual philosophies reflected into classroom atmosphere.

3.4.3. Reflective journals

Reflective journals can also be used as effective data collection instruments in qualitative studies. According to Mackey and Gass (2005), "this form of data collection can yield significant insight that may not be accessible from the researcher's perspective alone" (p. 178). In reflective journals, participants are not constrained with specifically imposed questions, they comfortably express their thought and feelings on the target phenomena so that the researcher can easily reach their perceptions.

In this study, the participants were asked to write weekly reflective journals on their classroom practices. The guidance on how they would write these journals was given to them after the initial interviews. While writing these journals, they focused on the classroom practices they covered on that week; what they taught, how they taught the subjects and why they used these techniques. It was planned that the participants would have written 10 reflective journals at the end of the term, and sent each week's journal to the researcher by e-mail. However, because of the heavy work load of the participants towards the end of the term, they were able to write as follows;

Eda wrote seven reports, Mert and Zeynep wrote six reports each. These journals served as supportive data and were analyzed in line with the interviews and stimulated recalls.

3.4.4. Document analysis

In qualitative studies, documents are important sources of information and they help researchers understand the central issue since they are mostly prepared with the words of the participants (Creswell, 2011). In this respect, the researcher collected 6 lesson plans (2 for each participant) prepared for the class hours that were observed and a sample of classroom materials that were prepared by the participant teachers throughout the term. The researcher also had short informal interviews with them on these documents to understand the logic and underlying reasons behind their preparation. These documents, like the reflective journals, were analyzed together with other sources of data.

3.5. Data Collection Process

The data for this study were collected during the spring semester of 2014-2015 academic year, and this intensive process lasted for four months. First of all, the researcher got all the necessary permissions from the ethics committee, the participants and their students via consent forms (Appendix D). Then, the data collection process was followed based on the schedule below prepared according to programs of the participants. All the interviews during the data collection process were conducted in the mother tongue of the participants so that they could express themselves comfortably and provide better insight for the points being examined.

Table 2. Data Collection Schedule

	Eda	Mert	Zeynep
1st Interviews	20.03.2015	18.03.2015	19.03.2015
1 st observations and SR interviews (submission of the 1 st weekly journal)	03.04.2015	01.04.2015	02.04.2015
2 nd observations and SR interviews	17.04.2015	15.04.2015	16.04.2015
2 nd Interviews	01.05.2015	29.04.2015	30.04.2015
3 rd observations and SR interviews	15.05.2015	13.05.2015	14.05.2015
4 th observations and SR interviews	29.05.2015	27.05.2015	28.05.2015
Submission of the final weekly journal	05.06.2015	05.06.2015	05.06.2015
Final interviews	12.06.2015	10.06.2015	11.06.2015

3.6. Data Analysis: A Grounded Theory Approach

Almost all the studies in the literature that aimed to explore language teacher cognition were conducted in ESL settings (please see Borg, 2003; Wright, 2010 for a detailed review) and, to the best knowledge of the researcher, none of them focused on the issue in connection with teachers' classroom practices and the effect of institutional context. For these reasons, EFL teachers' cognition, their classroom practices and the effect of institutional context on them are new areas to be explored.

Thus, this study followed the grounded theory approach, the reasons of which are parallel with the words by Creswell (2011).

Grounded theory generates a theory when existing theories do not address your problem or the participants that you plan to study. Because a theory is grounded in the data, it provides a better explanation than a theory borrowed “off the shelf”, because it fits the situation, actually works in practice, is sensitive to individuals in a setting and may represent all of the complexities actually found in the process (p. 423).

Though grounded theory may be applied to a whole research process including sampling, data collection and data analysis, many scholars in the field (Charmaz, 2005; Dey, 2004; cited in Dörnyei, 2007) believe that it is a specific mode of data analysis. In line with this, this study used grounded theory as a systematic data analysis design to generate a theory which aimed to discover a broad conceptual level about the phenomena under investigation.

During the data analysis process, this study followed two basic criteria stated by Dörnyei (2007) that make the study grounded theory; a) the analysis follows the specific sequential coding system, b) the analysis produces some theory outlining a tentative model of framework as an outcome of the investigation.

3.6.1. Coding in grounded theory

Grounded theory has a multilevel data analysis process in which the researcher starts with some basic descriptions (open coding), goes on with a conceptual ordering (axial coding) and finalizes with theorization (selective coding) (Patton, 2002). All these processes are shaped with detailed sets of coding processes that occur in a cyclical way.

The first step of this coding process was open coding in the current study. In this process, the researcher broke the data into chunks and assigned them initial category labels. At the end of open coding, the researcher identified themes and categories. Since this phase of coding process is similar to qualitative content analysis (Walker and Myrick, 2006), the researcher followed the coding scheme provided by Creswell (2011).

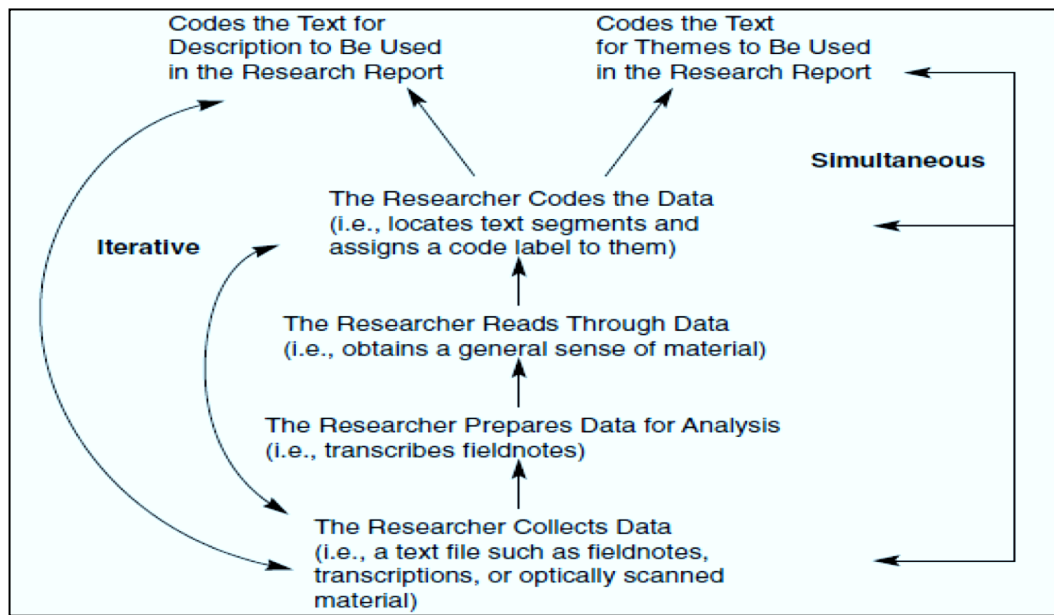


Figure 5. Open coding scheme (Creswell, 2011, p.237)

The second data analysis step in grounded theory is axial coding in which “the researcher makes connections between categories, thereby attempting to integrate them and group them into more encompassing concepts that subsume several subcategories” (Dörnyei, 2007, p. 261). During axial coding, the researcher selected a core category among open coding categories based on the criteria stated by Strauss and Corbin (1998) considering its frequency in the data and its relevance to other categories, and related other categories to it under the headings of causal conditions, context, intervening conditions, strategies and consequences. In order to systematize this process, the researcher followed the axial coding paradigm presented by Creswell (2011) and conducted the same process for two constructs of the study – language teacher cognition and classroom practices– separately.

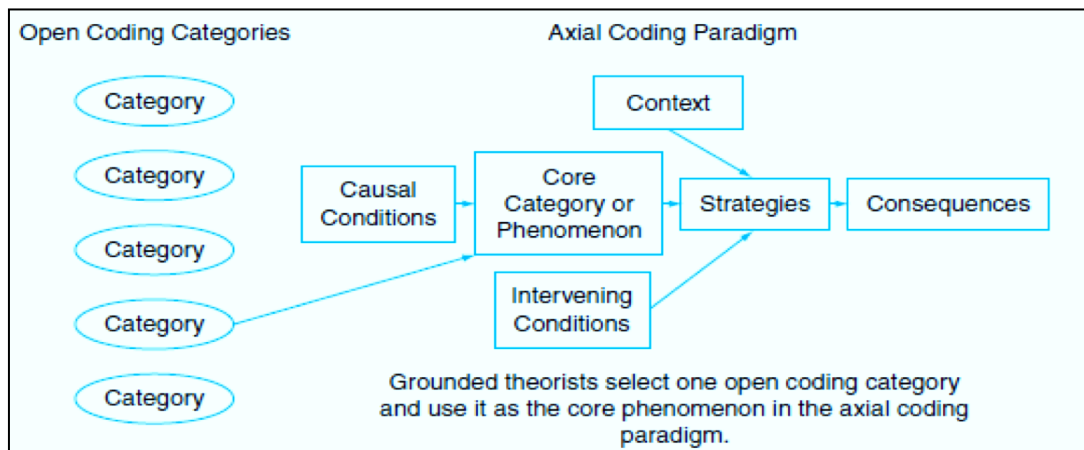


Figure 6. Axial coding paradigm in grounded theory (Creswell, 2011, p. 428)

In selective coding, the last phase of the process, the researcher integrated and refined the theory from the interrelationship among the categories derived from the axial coding schemes of language teacher cognition and classroom practices and the categories related to the institutional context (Strauss and Corbin, 1998). A new theoretical insight was generated on the sources and characteristics of each construct and their interconnectedness. At the end, the researcher proposed a framework that would describe the cognition of EFL teachers with regard to their classroom practices and institutional context.

3.6.2. Key issues in data analysis

Data analysis in a grounded theory design is a multilevel process in which systematization plays a crucial role. To ensure this systematic process, which makes a research study “grounded theory”, there were some important issues that were followed and used by the researcher.

First of all, the process moved cyclically and recursively. Creswell (2011) calls this process as an emergent design and states that “the researcher collects data, analyzes it immediately and bases the decision about what data to collect next.....This process waves back and forth between data collection and analysis and it continues until the researcher reaches saturation of a category” (p. 433).

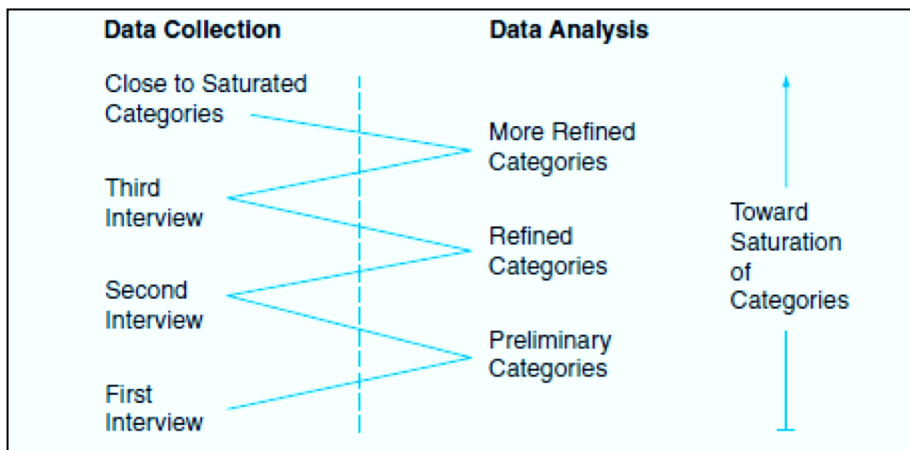


Figure 7. Emerging design in data analysis process.

In addition to this, the researcher used memos, constant comparison and the cross-cases during the analysis. Memos are thick notes taken by the researcher which are formed by his/her ideas on the relationship of the emerging codes (Dörnyei, 2007). These memos helped the researcher elaborate on coded categories and develop further understanding throughout the analysis. Furthermore, the coding process followed a constant comparison model shown in Figure 8.

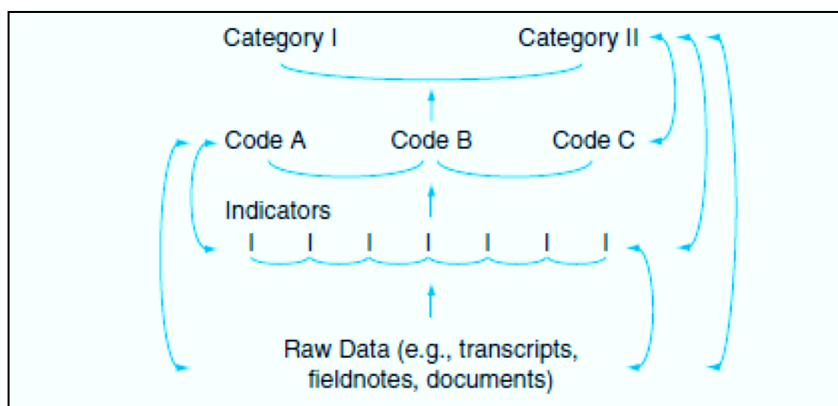


Figure 8. The constant comparison design (Creswell, 2011, p. 434)

As it is seen in the figure, generation of categories was based on comparing the sub-elements among each other. Till the raw data was formed into categories, the researcher constantly compared codes to codes and themes to themes so that the final categories in the data were grounded. This helped the researcher reduce redundancy and have evidence for the development of categories. All this process was assisted by

a colleague, a PhD candidate in educational sciences, through cross-checking to promote inter-coding.

After the data analysis process, the narrations that were planned to be used in the chapter of results to present and support the findings of the study were translated literally into English and all these translations were checked by the participants themselves in order to prevent any missing words or ideas in them.

3.7. Trustworthiness

Although the issues of reliability and validity are well-formed for quantitative research studies, their places in qualitative research are still at the centre of discussion. According to Mackey and Gass (2005, p. 180), “because qualitative research can be based on the assumption of multiple, constructed realities, it may be more important for qualitative researchers to demonstrate that their findings are credible to their research population.” Lincoln and Guba (1985) discuss the reliability and validity issues in qualitative research under a general term called “trustworthiness” which is formed by four general criteria; credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability, and they suggest several techniques to enhance these constructs in qualitative studies. This study employed most of these techniques to enhance its trustworthiness.

Triangulation is one of the most important concepts proposed by Lincoln and Guba (1985). It is defined as “the process of corroborating evidence from different individuals, types of data or methods of data collection to ensure that the study will be accurate because the information draws on multiple sources of information, individuals, or processes” (Creswell, 2011, p. 259). As for triangulation, the data in this study were obtained through multiple sources such as interviews, stimulated-recalls, classroom observations, reflection reports and document analysis. Besides, the researcher chose participants with different teaching experiences and from different workplaces. By doing so, the researcher aimed to focus on the phenomenon via different perspectives and enhance the notion of triangulation since “using the technique of triangulation can aid in credibility, transferability, confirmability and dependability” (Mackey and Gass, 2005, p. 181).

During the data collection process, the researcher made multiple visits to the research settings and spent plenty of time in classrooms. He also had informal meetings with the participants and their classes before and after the classroom observations. This situation is referred to as prolonged engagement through which the researcher ensures that the participants have become used to the researcher and are behaving naturally (Mackey and Gass, 2005).

Peer-debriefing, also called as external audit, is another technique to enhance especially confirmability and dependability (Lincoln and Guba, 1985). In this process, another researcher outside the study reviews different aspects of the research or evaluates the accuracy and whether findings, interpretations and conclusions are supported by the data (Creswell, 2011). In this study, a colleague with a PhD in educational sciences checked almost 25% of transcriptions to detect any missing points, and reviewed the preliminary codes and the emerging themes at the end of the study.

The researcher also asked the participants to review and comment on the transcriptions, observation records and analysis of their own cases. This process is called member-checking in which “the researcher asks one or more participants in the study to check the accuracy of the account” (Creswell, 2011, p. 259). It is also one of the most important techniques to ensure dependability and credibility (Mackey and Gass, 2005). Due to the workload of the participants, member-checking was employed in one interview, two stimulated recalls and final analysis reports. Combined with the memos during the analysis, the feedback provided by the participants for those parts were quite helpful in data analysis process.

The final technique employed to enhance the transferability of the findings of this study is thick description in which a researcher describes the phenomena under study in sufficient details so that the conclusions drawn from the study are transferrable to other settings and contexts. Mackey and Gass (2005) highlight the importance of thick description for qualitative studies:

The idea behind thick description is that if researchers report their findings with sufficient detail for readers to understand the characteristics of the research context and participants, the audience will be able to compare the research situation with their

own and thus determine which findings may be appropriately transferred to their setting (p. 180).

To do this in the current study, the researcher presented a detailed literature review on the topic being studied. Then, the participants and the research setting were described in detailed. Finally, with the help of interpretative commentary which refers to the explanation of the phenomena being investigated and interpretation of the meaning of the findings with respect to previous research (Mackey and Gass, 2005), the researcher presented a detailed discussion part in which each case and their cross-cases analysis were discussed in relation with the relevant literature and a holistic model was presented at the end. By presenting and discussing the findings in detail, the current study was made more meaningful and clear to the reader and other researchers, which was supposed to increase its transferability.

CHAPTER FOUR

THE CASE OF EDA

4.1. Introducing Eda

Grown up in various cities and towns in Turkey due to the jobs of her parents, Eda had different schooling experiences in the past. Until she started high school, she did not receive any systematic and disciplined language education. Her first introduction with English was in the sixth grade with a teacher whose major was teaching religion. She again had three other teachers during secondary school and they had different majors, so the lessons were not meaningful for her. The experiences she had with those teachers influenced her attitude towards learning English negatively. When she started high school, she had one year of intensive English preparatory program, which was quite influential on her changing attitudes towards learning English and choosing the way towards this profession. After high school, she took the nation-wide university entrance exam and had the opportunity to study in the English language teaching department of a mainstream university in Turkey. She had four years of pre-service education there and graduated with a good degree. After graduation, she took a nation-wide KPSS exam and was assigned as an English teacher in one of the villages of her hometown.

Her first experiences as an English teacher were quite challenging for her because of the socio-cultural and economic profile of the school and the learners. In her utterances, it was understood that she got really disappointed due to this situation and was quite unhappy working as an English teacher during those years. Thus, one semester later, she resigned and started working as an instructor at university and she is still working there. During the years she spent in her current institution, she taught different levels of learners, performed various office duties and completed her MA in ELT two years ago. She also had plans to start her PhD in the same discipline.

During the data collection process, she was teaching elementary students and had 21 hours of course load.

The following sections in this chapter include the elements which contributed to the formation of Eda's language teacher cognition, the characteristics of her classroom practices and the impact of institutional factors on them.

4.2. Main Sources of Eda's Language Teacher Cognition

The results derived from the narrations of Eda revealed that her language learning experiences as a student in the past, the pre-service education she received during her university years and her eight-year of teaching experiences altogether formed her language teacher cognition as an English teacher. Among these factors, her pre-service education was reported to be at the centre and she almost learnt everything about teaching English during this process. On the other hand, her language learning experiences made her form initial conceptualizations on being a good teacher and how a language could be taught better. Finally, it was seen that her teaching experiences as a novice and experienced teacher helped her shape most of the knowledge she gained about teaching.

4.2.1. Language learning experiences

4.2.1.1. Teachers in the past

During the data collection process, it was clearly understood that Eda had various language learning contexts until high school years and none of them was systematic and continuous. In these contexts, she had several teachers who influenced her attitudes towards language learning negatively. Though Eda had initially positive feelings for learning English, she got frustrated due to their negative attitudes and she became a passive student who never wanted to come to English classes and participate in the lessons. She had a memory with one of those teachers in which she was quite embarrassed:

“One day, I never forget it, this teacher, who was in fact a midwife, asked us how to pronounce the word ‘child’. In previous years, I was taught that it was pronounced as ‘tʃild’ and I thought I would know the answer. With a childish enthusiasm, I raised my

finger and said 'tıld'. 'What?' 'What did you say?' said my teacher and started to laugh. 'Look at her and let's laugh all together' she added. I was exposed to similar attitudes in previous years, but this was the most embarrassing one for me. I never talked again in this lesson and wanted to finish that year as soon as possible" (1st interview, 20.03.2015).

The teaching styles of her English teachers in the past also had negative influences on her ideas and feelings. The way teachers performed their lessons made students passive and they did not have any opportunity to participate:

"Especially the one in eight grade was terrible. We had a book and she strictly followed it. The lessons were monotonous; we were just doing the exercises one by one and writing down the things on the board. Everything was Turkish and we had no speaking activities. Just like learning Maths or Geography" (3rd interview, 12.06.2015).

Eda reported that the time she started the teacher training high school with the one-year intensive English preparatory program led to significantly positive changes on her feelings, ideas and attitudes towards learning English and she thought that the most important reason for this change was the attitudes of her teachers in these years. That was the first time she had teachers whose major was English language teaching and she said their attitudes towards students were quite inspiring for her. They were always cheerful, they approached students in a very friendly manner and they were always so kind in correcting students' mistakes (1st interview, 20.03.2015). Eda said she opened a new page in her life for learning English with these teachers and forgot all her negative experiences she had had in English classes so far.

The way teachers performed their lessons in this year also influenced Eda positively. She expressed that the teachers were incredibly encouraging during the lessons, prepared speaking and listening activities all the time, played games with them during class hours and helped them be active in the classrooms. According to Eda, the classroom atmospheres they created were quite relaxing and fruitful for the students and for this reason they always looked forward to these lessons each and every day. She thought that they were the most enjoyable moments of her high school life as a student (1st interview, 20.03.2015). Eda also expressed that she was

so positively affected by the attitudes and teaching styles of the teachers in preparatory year that she began to criticize the ones in the following 9th, 10th, and 11th grades, and thought that their way of teaching was not satisfactory enough to attract students' attention (1st interview, 20.03.2015). These expressions showed that the teachers Eda had during the preparatory year were quite admirable for her, created the idea of being an English teacher in her mind and served as a model for her on how to be a good English teacher.

The results of her narratives demonstrated that such instances in Eda's language learning experiences with her teachers in the past were quite influential on her teaching philosophy. For example, she uttered that she always had a kind attitude while correcting learners' mistakes because she knew well that the opposite would make them feel frightened and anxious (referring to the moment she had with her secondary school teacher on the pronunciation of 'child') (1st SR interview - 03.04.2015). It was also understood that she used several activities that she remembered from her high school years. For instance, she played a card game with her students to revise previously taught vocabulary items in the third classroom observation and when she was asked about it in the follow up interview; she told that "we played this game when I was at prep year. Our main course teacher used to play it. It was my favourite because it was both enjoyable and helped me refresh my vocabulary knowledge. Now, I am using it for my own students" (3rd SR interview - 15.05.2015). Her explanations on such instances showed that Eda had the traces of her experiences with the teachers in the past and these experiences had an impact on her current way of teaching.

4.2.1.2. Language learning habits

As it was mentioned before, Eda did not have real language learning experiences till she started high school and she admitted that her language learning experience began with the prep year at high school. During the first interview, she expressed that she spent a big effort and studied a lot not to miss any subjects being taught and towards the end of the first term, she became one of the best students in her class. Her teachers began to value her very much and she was also respected among her friends for her success. During this period, she developed several language learning habits

and she used to believe that she learnt best in those ways (1st interview, 20.03.2015). The results of her narrations revealed that these habits through which she learnt English had significant effects on her teaching philosophy.

During the first classroom observation, Eda continued to teach the grammar structure (quantifiers) which she started in the previous lesson. Towards the end of the lesson, she wanted her students to do the exercises in the workbook. After having finished them, the students began to give the answers one by one. Even if they gave the correct answer, Eda explained each and every sentence one by one with a higher tone of voice emphasizing the use of the target structure. In the follow-up SR interview, she was asked if she always did the same while doing such exercises:

“Yes, I always do it and according to me the reason is so simple (smiling). If I were, I would take notes if somebody was explaining a very important structure. For example, if my teacher say chocolate is uncountable, I immediately write it next to the word “chocolate”. In a way, I am used to teach the way how I learnt (smiling). I am overemphasising to create awareness so that they can take notes and revise them later. I am used to do it exactly in this way and I hope it works for them” (1st SR interviews - 03.04.2015)

In the first and second classroom observations, it was also seen that Eda had written the grammar rules on the board towards the end of the sessions after explaining the grammatical structures either explicitly or implicitly. Then in the second interview, she was asked to elaborate why she had done this:

“I always write the rule on the board whatever the structure is because they are the only things students write down and then study. And also that is what I used to do when I was a student. I always took notes about the rules and studied them later. I also had a small notebook just for writing the rules. And I believe this also works for my students now. They take notes and study them later” (2nd interview - 01.05.2015).

The documents Eda used for her classroom teachings also had traces from her language learning habits in the past. In the lesson plans (1st and 2nd classroom observations) in which she focused on grammatical structures, she stated that she would use some worksheets and she actually used them towards the end of the lesson. During an informal interview, she stated that she had done even more

exercises in the lessons just after the observations and she believed that doing a lot of exercises was quite beneficial for her students. In the final interview, this topic was opened while she was talking about the effect of her language learning experiences on her teaching style, and she explained why she did so much worksheet during class hours.

“First of all I want them to do exercises over and over, like drilling and I sometimes give more for homework. In this way, they cover the structure better and it gets more stable in their mind. I am sorry that I am telling the same thing (smiling), but I used to do it as a learner. For example, let it be present perfect, if I had been taught it, I would have opened all my books at home and have done all the exercise over and over, over and over. After a while, I could guess the answer without reading it completely. It worked for me, I believe it will work for my students as well.” (3rd interview - 12.06.2015).

As a result, it was found that Eda was a successful language learner when she was at high school and language learning habits she developed during this period were so strong and relatively effective in her eyes that she kept doing the same things for her students. As a teacher, she believed that some of her learning habits that had made her a successful language learner would also make her students successful during their language learning processes.

4.2.2. Pre-service education

After high school, Eda had the opportunity to pursue her pre-service education in one of the good universities in Turkey thanks to her degree in the nation-wide university entrance exam. Though the initial days were quite challenging in the program, she managed to adapt the conditions, spent four years in this program which included courses on language skills, methodology course, literature and linguistics course, and practice teachings and graduated with an honorary degree. The results derived from Eda’s narrations regarding her pre-service education and its impact on her language teacher cognition showed that the pre-service education had a very important place in Eda’s developing as a professional teacher, and it can be said that she learnt there almost everything she knew regarding teaching English. The role of this process was shaped by three factors which were teacher educators, courses and the practicum.

4.2.2.1. Teacher educators

According to Eda, the teacher educators she met during her pre-service education played an important role in shaping her behaviours as a teacher. In general, she thought that some of them served as positive models for her with their behaviours whereas some others had negative attitudes which taught Eda not to behave in that way.

In the first interview, Eda reported that the initial days were quite challenging for them mostly due to the attitudes of teacher educators towards students: “They were coming to the lesson, just giving information about the content of the course in pure English and then leaving the class” (1st interview - 20.03.2015). She told one of her memories in which she felt quite desperate owing to the attitude of a teacher educator in the very first day of their “Speaking I” course.

“It was the first day of our speaking course. No one knew each other. She came to the class, wrote her name on the board and told us that we would do presentations and nothing more. No one knew about preparing and doing a presentation. It was a shock for me and I felt extremely desperate. At high school, our teachers were very friendly and we did everything together. How can a teacher educator behave in that way?.....She could have been more collaborative.”

She had another negative experience with a teacher educator during her practice teaching in her final year in the program. She expressed that this situation was important in her pre-service education because she learnt how she should not give feedback to her students when they prepared and produced something:

“She was always too judgemental to us and criticizing whatever we did. For example, I remember the day I prepared a very good lesson using the photos of famous actors and actresses, and I believed I really did a good job. However, after the course the only note she took about my lesson was my mispronunciation of ‘Catherine Zeta Jones’. ‘It is not pronounced as ‘Zeta’, you should say ‘Zi:ta’ ” she told me. Is it the only feedback you can give about this well-done lesson? It is not even worth saying” (1st interview - 20.03.2015)

On the other hand, she also reported that she had several teacher educators who had been very influential on her development as a teacher and served as a positive model with their attitudes towards students, their way of teaching and the depth of their subject matter knowledge. While describing the methodology course she took in the program, Eda told how she admired the teacher educator as a teacher while she was giving that course:

“An assistant professor was giving that course. By the way, she was a perfect educator. Her stance, the way she spoke English, her relationship with us, the knowledge she had. She was admirable in every sense. I always thought “That is the kind of a teacher I should be” (1st interview - 20.03.2015).

Besides serving as a good model in terms of behaviours and attitudes, some other teacher educators helped Eda gain several implications that she still used in her classroom hours. For example, after two classroom observations, it was seen that while students were doing a task, Eda was constantly monitoring in class receiving students’ questions about the task or asking other students some questions about their own lives. In the second interview (01.05.2015), when she was asked why she did it, she told that “One of our teacher educators was doing it. It always kept us alert and sometimes it was easier to ask questions when she was next to us. That’s why I do it now for my students.” Moreover, while talking about the impact of pre-service education on her knowledge of teaching in the third interview, Eda mentioned a kind of project she made with her students every year. They prepared a booklet which included short stories originally written by her students based on a picture drawn on the board by them. She expressed that the roots of this activity went back to her fourth year in pre-service education.

“It was the testing and evaluation course and we were covering alternative assessment that week. In this session, to cut it short, our teacher educator drew a house in the middle of the board and wanted every of us to draw something next to it to complete the picture. At the end, we had a big picture and she wanted us, as a group, to write a story on this picture. I loved the activity, it was so creative. I do it with my own students every year and they love it too because it is their own product” (3rd interviews - 12.06.2015)

Based on the quotations, it was found out that Eda's teaching philosophy was influenced by the attitudes, approaches and implications of the teacher educators she met during her pre-service education. She took their attitudes as either positive or negative models, and embraced their several activities to use in her classroom implications. In other words, it can be said that they not only served as a teacher model for Eda but also taught her many things to use in language teaching process.

4.2.2.2. Courses in pre-service education

Another factor which was found to have a significant effect on Eda's learning-to-teach process was the courses she had during pre-service years. Although Eda claimed that some of the content courses she had during those years like English literature, poetry, morphology or syntax were too detailed, not related with the issue of teaching and to some extent unnecessary (1st interview - 20.03.2015), she also reported that initial courses in the program to improve student-teachers' language skills and the courses related to teaching methodologies were quite beneficial for her.

The courses Eda had in the first two terms of her pre-service education were like introduction to reading, speaking and pronunciation or writing, which were mainly organized to improve the language skills of student teachers rather than teaching them how to teach those skills. During the first interview, Eda told that the course on speaking and pronunciation was quite beneficial for her, she learnt about the phonetic alphabet and improved her speaking and pronunciation skills a lot. While talking about the impact of the pre-service education during the third interview, she gave a very clear example on the writing course which not only helped her develop her writing skills but also served as a ground on how to teach writing.

“These courses were good transitions for us. For example, in the writing course, we started to learn from the very beginning, what a topic sentence is. It was the first time I had heard of topic sentence or thesis statement. Our instructor was also very helpful and the course was quite beneficial for me. I can say that I learnt how to write in English there, and I am also still using my notes when I teach my students how to write a paragraph or a composition.” (3rd interview - 12.06.2015).

In her narrations, Eda reported the considerable influence of the teaching-related courses she had during the pre-service and how she learnt enjoyably during these courses: “The least effective was the approaches and methods course, but even in this course I learnt a lot on how to prepare different settings of learning for students” (1st interview - 20.03.2015). She expressed that their teaching-related courses like teaching methodology, young learners, testing and evaluation were quite strong and she loved to attend those courses:

“The methodology courses were extremely useful. We learnt how each language skill is taught, what kind of activities support their being taught, and most importantly we started to gain awareness: ‘I had learnt in this way, but it can also be taught in that way’. We also learnt each skill should be paid attention separately” (1st interview - 20.03.2015).

The data from classroom observations and reflection reports revealed that these teaching related courses also had some to-the-point effects on Eda’s gaining several skills to use in her classroom implications. Combined with her own teaching experiences, the elements she learnt during these courses significantly shaped her knowledge of teaching. The following excerpt from one of the interviews illustrates the issue.

The researcher: In both of the lessons, while teaching the grammatical points, you followed the same procedure. You explained the structure, did some exercises and created a context so that students would produce sentences. Do you always do the same?

Eda: Exactly. I try to do it when I teach the grammar rules. That’s what I learnt during the methodology courses at university; presentation, practice and production, and I think it is logical and very effective.

The researcher: Ok, and while explaining the structure at first, you started in English, but then you began to use Turkish towards the end of the explanation part. Why did you code-switch there?

Eda: Well, in fact this occurs frequently. Again at university, we were taught not to use the mother tongue while teaching and I try to do my best and start teaching in English. But sometimes, especially when the learner profile is low, I have to use

Turkish because they say they need it. So, the combination of two is sometimes better.” (2nd interviews - 01.05.2015)

What Eda learnt in the methodology courses at university also contributed to her knowledge of teaching other language skills. In one of her weekly reflection reports, she wrote about how she covered a reading text that was not on the course book and it is clear below that the way she covered the text was totally shaped by her pre-service knowledge.

“On the final day of this week, I was a bit ahead of the program so I brought an extra reading text which I thought would be interesting for my students. The text was about the book and the movie “The lord of the rings”. At first, I gave the first page of the reading which included a picture and a short introduction. I asked some intro questions to my students to make them familiar with the topic. Then I distributed the second page. My students read the text and I asked some comprehension questions verbally. Finally, I gave the last page and a comprehension quiz which they filled out after finishing the text. We also revised all the new vocabulary items at the end..... That is my typical reading lesson which includes pre-reading, while-reading and post-reading. I learnt it in the methodology course at university and did a demo on the application of it. Since then, I have performed all my reading courses like this because it is enjoyable, more interactive and in my opinion effective to cover the text part by part.”
(Eda – reflection 3, p. 3)

As it is clear from the illustrations, the initial courses which were organized to improve student-teachers’ language skills and all teaching-related courses Eda had during her pre-service education considerably contributed to her cognition as a language teacher. Thanks to these courses, Eda not only developed her level of English proficiency and language skills, but also learnt most of the activities she currently implied in her classroom teaching. It can also be said that the content of these course shaped her language teaching philosophy as well.

4.2.2.3. *The Practicum*

During the interviews, Eda stated that her practice teaching experience in the final year of the program also contributed to her development as a teacher. In fact, it was understood from her narrations that she had a school experience course in the second

year of the program and her initial conceptualizations were formed in this course. She told that they just made observations and completed some tasks based on these observations within the scope of this course. When asked how she benefited from these observations, she clearly stated that “I remember I was criticizing the teacher we observed as ‘look, she didn’t do any warm-up today’ or ‘she should have made this activity’ etc. I began to think I would teach better if I had the chance” (1st interview - 20.03.2015). As it is seen, during this school experience course, she had the opportunity to observe a teacher in a real classroom atmosphere, to make comments on his/her performance and even compare him/her with her own potential performance.

In addition to her experiences in the school experience course, the practice teaching experience in Eda’s final year was very important for her. Although she mentioned several problems regarding the implementation of practice teaching in her program, she highlighted the fact that she learnt a lot during her very first teaching performances:

“Well, it was the first opportunity for us to teach in a real-like classroom atmosphere and to real students. We gained awareness on how to put what we learnt so far into practice and we had the chance to see whether they worked or not.....For example, once I prepared a game on conditional type 2 for the students. I thought they would love it, but they got really bored because they found it too childish” (1st interview - 20.03.2015).

Eda reported that the most useful factor for her during her practice teaching period was the mentor teacher she worked with. As mentioned before, she was not very happy with the attitude and feedback of her supervisor - teacher educator - but she stated that her mentor teacher was a perfect model who taught her many things for classroom teaching: “She was a very idealist teacher. She always had a logical explanation for anything she did in class. I can say that my teaching style has some traces of what I learnt from that teacher” (3rd interview - 12.06.2015). Moreover, while talking about her practicum experiences, Eda highlighted the fact that she benefited a lot from the discussions she had with her peers after their practice

teaching performances. Even, she claimed that such discussions with her friends were more useful than the feedback provided by their supervisor most of the time.

“We were four people assigned for the same mentor, and each of us performed a teaching once in three or four weeks. We were also very good friends and we used to get together after every teaching and make comments on our performances. These discussions were extremely fruitful and we believed that we became better teachers after every discussion because we told each other our strengths, weaknesses, good sides and bad sides of our teaching. Honestly speaking, they were even better than the supervisor’s feedback” (1st interview - 20.03.2015).

Along with all these positive sides, Eda mentioned several points during the interviews that could be regarded as the negative or missing elements of the practicum experience she had in the program. First of all, she complained about the number of opportunities provided for them to perform practice teaching and thought that it was definitely not enough for them to practice their teaching skills. Secondly, she underlined the issue that the atmosphere and the students were real-like but not real because they knew that students were warned by their teacher to behave better when they would teach in class: “It would have been better if they had been more naturalized” (1st interview - 20.03.2015). Finally, she wished that she had had a better supervisor. According to Eda, the feedback provided by her, her attitudes towards Eda and her friends and her inefficacy as a supervisor made the process of practice teaching more challenging: “I was not sure whether she had ever been in a real classroom and taught English because she did not seem so” (1st interview - 20.03.2015).

Eda’s narrations of her practicum experiences demonstrated that the process was quite beneficial for her and contributed to her knowledge of teaching in several aspects in spite of the lack of several elements that would have made the process more fruitful. Her experiences in a real-like (in her own words) classroom atmosphere, her mentor teacher who guided Eda in her practice teaching performances, and the discussions she had with her peers after practice teachings taught Eda a lot of things that helped her develop as a professional teacher.

4.2.3. Experiences as a teacher

4.2.3.1. Being a novice teacher

The pre-service education Eda completed was very useful in developing her as a professional teacher. After completing this program and graduating from the university, like every teacher candidate in Turkey, Eda took the national KPSS exam and was assigned as an EFL teacher in one of the villages of her hometown based on her grade in this exam. Starting from that time, September 2007, she started to work as a novice in-service EFL teacher in a mainstream primary school. Her utterances during the interviews showed that the period she spent as a novice teacher taught her a lot about teaching.

Her first experience as a teacher was in a primary school in a village. During her narrations, she referred to this very first experience as a “total disappointment and reality shock” (1st interview - 20.03.2015). She told that she had felt extremely disappointed when she started teaching in that school. She dreamt about teaching more difficult subjects and having opportunities to develop herself as a teacher before graduation, but she was shocked when she started teaching colours or parts of our body. She also added that the socio-economic and socio-cultural conditions of her students were extremely low, which made the situation more challenging for her. She also said that some of her students even did not want to come to school because they had more important works to do in the village. Due to these situations, she felt quite unhappy and left her job just one semester later. While defining this one semester spent in this school, she said that “in fact it did not contribute to my teaching skills in any way. It was just a ‘welcome to reality’ and I felt that everything would be much more different than I had expected” (1st interview - 20.03.2015).

Six months later, Eda started to work as an instructor at the English preparatory program of a state university in which she is still working. She claimed that she had her first real teaching experiences as a novice teacher when she started to work in this program. Her memories were quite clear about these days and she reported that she had spent her initial days to make the students accept her as the teacher, to set up

rules in her classroom, and to manage her students in classroom atmosphere. The example she gave below illustrates the effort she spent in those days:

“I was going to start a text about train accidents and I wanted to ask a question before starting it. The question was ‘Have you ever had an accident?’ A boy called Haluk sitting at the back said ‘Yes, I have’. And I asked ‘Ok, Haluk how did you feel?’. He sarcastically said in front of the class ‘It was an accident, how am I supposed to feel?’ I was shocked and frustrated with his manner. I looked at the book and then the door and I wanted to leave the class. But then I told myself ‘Eda, if you leave now, you can never come back to this class.’ Then I managed to go on my lesson, but I never forget how I felt there” (1st interview - 20.03.2015).

In addition to her efforts for classroom management, Eda also remembered her teaching practices on those days, and uttered an important sentence during the first interview: “I was truly governed by what I learnt at university.” She reported that she strictly applied what she had learnt during her pre-service education in every aspect of her classroom teaching. However, all her implications were serving as a kind of trial and error mechanism through which she tried to find the best way that would fit the situation in which she tried to manage a misbehaviour, to teach an instructional point or to make a decision in a classroom atmosphere:

“I was doing whatever I learnt at university and nothing else but it was, how can I say, trial and error in a way. For example, I started every lesson with a warm-up. If it worked, I said ‘Ok, I should use warm-up, or I explained a grammatical point in English, if it worked, I went on, but if my students looked confused, I said ‘Himm, I should use Turkish here’. I can say that everything I did in class on those days went on in that way” (1st interview - 20.03.2015).

During her first year in this program, since she was a novice teacher, Eda was told by the administration to attend other classes as an observer during the sessions, so she had some opportunities to observe the lessons of other experienced teachers working there. The most important thing she remembered about these observations was the fact that her teaching style and way of conducting her lessons were quite different from the ones more experienced teachers had and she began to criticise most of her colleagues because of being ordinary.

“Their lessons were very ordinary. I couldn’t believe when I saw they did not start the lesson with a warm-up. Most of them did not prepare any activities or games for students. They were just following the books most of the time. I did not understand why they were so ordinary because their way of teaching was the easiest one. I thought I would learn a lot from them but that was not the case.”

The utterances showed that, combined with all these experiences, the time period Eda spent as a novice teacher had an important place in her career as a professional teacher. While talking about the impact of such experiences on her teaching, she highlighted a very important detail: “This time period, in a sense, provided me the opportunities which the practicum did not. I was able to test whatever I learnt during my pre-service education and this testing shaped me as a teacher in these years” (3rd interviews - 12.06.2015). Along with this, her other narrations put forward that during her novice years, Eda made a big effort to be accepted as a teacher by her students, she had challenging situations in classroom management, her classroom practices and decisions served as a kind of trial and error mechanism which helped her to proceed towards the best implications, and her experiences with more experienced colleagues made her be more aware of her own practice. For all these reasons, it can be concluded that her novice years were considerably influential on her to develop better teaching skills.

4.2.3.2. Getting more experienced

As mentioned before, Eda has been teaching English for about eight years. After the years spent as a novice teacher which contributed a lot to her knowledge of teaching, Eda thought that she began to be a more experienced and rational teacher as the years passed on. During the interviews, she admitted that getting more experienced changed her as a teacher both in positive and negative ways. She got more confident and calm as a teacher who had a good stance and knew what she was doing in any situation. On the other hand, she lost her idealism and the work of teaching got routinized. Depending on what she experienced during her career, these changes made her construct her own teaching philosophy and reflect it into the classroom.

Eda thought that she was an idealist teacher during the first two years of her career. Her lessons were full of activities, the homework she gave for students was always

enjoyable, she always cared about her students' problems and she worked a lot even outside the school to get prepared for her lessons (1st interview - 20.03.2015). However, she said that, as the time passed, she began to be less enthusiastic about doing all that work. She admitted that two factors played important roles on her decreasing idealism, one of which was the learners. The utterances below summarize how learners affected her negatively in time:

“I was spending a lot of time preparing all these things, but they were saying ‘teacher it is boring, let’s not do it’ or they weren’t doing the homework I prepared for them. At first, I thought it was for that group of learners, but then I saw that every year was the same. I mean they did not value the big effort I made for them. Then I started to think ‘why should I do these?’” (1st interview - 20.03.2015)

Eda reported that the other factor decreased her idealism was related to her colleagues in the institution. Starting in her novice years, the experiences she had with her colleagues also became influential on her decreasing idealism. She told that she had expected to learn a lot from her colleagues when she started teaching in this program, but as the years passed, she understood that, let learning something aside, she lost her enthusiasm due to the attitudes, approaches and working philosophies of her colleagues:

“They were doing nothing for students, just following the course book. At first, I thought that they would ask me about my activities, or they would praise me for my good works, but they didn’t ask even one question about my teaching. Also, whenever I suggested something new in our meetings, they always resisted to do it. The worst thing was that I was much more hardworking than most of them, but I was not valued by anyone. Even, according to the students, they were sometimes better teachers than me because they watched films with their students in class (smiling)” (1st interview - 20.03.2015).

Due to the factors and experiences she had, Eda lost most of her enthusiasm as a teacher: “My lessons began to be more ordinary and teaching got more routinized each and every day.” The number of activities she prepared for students decreased, she began to follow the course book more and she paid less attention to her students. On the other hand, as the time passed in this way and the issue of teaching became a

routine for her, she got a more confident teacher who began to have a firm relationship with students, knew what worked well or what did not in any case and began to manage her class more easily. “I began to be the teacher I am now” she said while talking about how she changed during this process.

Another point which Eda mentioned as being positive during this time period was that some of her ideas on classroom implications she initially had at the beginning of her career changed and she learnt a lot about their effectiveness. While talking about the impact of teaching experience on her language teacher cognition, she touched upon this issue and stated that as she got more experienced she began to do what she had thought she would have never done or she began not to do some principles which she had regarded as indispensable. She gave two clear examples during the interviews:

“For example, translation. We were taught at university that translation should be avoided while teaching English and during my first year I had never used it. But now, I both use it during class hours and give it as homework because I learnt it is beneficial to some extent..... On the other hand, I learnt about peripheral learning at university and when I started teaching here, there were always and always cartoons on walls of my classrooms. Then I observed that they just looked at them on the day of sticking and sometimes for cheating (smiling) and then they never had a look at them. Thus, I gave up preparing such materials at the end” (3rd interview - 12.06.2015)

Based on all these narrations, it was revealed that the teaching experience Eda went through during those years had both negative and positive influences on her as a teacher. The experiences she had with the learners and her colleagues decreased her idealism whereas the years she spent as a professional teacher made her a more confident one. The work of teaching began to be a routine activity for which she spent less effort each passing day. Moreover, she had many opportunities to evaluate the value and effectiveness of her teaching principles, gave up doing some of them or embraced the one she believed she would never do. To sum up, in her own words, “Experience made me the teacher I am now” (3rd interview - 12.06.2015).

4.3. Eda's Classroom Practices

In the spring semester of 2014-2015 academic year, Eda was teaching elementary students for 21 hours per week. During her classes, she was following the course book that was chosen by the administration of the school within the program prepared by their curriculum office. In order to collect data on Eda's classroom practices, she was observed for four block sessions (the second hour in the institution which is the combination of two class hours without a break) which were video-recorded, four follow-up SR interviews were conducted after each session on her practices, one main interview was carried out in the middle of the term and she was asked to write reflection reports on her classroom implications. The results of all these data revealed that Eda's classroom practices 1) were mainly shaped by her language teaching philosophy, 2) put learners at the centre, 3) were intervened by her improvisational teaching, 4) were guided by the course book she used.

4.3.1. Eda's language teaching philosophy

The previous section on her knowledge base showed that Eda constructed a language teaching philosophy which was reported to be the combination of her experiences as a learner, the knowledge she gained during the pre-service education and her teaching experiences. The findings regarding her classroom practices showed that Eda's classroom practices were mainly shaped by her language teaching philosophy and the traces of its sub-elements were easily observed in her classroom implications.

During the first two classroom observations, it was seen that Eda had a very positive and kind attitude towards students' mistakes. During the sessions, although her students made hundreds of mistakes, and sometimes the same ones, she always corrected them in a very nice manner and she encouraged her students to see and correct their own mistakes most of the time. When she was asked to elaborate on this, she told that "You know (referring to the experience she told on the pronunciation of the word 'child'), no one can know the feeling better than me when you are corrected in a very bad or humiliating manner. I never want my students to experience such a feeling" (2nd interview - 01.05.2015). In addition to this, during the first observed session, whenever her students asked her the meaning of a word, she

said “I am not your dictionary, please look up your dictionary.” When she was asked the reason of this reaction, she said that “One of our teachers at high school was doing so. He never answered our questions on the meanings of the words. At the end, we had to use a dictionary” (1st SR interview - 03.04.2015). Moreover, during the first five minutes of the third session, she distributed the writing papers of students that were given as homework two days ago. On the paper, it was seen that she underlined the incorrect sentences and wrote some codes such as “gr”, “sp”, or “ww” for the mistakes. During SR interview of that session, she was asked why she evaluated the papers in that way:

“Well, in fact this technique is very old for me. Our skills teacher in our prep year at high school was doing it for the first draft of our writings. We were asking each other or looking at our notes to find our own mistake, and it was very useful for us. I have been using it for years and I think it is much better for students than simply correcting their mistakes” (3rd SR interview - 15.05.2015).

During the data collection process, Eda obviously reported how her pre-service education influenced her classroom practices in both interviews and reflection reports and it was easy to observe the elements that belonged to her pre-service education. First of all, it was very clear that she had a logical and systematic pedagogical principle for any new language point to be covered - a new grammatical structure, a new reading or a new type of paragraph – and it was found that these principles were quite related with her pre-service background. For example, while focusing on certain grammatical points during the first two observed sessions, she clearly followed the “presentation-practice-production” procedure and stated in the second interview that she learnt it at university and had used this technique since then because she found it as logical and effective. In another example, she wrote about one of her writing lessons in her sixth reflection report. The flow of the lesson was quite parallel with the steps of teaching writing and at the end she stated that she tried to conduct her writing lessons in this way and the lesson was a combination of the elements she learnt in writing and methodology courses she had at university (Eda - reflection 6, p. 4). More importantly, while talking about how her pre-service education influenced classroom practices in a more general sense, she emphasized the fact that pre-service education was at the centre of her career:

“I learnt how to teach the language there. I learnt to follow different stages while teaching different skills. How to create a good atmosphere for students, how to prepare useful activities for learners; they were all taught there. I may not be applying all of them, but they are always ready to use for me in my mind whenever I need them” (3rd interviews - 12.06.2015).

Eda’s teaching experience was also found to be influential on shaping her classroom practices. The sessions in which she explained grammatical structures provided a good example for this. Towards the end of these sessions, she wanted her students to do the exercises on the workbook. When asked about the reason why she preferred to do it in class, she said that “when you give homework, they do not do it on their own or copy from their friends’ books..... The years taught me to do it in class” (2nd SR interviews - 17.04.2015). Her experiences with learners for years also taught her to have a firm relationship with students. During first two sessions, she was observed to have a smiling face during the class hours but she was also quite distanced towards students. When she was asked how she achieved to balance this relationship, she told that it was the end result of a long-lasting effort:

“In fact, I couldn’t do it in the first years of my career and my relationship with students was sometimes too sincere. They even came and asked me ‘can you lend us some money?’. Then for the following years, I tried to be a serious teacher with a rarely smiling face. This time, I felt myself too far away from my students and I didn’t enjoy it. Now, I always have a smiling face but I also have red lines for my students. To cut it short, I managed to do this in time” (2nd interview - 01.05.2015)

Eda’s teaching experiences also helped her gain several techniques which she used while teaching some language elements. While doing a short listening activity in the fourth session, she made students listen to the text twice. However, students seemed not to have understood the listening and; thereupon, she wanted her students to open the audio-scripts at the end of the book, listen and follow at the same time. She was asked about her preference to this and she said that “Well, there is not a specific reason for it. I got used to do it in time whenever my students did not understand the listening text. I believe that when they do it in this way, it becomes a better listening activity for them” (4th SR interview - 29.05.2015). Moreover, in one of her reflection

reports, she mentioned an activity which she had found on her own three years ago and used it to revise or teach some conjunctions:

“I formed seven groups in class and assigned an occupation for each group. In ten minutes, they shared ideas and at the end each member of the group said his/her idea about the situation of this job in Turkey using ‘and, but, or, so, because, however’..... I found this activity three years ago while talking about the jobs with my intermediate students, and it became my favourite activity. It also helps students to generate ideas and produce longer sentences” (Eda - reflection 5, p. 2)

As the utterances above illustrated, Eda’s language teaching philosophy which she constructed as a result of her experiences as a learner, as a pre-service teacher and as an in-service one played a significant role on her classroom practices. She benefited from all her experiences and used them in harmony rather than sticking into one or making one of them dominant in her classroom. It was also revealed that her language teaching philosophy, as a combination of all her experiences, was reflected in all her aspects as a teacher such as her relationship with students, her classroom management style and her instructional activities. For this reason, it can be concluded Eda’s classroom practices are mainly formed by language teacher cognition.

4.3.2. Learners

The results of Eda’s narrations also demonstrated that learners were at the centre of her classroom implications. Rather than embracing a perspective of ‘I do my job and do not care if they get it or not’, Eda seemed to adapt all her classroom practices in the sense that students would feel better, express themselves comfortably, understand her as much as possible and learn in a maximum level.

First of all, as a very simple but important detail, it was observed that Eda designed her classroom in a classical row order. After the first observed session, the researcher asked her about this preference and she replied that “I normally prefer a U-shape classroom every year and we also started with this row. Then some of the students said that their necks were hurt while listening to me, so I had to change it and we turned to the classical shape” (1st SR interview - 03.04.2015). As another example,

while conducting her lessons, Eda was observed to be giving very short breaks in which she sometimes told a memory or story about herself, or asked students' comments or ideas about a topic. During the second interview, she commented on this issue that "I do it just for attracting their attention because they might sometimes get lost during the flow of the lesson and I give these breaks to get their attention back on me." Her comments showed how her learners' attention was important for her.

The results also yielded that Eda prepared or adapted her instructional activities according to the profile of her learners most of the time. In one of her initial reflection reports, she wrote that she did a competitive activity in class which required students to run and stick a card on the board. She also added that the activity was not pedagogically good and the only reason she did it was to attract some of the students' attention and make them enjoy to be in class because they were about to give up learning English (Eda – reflection 1, p. 2). Moreover, while covering a short reading text which was relatively difficult, she translated every sentence for students. When she was asked the reason why she covered the text in that way, she explained that she normally used paraphrasing or asked questions to make students understand the text but the level of these learners were quite low and she had to translate the text so as to make them comprehend it (3rd SR interview, 15.05.2015). Finally, the moment that was observed in the fourth session was a clear illustration of how she adapted her teaching performances according to her students. In this session, she started to teach reported speech and did it in English. However, just after two or three minutes, she said "Ok, forget about it and listen to me very carefully" and began to teach the topic in Turkish. The dialogue below shows the reasons behind her code-switching:

Eda: I am really sorry that I used Turkish a lot.

The researcher: No problem for me but I just wonder why you code-switched

Eda: As you saw, I started in English but while I was explaining the rules, they looked so desperate and confused that I had to turn to Turkish.

The researcher: Don't you normally do it?

Eda: In fact I hate teaching a whole topic in Turkish. I sometimes use both Turkish and English but I hardly ever use only Turkish.

The researcher: So why did you do it?

Eda: Because they didn't understand it. Reported speech is already a difficult topic and they will be responsible for it in the exam. The only way they could understand it was to speak Turkish because their level is quite low.

The researcher: Were you able to teach this topic in English in the past?

Eda: Of course yes. I had upper level learners last year and I remember to have completely taught it in English" (4th SR interview - 29.05.2015).

As her utterances clearly illustrate, the only reason why she completely explained the target grammar structure in Turkish was the low level of learners. Though she reported to have used English frequently while teaching grammar and explained the same topic in English in the past, it was seen that she needed to adapt her teaching according to the situation of her learners.

The final point about learners' being at the centre of Eda' classroom practices was that Eda paid attention to the affective filter of her students. It was very clear during the observations that she intentionally created an atmosphere in which they could feel comfortable and express themselves freely. For example, during the initial moments of the first observed lesson, she asked some questions about a picture in the book and the students told their answers without raising their hands or taking permission. When the researcher asked her about this situation, she said that "When their answers are expected to be short, I let them say whatever comes to their minds without taking permission. In this way, I think they feel less anxious and more eager to participate" (1st SR interview - 03.04.2015). Another illustration that showed the importance she gave on her learners' feelings occurred in the second lesson. While students were telling their answers to the exercise of a grammar topic, one of the less active students pronounced the word "chocolate" as /ʃokoleit/ and some of his friends began to laugh. At this straight moment, Eda glanced at those boys angrily and their laughs immediately stopped. When she commented on this situation after the lesson, she expressed that she had similar situations in the past and such a situation might even cause learners not to speak in classroom atmosphere anymore. For this reason, she would never allow such situations in class (2nd SR interviews - 17.04.2015). Finally, it was observed that Eda was also very careful while correcting her students' mistakes and she even preferred a certain type of corrective feedback. During the

second interview, the researcher asked whether she intentionally preferred that feedback type and she clearly stated that she used explicit correction so that her students would feel less anxious or embarrassed while their mistakes were being corrected:

“The researcher: I also observed that you use explicit correction, you know there are some other ways to correct students’ mistakes like recast, elicitation or repetition, but you use explicit correction mostly. I mean, you correct the mistake and provide an explanation immediately after it. Are you aware of it, I mean are you doing it consciously?

Eda: Yes yes, very consciously (smiling). In that way, I think they both feel less stressed and learn the correct version because if I encourage them to find their own mistake and correct it on their own, they will feel more anxious and stressed to find the correct form. Even, they might be regretful to have spoken. I don’t want this to happen” (2nd interview - 01.05.2015)

Based on all the observations and her narrations, it was concluded that the profile of learners was a main factor which played a significant role in the formation of Eda’s classroom practices. She not only adapted most of her classroom implications and teaching activities taking her learners’ profiles into account but also embraced a perspective which prioritized the feelings of her students. It was also found that she had some stable approaches like the issues of affective filter and corrective feedback, but she could change and adapt teaching activities based on the learner profile.

4.3.3. Improvisational teaching

In general, it was observed during the sessions that Eda was an organized and planned teacher who seemed well-prepared and knew what to do in all her lessons. However, in almost all of the observed sessions, there occurred some moments which seemed to emerge suddenly and not to be pre-planned. The results showed that most of these cases were improvisational and the activities came to Eda’s mind at the time of teaching.

There were some clear examples of her improvisational teaching during the observed sessions. For instance, in the middle of the first lesson, she completed a vocabulary

activity in which she taught some new items, and was about to start teaching the grammar point. She suddenly changed her mind and wanted students to form some example sentences with the new vocabulary items in five minutes before passing to grammar teaching. In this situation, she said that “The vocabulary items were important and I thought, at that moment, that it would be better if they did some more things with these words. Then I wanted them to form sentences” (1st SR interview - 03.04.2015). In another situation that was observed in the second lesson, there were about ten minutes to the end of the lesson and she had just finished teaching grammar points and doing exercises on them. She was looking at her book and then she came next to the board and started writing sentence halves like ‘I eat’ or ‘I don’t drink’ Then she wanted her students to complete these sentences considering their own life styles and the lesson ended after she received her students’ answers. During the interview just after the lesson, she was asked if she planned it before the session and she replied that “No, I didn’t. It came to my mind there. I thought it would be fun if students both formed sentences using quantifiers and talked about their lives..... I guess it worked and they liked it” (2nd SR interview - 17.04.2015).

It was also seen that some of her improvisational decisions were to attract students’ attention when she became aware of the fact that their concentration was getting lower. For instance, in the third session, she was going to cover a short text about the city of Amsterdam. While she was giving a brief information about the city, she stood up, turned on the computer and showed some pictures of Amsterdam to her students in three or four minutes. She reported after the session that she hadn’t planned showing these pictures to the students, and in fact she planned to skip that short reading quickly. However, she had observed that the students were so reluctant and sleepy so she wanted to show those pictures to get their attention (3rd SR interview - 15.05.2015). In addition to it, a very interesting situation occurred in the fourth observed session. During the lesson, she spent about twenty minutes speaking totally Turkish to explain the rules of reported speech and she focused on all the features of that structure in detail. Students did the exercises in the book after she finished her explanations. There were about ten minutes left and she asked her students if they understood the topic. They answered ‘yes’. She again asked if they

were sure and students again replied yes. Then she wanted her students to close their notebooks and take a piece of paper. She wrote five sentences on the board and asked her students to write them using reported speech. In the interview immediately after the session, she was asked whether she frequently did some small pop quizzes like this. She surprisingly replied that “No, it was the first this year, and I did not plan to do it. I made a big effort to teach it and they always said ‘yes we understood, yes we got it’. I had some time left and I wanted to see how much they understood” (4th SR interview - 29.05.2015).

There were many other examples of Eda’s improvisational teaching that were observed during the sessions. In her second interview, the researcher asked Eda whether she was aware of them and how she felt about these spontaneous implications. According to Eda, such kinds of implications were quite natural for a teacher:

“To be honest, I wasn’t aware of it before you talked about it in the first SR interview. In fact, it is not possible to be aware of it because you feel as if they are the actual and planned parts of your lesson. I mean, you never say to yourself after the lesson ‘I didn’t plan this but I did it’. They occur and the lesson finishes. I think they are quite natural because you sometimes adapt your practices according to the flow of the lesson and these adaptations might require some improvisation (smiling)” (2nd interview - 01.05.2015).

The findings derived from the observations and interviews demonstrated that although Eda was observed to be a planned or organized teacher in most of her lessons, improvisational implications which she decided to do at the time of her teaching had an important place in her classroom practices. In most of these situations, Eda felt as if they had been an actual part of the lesson and implemented them as if they had been pre-planned, which showed that she was good at doing it. The important point was that almost all her spontaneous decisions were quite good in fitting the flow of the lesson and it was understood that they served their purposes well.

4.3.4. The course book

The final element which was found to be quite influential on Eda's classroom practices was the course book she used. In Eda's institution, the course book is selected by a committee consisting of teachers and administrators. Throughout the academic year, teachers have to cover and finish the books determined for the level they are teaching because the exams are mainly based on them. The book Eda was using consisted of ten modules each of which had four sections in which language skills were integrated to the target structures and linguistic elements. During the data collection, Eda generally expressed that she was happy to be following a course book and being guided by it. However, she also reported that there were some points which she didn't like because of being dominated by an outsider factor.

The lessons that were observed and Eda's narrations during the interviews were full of the instances which showed the course-book effect on her classroom practices. Starting from the very first moment of her lessons, it was very easy to see that effect. For example, she started with a short warm-up activity that, to some extent, introduced the content of the unit in the first lesson. Later in the interview, she expressed that she had already loved starting a lesson with a warm up activity and had been happy with this feature of the book. Even if she had not loved it, she would have done that warm up just because it is included in the course book (1st SR interview - 03.04.2015). Again in the same lesson, she covered a short section called social English which included some communicative phrases that would be useful for students. She also wanted her students to write down these phrases on their notebooks. She referred to this part of the lesson as "unnecessary but compulsory" because she stated that she did not believe the effectiveness of teaching such phrases to students at this level but she had to cover it because it was in the course book.

In another situation observed in the second session, there was a dialogue of people in a party in the course book and Eda started with covering this dialogue before teaching the target structure (quantifiers). Her thoughts about starting to teach quantifiers with such a text were quite positive: "The text was awesome. The quantifiers were successfully placed within it and students began to understand their functions while reading it. Thus, it was very easy to teach the topic. Honestly

speaking, it wouldn't have been that much easy if I had done it on my own" (2nd SR interview - 17.04.2015). On the other hand, it was written in one of her reflection reports that she experienced an opposite situation which she did not like and in which she had difficulty in explaining the topic. Although she managed to cover the section and teach the subject at the end, it was a very challenging situation for her:

"The topic was 'may' and 'might' and it started with a dialogue between two women who were talking about going or not going to a birthday party. The dialogue included sentences on the usage of these two modals. However, the text was terrible. Nothing could make such a simple topic more difficult than this text. It made students totally confused and they began to ask and say 'can we use might here?' 'what about using may here, it looks more probable.' At the end, I told my students to forget about the text and I explained these modals in my own sentences. The simple 'may' and 'might' became the most difficult topic of the month" (Eda, reflection 3, p.1)

In another reflection, she mentioned covering a reading text which was a little boring and above students' level. She wrote that it was very difficult and tiring to teach the text and the vocabulary items in it. The important thing about this case was again highlighted by her own words: "I am not sure the text contributed to their knowledge of English, but anyway, I had to cover it" (Eda reflection 6, p.2). It showed that she was not happy with covering such a text and did not believe its benefits on learners but she had to do it. A similar thing happened in the third observed lesson and she had to do an activity which, in fact, she did not want to. There was a song called "money, money, money" at the end of the section and although she tried to be quick to cover all she planned and did not have enough time for it, she had to make students listen to the song. In the stimulated recall, she stated that "I didn't want to do it because of many reasons: I want to save time, I don't think they are useful for them, they can listen to it at home. However, again, I had to do it because it is in their book and they want to listen to it" (3rd SR interview - 15.05.2015).

In addition to these specific instances regarding the effect of the course book on Eda's classroom practices, she also expressed her ideas and feelings in a more general perspective. Her utterances below draw a general picture of her ideas on following a certain course book.

“In fact, I sometimes feel positive and sometimes negative for it. It mostly depends on the situation, but I can say that I feel more confident and comfortable following a certain guide. Sometimes I do not approve some features but it always provides me an alternative on what to do in classroom atmosphere. I think it would be better if we were more flexible. I mean, to follow the course book but not every detail of it. It would be better if we did more things on our own” (2nd interviews - 01.05.2015).

“Well, it definitely has an effect on my classroom practices because most of the time it decides what to do in the classroom, not me. It says how to start the day, how finish it, which exercises to do, what to read or what to listen. I just sometimes feel the server of it. But it is quite normal in this era.....As I said before, I am neither positive nor negative about following it, but it would be better if we had more freedom” (3rd interview - 12.06.2015).

As it is shown above, the findings revealed that the course book Eda used influenced her classroom practices significantly. Though she was happy with certain implications stated in the book, she sometimes felt just as the server of it and wished more freedom in her practices. In some cases, due to the instructions and the content of the book, she had to apply certain practices that she did not want to or she could not do certain activities because the book required her to do it in different ways. For this reason, it can be said that Eda, in general, felt neutral about the impact of the current course book on her classroom practices.

4.4. Eda’s Institutional Context

As it is mentioned before, Eda has been working in this institution for about six years. It is the English preparatory program of a state university and it receives about 1000 students every year. There are about 60 people working as instructors some of whom work as administrators or coordinators. General regulations of the program are determined by Higher Education Council (YOK) but there are some specific goals, procedures and policies of the program determined within it. During the data collection process, the researcher also aimed to investigate whether the factors in the institution such as policies, atmosphere, colleagues etc. had an impact on Eda’s classroom practices. The findings showed that the testing policies, curriculum targets

and the attitudes of her colleagues influenced Eda's classroom implementations and decisions.

4.4.1. Testing policies

The issue of testing was found to have such an impact on Eda's mind and her classroom decisions that almost all her observed sessions, interviews and stimulated recalls had traces of elements related with testing. Her perspective got even clearer when she told in the first stimulated recall that "I am also trying to make them speak but we do not have a speaking exam in the end."

During the sessions, it was observed that she constantly reminded her students of their exams and tried to provide some cues on how the topic or elements she was teaching at that moment would be asked in the exam. Some of her reminders in these sessions were as follows:

"There might be some questions on these social phrases" (1st observation)

"They might ask you to classify the words as countable or uncountable" (1st observation)

"Most probably you will be asked to fill in the blanks with these quantifiers" (2nd observation)

"I don't think you will be responsible for these words in the third quiz" (3rd observation)

"This reading is too difficult. You may have an easier one in the exam" (3rd observation)

"The exam will mostly be based on reported speech" (4th observation)

The most important thing about these statements was that she not only uttered them orally but also did a small demonstration of the statement spending four or five minutes or giving some extra homework. For example, after she reminded her students that they might be asked about countable and uncountable nouns in the 1st observed lesson, she quickly wrote twelve words on the board and asked students to classify them. In another situation, when she emphasized the importance of reported speech for the forthcoming exam, she gave five pages of homework which included exercises on this topic.

There were also some parts in Eda's reflections that revealed the importance she gave to the issue of testing during her class hours. Especially the ones written for the weeks just before exams included her narrations on what she did for these exams. For example, she wrote in her second reflection that the students had had an exam on Friday and for this reason she quickly covered the topics on the first three days of the week and did two hours of exercises with students on Thursday (Eda reflection, p. 4). In her final reflection report which was written one or two weeks before the proficiency exam, her statements showed how that exam was important for her:

“In the program, we were supposed to cover the last two sections of the final module during that week but we covered them last week to study for the final and proficiency exams this week. I prepared a study pack which included vocabulary, grammar and reading exercises for my students and we went over it” (Eda reflection 7, p.1).

In addition to these specific instances that showed the importance of testing in her classroom practices, Eda reported significant details regarding the impact of testing policies on her classroom practices and how she thought about this issue during the second and third interviews.

“Of course it is because it makes no sense for students if they can't be successful in the exam. Ok, they are here to learn this language and it is the exams that show they can or can't learn. I mean this is a need for students and I am trying to meet that need with some of my classroom practices. That's why I mostly use these, as you said, reminders and prepare small questions for them or give exam-like exercises” (2nd interview, 01.05.2015).

“Well, I guess the most influential one is testing because it very important for your students. I think none of the teachers working here can deny the influence of it because I know everyone is doing something related to the exams in their classrooms.....It never affects the flow of my lesson completely or change the content of it, but I sometimes need to integrate some extras into the lesson. I think that is not something negative and it is not a problem for me” (3rd interview - 12.06.2015).

As it is seen, Eda thought that the importance her students gave to the exam made the issue of testing an important part of her classroom practices and she perceived it as a student need to be met. To do it, she admitted that she integrated several small

elements to the flow of her lessons but she never changed the content or flow of her lessons completely. She also reported that such implications were also used by other instructors and they were quite normal as long as they were done for the benefit of students.

In general, it was concluded that the issue of testing took an important place in Eda's classroom practices. She constantly made some reminders to students about their exams, prepared questions, materials and worksheets that included exam-like elements and integrated them into her classroom implications. Perceiving this impact of testing quite natural, she also reported that her students needed them and that was the main reason of all these practices.

4.4.2. Curriculum

When this study was conducted, there was a curriculum office in Eda's institution. There were about ten instructors in this office who were responsible for planning the weekly programs for the levels and inform other instructors about what they were supposed to cover during a week. While referring to this office, Eda stated that "they are neither very systematic and disciplined nor lazy and easygoing; just the middle" (2nd interview - 01.05.2015). Like the other instructors, Eda was also supposed to cover the content informed by the office every week. In all her sessions, she seemed to cover the required content and have no problems in keeping up with the pace of the curriculum (Only in the third session, she said she did not have time to listen to the song in the book but then she managed to do it anyway). For this reason, no direct influence or intervention of the curriculum was observed in her lessons. However, it was found out during the interviews and in the written reflections that she sometimes had problems regarding the existence of a certain and pre-determined curriculum.

Eda expressed her first ideas during the second interview. When the researcher asked how she felt about following a certain program and how it influenced her practices, she stated that she did not feel too disturbed but she focused on two points which sometimes put her in a difficult situation and made her feel negative about the

curriculum policies. Firstly, she reported that she sometimes did not have enough time to teach a subject in detail or to make revision of a previous topic.

“For example, students may not sometimes understand a topic well and you need to make extra activities or even explain it again on the following days. Whenever you do it, you fall behind the program. At this time, you try hard to keep up with it and teach some parts too quickly. That is again disadvantageous for students. For this reason, it sometimes puts you in a very desperate situation” (2nd interview - 01.05.2015).

The other point she mentioned was similar to the point above which again put her in a difficult situation and was not beneficial for students.

“Another point that came to my mind is that they sometimes put some difficult topics in the same week and students get confused. For example last year we covered passive voice and reported speech in the same week and students understood none of them.....For example, we taught a paragraph type two weeks ago but it would be perfect if we covered it this week because we had more suitable content in the course book” (2nd interview - 01.05.2015).

In her utterances above, she highlighted the facts in which following a program created problems for her classroom teaching and students. It was quite clear that the program's being pre-determined and not being flexible for revision or extra activities create some negative feelings for Eda. Finally, while making a general evaluation on how the existence of a pre-determined program influenced or shaped her classroom practices, she stated her general ideas and some of her utterances were really salient:

“Well, sometimes you feel as if you had no voice in this process. I mean, you just do what you are told to do. In this aspect, I sometimes feel me and my teaching style is restricted, but in general I am not too disturbed with this situation. Teaching is not an easy job and the program guides you in this process. I only wish I had more freedom and flexibility in my classroom so that I could do whatever I wanted. Of course, within the scope of the curriculum (smiling)” (3rd interview - 12.06.2015).

Based on these findings, it was concluded that although the content of classroom teaching was mainly determined by the curriculum of her school, it did not have a direct impact on shaping Eda's classroom practices. In other words, the effect of curriculum was found to be an indirect one which sometimes compelled Eda to

follow a certain schedule, did not sometimes allow her what she wanted to do, or put her in a difficult situation with wrong content sequencing. It was also revealed that this situation did not worry Eda much, but would have made her feel better if it had allowed her more freedom in her class.

4.5. Conclusion

This chapter reported the findings on the first case of this study, Eda. The findings revealed significant elements that formed her language teacher cognition, the characteristics of her classroom practices and what factors in her institution influenced her classroom implications. Table 2 presents the elements that were found to be influential on the constructs mentioned below.

Table 3. The summary of Eda’s case

Main Sources of Eda’s Language Teacher Cognition	Eda’s Classroom Practices	The Impact of Institutional Factors
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Language learning experiences <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Teachers in the past ✓ Language learning habits • Pre-service education <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Methodology courses ✓ Teacher educators ✓ The practicum • Experiences as a teacher <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Being a novice teacher ✓ Getting more experienced 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Eda’s language teaching philosophy • Learners • Improvisational teaching • The course book 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Testing policies • Curriculum policies

The results demonstrated that her language learning experiences in the past, the pre-service education she had at university, her language teaching experiences as a novice teacher and as an experienced one were influential on the formation of her

cognition as a language teacher. It was understood from her utterances that she began to have initial conceptualizations on how to be a good teacher in her high school years and how a language should be learnt based on her study habits. During her pre-service education, courses related with teaching methodologies, teacher educators she had and her practice teaching experiences had a significant effect on her development as a teacher candidate. After university, she reported that she experienced a reality shock when she started to teach as a novice teacher and most of her classroom teaching functioned as a trial and error mechanism. During those years, she stated that she changed some of her habits and principles as a teacher and the knowledge of teaching she currently had was, in a way, shaped by her experiences. At the end of all these processes, it was seen that she constructed her own language teaching philosophy which was clearly observed during her classroom teaching.

Her classroom practices, on the other hand, were mainly shaped by her language teaching philosophy. Most of her instructional decisions were made based on a pedagogical background which was closely inter-related with the elements that formed her language teacher cognition. For this reason, her classroom practices and cognition were observed to be closely related. Other factors which significantly influenced her classroom implications were found to be the learners, her improvisational decisions and the course book. It was observed that learners are at the centre of all her practices. She had a firm relationship with her students but she paid a special attention to their comfort, welfare and feelings. Some parts during her class hours were intervened by her improvisations which were spontaneous but successful in terms of their integration in the flow of the lesson. During her class hours, she had to follow a course book which had a salient effect on her implications. Though she was neutral about using that book, she reported that she sometimes had to cover a topic in the way the course book wanted her to do, which, in the end made her feel negative about the existence of it.

Finally it was reported that the issue of testing and the existence of a pre-determined curriculum were the institutional factors that had an effect on Eda's classroom practices. According to her, testing was an important element for students in this

process and the importance her students gave to testing made it a significant element of her classroom practices. During class sessions, she was observed to be making constant reminders on testing and to prepare materials in order to help students prepare for the exams. Although determining the content of her classroom teaching, the curriculum of her school was found to be indirectly affecting her classroom practices. She stated that she sometimes had to keep up with it and for this reason; she could not focus on several subjects in detail or make necessary revisions. This was disadvantageous for students and sometimes put her in a difficult situation. She also expressed that being guided by a pre-determined curriculum was not a problem for her but she would have felt better if she had had more freedom in her classroom implications.

CHAPTER 5

THE CASE OF MERT

5.1. Introducing Mert

Mert was born in one of the small towns in the east of Turkey and spent his childhood in this city. Due to his parents' jobs, his family came to a city in the west of Turkey and he started his schooling experience there. In the first years of his schooling experience, he had some problems due to the lack of self-confidence or self-perception of inefficacy. He said that he had always been used to compare himself with his peers and blamed himself to be stupid. After these problematic years, he started the secondary school of an Anatolian high school which had one year of English preparatory program before the sixth grade. He referred to this year as “a new white page in my educational life” (1st interview, 18.03.2015). Being his first meeting English, this year was very important in his life since he discovered his own potential and became enthusiastic about learning a foreign language.

His first experiences with English in those years were quite positive and his positive attitude towards it went on during high school years. He went to an Anatolian teacher training high school for three years during which he had considerable amount of English courses. After high school, he took the nation-wide university entrance exam and due to his good score, he was placed in the language teaching department of one of the best mainstream universities in Turkey. He had his pre-service education there and after graduation he worked as a teaching assistant in Germany for a year within the scope of the Comenius Project. When he turned back to Turkey, he took the KPSS exam but could not get enough score to work as a teacher in mainstream schools. For this reason, he started to work as an EFL teacher in a private primary school in his hometown. In this first teaching experience, he had extremely difficult time to teach students because of their childish and naughty behaviours (1st interview, 18.03.2015). One year later, he had some problems with the manager of

that school, resigned from there and started to work as an instructor in a relatively good state university. He is still working in the English preparatory program of that university. At the time of the study, he had 16 hours of course-load with intermediate learners.

Mert is a quite social person and he has been to many parts of Europe. Currently, he has high level of self-confidence and he thinks that he has a good command of English. He is very fond of using technology and loves using it in his classroom. He does not have any plans for doing a master or PhD in the field but he wants to get accredited teaching certificates.

This chapter presents the case of Mert; how he grew up as a professional teacher and what contributed to the formation of his cognition as a language teacher. What shaped his classroom implications and how the factors in his current institution influenced these practices are also reported during the chapter.

5.2. Main Sources of Mert's Language Teacher Cognition

The findings about Mert demonstrated that, like in the case of Eda, his language learning experiences in the past, the pre-service education he had at university and his experiences as a teacher formed his language teacher cognition. However, the degree of their impact on this ongoing process was very different from the case of Eda. It was reported that the pre-service education was influential in his gaining all the pedagogical skills but not as much as his own teaching experiences as a teacher. It was also revealed his language learning experiences had a different element in itself; his language learning aptitude.

5.2.1. Language learning experiences

5.2.1.1. Language learning aptitude

As it is mentioned before, Mert thought that he had a good command of English, and during the interviews, it was revealed that the roots of his perception went back to years when he was a language learner. His first experience with English was when he started secondary school with the English preparatory program, and he slowly began to discover his potential to learn English. Even on those days, he believed that he had

a high level of language learning aptitude and that was the main reason of his success in English classes. While talking about those days, he believed that the reasons he stated had an important place in his development.

“I was really talented to learn English because I had serious problems in learning the other courses but when I started the prep year, everything was different for me. I quickly understood almost everything what our teachers taught and began to be the best student in the class..... I think it was the ability I had from birth” (1st interviews - 18.03.2015).

During the years he spent at secondary school, his enthusiasm and success in English were the same and he always was the most brilliant student in English classes. Mert emphasized that the more he discovered his potential and became successful, the more his teachers began to value him and they had a very good relationship. He also stated that his self-confidence, emerged as a result of success in English, influenced his success in other courses positively as well. In the 7th and 8th grades, he enjoyed studying English and doing exercises in his free time, and for this reason he almost knew everything taught by his teachers whereas his friends struggled a lot to learn those subjects. He told an interesting memory while he was referring to this situation in the 7th grade.

“Every lesson was the same. The teachers were asking questions and my hand was always up. One day, I never forget, I went towards one of my teachers and said ‘Teacher, I really know the answer of any question you ask and raise my hand. My arm gets tired, and I can’t do it towards the end of the lesson. Please keep in mind that I want to answer all the questions and think as if I was raising my hand.’ Really. I am not exaggerating but that was the situation” (1st interviews - 18.03.2015).

Mert reported that his perceived efficacy and potential in learning English went on when he was at high school. He was always ahead of his friends and he never had to work hard to learn new structures and linguistic items. When he was in the 9th grade, he even felt ready for the university entrance exam which he was supposed to take at the end of the 11th grade. When mentioning those days, he uttered that “most of my teachers told me that I was the best student they had ever had and everybody believed that I would have an excellent degree in the university entrance exam, most

probably in the top hundred” (1st interviews - 18.03.2015). At the end, he became the 108th among more than fifty thousand students thanks to his aptitude (on his own words) and he was placed in one of the best pre-service programs in Turkey.

During the data collection process, it was understood that Mert believed his perceived language learning aptitude was one of the main factors of his success in his language-related career. In fact, a more important point in his perception was how his language learning aptitude influenced his initial conceptualizations in language teaching. During the first and third interviews, Mert was asked to elaborate on this issue and his narrations showed that his aptitude planted the seeds of his career as a teacher:

“...because even in those years I used to think that ‘I must be in the best place regarding my career with English. In fact, in secondary school, I didn’t think about being a teacher but I decided to improve my English as much as I could” (1st interview - 18.03.2015).

“Towards the end of high school, I eventually began to think that “a person should do the job which he can do best” and my area of expertise was English in those years (smiling)” (3rd interview - 10.06.2015).

“.....To be a good English teacher, first you must be good at English, and if you are good at English, you can teach your students how to be good at it. I can say that is the foundation of my career as a teacher because being good at English eventually forced me to be a good English teacher who can easily grow up students with a good command of English” (3rd interview - 10.06.2015).

As it is quite clear in the narrations above, Mert’s perceived language learning aptitude played an important role in the early years of his language-related career. All kinds of success in his language learning process made him feel that he should improve himself as much as he could do and made a career with his good English. Although, it was not found to have a very direct influence on his cognition as a language teacher, it was seen that his aptitude and positive attitude in learning English laid the foundations of his career as an EFL teacher.

5.2.1.2. Teachers in the past

When Mert's narrations on his language learning experiences were examined, it was understood that he had pretty good relationships with his teachers during his first experience with English in the preparatory program and his later years as a successful language learner. As in the case of Eda, Mert's teachers were also quite influential on his early knowledge formation on how to teach English effectively and treat students. Besides, it was also observed that Mert's classroom behaviours carried the traces of his teachers in the past.

Mert had his first experiences with EFL teachers during the English preparatory year he studied in just before secondary school and these first experiences were extremely positive. He was so amazed with the styles, activities and attitudes of his teachers that he referred to those days as "a revolution" during the interviews:

"Everything they did was amazing. I mean their activities, games, books, material were very different and interesting for us because we were taught very traditionally in primary school and after that, it was like a revolution. We were singing songs and playing games during class hours. I remember such lessons made those teachers very valuable for us" (1st interview - 18.03.2015).

Emphasizing the fact that no other teacher had been that much influential in his life, Mert reported that he even criticized other teachers in the following years of his secondary and high school years not being as good as the ones in prep class. Mert also believed that his teachers in this prep year made him love English classes and affected the start of this long-lasting process positively. He also loved his teachers so much that he never got offended even if they were angry with him, and he used to think that there were some points he needed to improve whenever these teachers criticized him. He admired these teachers because of their attitudes towards students and this was quite clear in an unforgettable memory which he had with one of these teachers:

"I never forget, one day I was standing in front of a window so depressed and extremely exhausted because of doing my homework. Canan teacher came to me and asked why I looked so bad. I told her the situation. She said 'Ok, no problem. I will also talk to Muammer teacher and don't do your homework today, go and rest at

home.’ That evening, I didn’t do homework but it was such a wonderful behaviour for me that I did a lot more for the following weeks. That behaviour was very important and critical for my success during this year” (1st interview - 18.03.2015).

Mert’s narrations also showed that the teaching styles of his teachers in this program were influential on his style as a teacher. He reported that Muammer teacher was a bit traditional, explaining topics and doing exercises, whereas Canan teacher’s classes were quite interactive, full of activities and communicative. During the interviews, he admitted that he felt as if he had had a teaching style which was a combination of two and thought that his teachers had an important role on it (1st interview - 18.03.2015).

In addition to Mert’s general perspective regarding his teachers’ impact on him, there were significant elements observed in his classroom practices which were reported to be influenced by the styles of his teachers in the past. For example, during the first two sessions, it was observed that Mert loved monitoring in class whenever he told his students to do a task or an exercise on their own, and his monitoring behaviour was consistent. When he was asked why he gave such an importance to monitoring during class sessions, he expressed that that was the technique of Canan teacher (one of his teachers in the prep year), she never sit in her desk while they were doing something on their own and they would ask anything in a very sincere atmosphere created by that behaviour (2nd interview - 29.04.2015). In addition to this, he played a game with his students in the fourth observed session to revise some previously thought vocabulary items. During the game, a student voluntarily came to the board and sat on his chair looking at her friends but couldn’t see the board. Mert wrote a new vocabulary item on the board in each case and other students tried to explain the word in English to the student sitting on the chair. During the fourth SR, it was seen that the origins of the activity were based on his school years:

“Canan teacher was doing this activity and I always looked forward to it because it was very funny. I adapted it a little bit; I do not form groups to save time and give some extra performance grades to the students coming to the board. I think it is very useful to revise the words I taught in previous weeks and I can use it with any group of learners” (4th SR interview - 27.05.2015).

First two observations also showed that Mert always awarded his students' participation with a motivating word like "perfect, well-done or good job" or with his gestures. He stated in the second interview on this issue that "Canan teacher did it when I was a student and I loved hearing those words from her." In one of the sessions, it was also observed that his understanding on how to teach grammar had the traces of his experiences with the teachers in the past. For example, while teaching relative clauses in the second observed lesson, it was seen he gave very specific details, which even made the researcher question the necessity of teaching those points (2nd observation). While explaining the reason why he paid attention to even very small details, he again referred to his past experiences with teachers:

"Well, in fact, it is like a habit, I teach every small detail to my students and I believe in its effectiveness..... Muammer teacher, you remember when I was at secondary school, might be the reason because he was teaching like this, every and every detail. I learnt a lot thanks to his style. Maybe that is the reason why I teach like that" (2nd SR interviews - 15.04.2015).

Based on Mert's ideas and memories in the past, it was concluded that his teachers, especially the ones he had in English preparatory year at secondary school, had an important place in his career as a teacher. They were such good models for him on how to be a good teacher that he did not like other teachers in his educational career. Classroom implications of these teachers and their attitudes towards students had been so admirable for Mert that their traces were observable in both general and specific perspectives while he was talking about his pedagogical thoughts and implications.

5.2.2. Pre-service education

Thanks to his very good degree in the university exam, Mert had the chance of getting his pre-service education in one of the best state universities in Turkey. He reported that he had had a lot of expectations to learn how to teach English but he was a bit disappointed even on the initial days of his pre-service years. He referred to those days as "the university version of culture shock" (1st interview - 18.03.2015) because he had experienced many challenges and stressful moments on those days. He also expressed that he was very disturbed by the attitudes of most of the teacher

educators since they had paid no special attention to freshman students: “They came and told their lessons as if we had been there for years” (1st interview - 18.03.2015). Although he started with such negative feelings to his pre-service education, he successfully completed the program with a good cumulative grade.

While making a general evaluation what impact this education had on his learning-to-teach process, he uttered that the pre-service education was “theoretically full but practically insufficient” (3rd interviews - 10.06.2015) and he believed in general that its impact on his knowledge of teaching was less than he expected. Nevertheless, the data derived from his narrations showed that methodology courses and his practicum experiences influenced his knowledge base to some extent.

5.2.2.1. Methodology courses

While talking about the courses he took during the pre-service, Mert stated to believe that most of them did not contribute to his cognition because the initial courses were not related to how to teach, and literature and linguistics courses developed him just intellectually. His thoughts on methodology courses were a bit different. He admitted that he had learnt a lot during these courses but they were too theoretical:

“I still remember that we learnt almost everything an English teacher needs to know; teaching skills, methods, testing, preparing lesson plans etc. However, they were all theoretical and we had no chance to see whether we could apply them or not..... I remember we were doing demo lessons in these courses. Some of us were teaching and the others were behaving like students. For God’s sake, isn’t it funny? Is it possible that it creates the effect like teaching in a real class?” (1st interview - 18.03.2015).

For the reason as he mentioned above, he thought that methodology courses were not very beneficial for him. However, during data collection process, it was found out that there were important elements, which referred to the methodology courses, in his practices. For example, his second observed session mainly included a grammar focus in which he tried to teach relative clauses. During this session, it was seen that he followed the process of presentation-practice-production while teaching it. When the researcher asked him to elaborate on this, he reported that it was the most

common way of teaching a grammar point and he learnt it in methodology courses at university (2nd SR interview - 15.04.2015). In the lesson, he started teaching the topic in an implicit way rather than just writing the rules on the board and explaining them. His utterances on this issue again showed the impact of methodology courses.

The researcher: Here, you preferred to start with some example sentences written in the course book. Do you always start in this way, I mean showing some examples to students and pushing them to discover?

Mert: Yes, yes. I don't like just writing the rules on the board from the beginning and then explaining them all. I don't believe that it is useful.

The researcher: Then, how do you know yours is useful?

Mert: Well, that is what we were taught; to teach the topics in an implicit way. It was always said in methodology courses that we should not start with the rules, and instead give students opportunities so that they can discover the rules on their own" (2nd SR interview - 15.04.2015).

As it was revealed, he reported that he had gained most of his grammar teaching principles in the methodology courses at university. In addition to this, there were some other similar narrations both in other interviews and his reflections which showed the significant effect of teaching-related courses of his pre-service education. In the first two observed sessions, it was seen that Mert spoke English in most of the lessons and he replied in English even if his students asked something in Turkish. During the second interviews, he was asked whether he paid special attention to do it and he replied that he believed in the effectiveness of Krashen's comprehensible input theory and tried to provide it as much as possible by speaking English during class hours. Moreover, while he was covering a reading text on drug addiction on the third observed lesson, he wanted his students to do first skimming and then scanning before reading it. When he was asked where he learnt to use these techniques to teach reading, he again referred to the methodology courses and said that "they were unique ways to make students familiar with the text" (3rd SR interview - 13.05.2015). Finally, in one of his reflection reports, he mentioned how he conducted a writing activity and followed the steps of teaching writing in that week, and again the traces of methodology courses were quite clear:

“I taught the first elements on how to write an opinion essay on Monday like mind-mapping and preparing an outline. Based on this, they submitted their first draft on Tuesday..... They brought the finalized version on Friday and got their performance grades.....This is the classical way for me to teach a new type of writing.....I made a presentation on those steps in one of our courses at university, thus I never forget how and when to use them” (summarized from Mert reflection 4, p. 2).

The findings above put forward that methodology courses Mert took during his pre-service education had a relatively significant impact on his language teacher cognition although he believed that they did not contribute to his learning-to-teach process a lot because of their being too theoretical. Based on this, it was a bit clear that his beliefs and practices on this issue did not match because he frequently referred to the knowledge he gained in these courses while talking about the fundamental reasons of his several implications. It was also revealed that most of his grammar teaching philosophy was purely based on what he learnt during the pre-service education.

5.2.2.2. *The practicum*

Within the scope of the pre-service education which was referred by Mert as practically insufficient, it was understood that the only chances to observe or conduct a lesson in a real classroom atmosphere were school experience and practice teaching courses. Mert stated that his experiences in the first phase of practicum were based on observations and completing certain tasks and forms. He thought that this experience was not beneficial for him in terms of teaching methods but he learnt a lot about student and teacher behaviours:

“To be honest, I didn’t learn anything about methods and techniques of teachers, I mean I didn’t see anything interesting or special. However, the courses I observed were important for me in the sense that I learnt a lot about student behaviours in class and teacher behaviours towards students. In what aspects the teacher was not effective and some alternative teacher behaviours that would make certain situations better were the most important points for me..... I observed, thought and learnt a lot by observing them.” (1st interview - 18.03.2015).

During the interviews, Mert reported that he had the only teaching experience of pre-service education in the practicum in his last year when he was assigned to a high school. Besides being a very good chance to practice his teaching skills, this experience was very important for him to set real relationship with students. Although there were not any specific elements of teaching or principles that were observed during the class hours or written in the reflection reports that belonged to his practice teaching experience, his utterances below showed that it was influential on his conceptualizations on how to conduct a lesson as a prospective teacher:

“I can’t exactly remember but I guess I conducted 4 or 5 lessons. Getting prepared for each of them, application of all these in a real classroom and teaching real students in a real classroom were all unique experiences for me.....they were very sincere to me and I was too. I was very happy to be able to have a good relationship with students” (1st interview - 18.03.2015).

During this talk, Mert touched upon a very interesting point about his experiences during the practicum. When the researcher asked him about the role of his supervisor teacher educator, he stated that he had loved getting prepared for the lessons in the practicum but he had paid a special attention to prepare the materials and activities that his supervisor (teacher educator) would like or would approve. In other words, during his practicum experience, he sometimes had to do or prepare the things that he did not want to do due to his supervisor’s opinions. His utterances during the interviews illustrated the issue better:

“I was going to teach second conditionals in one of these lessons. I had planned a warm-up for this lesson but she told me that starting with a song would have been better. I didn’t like the idea but I had to start with this song.....We knew that she was grading us and we felt that we had to do what she liked. Eventually her grades would decide whether we would pass this course or not” (1st interview - 18.03.2015).

Mert’s narrations on his pre-service education demonstrated that he partly believed in the impact of his pre-service education on his cognition. According to him, pre-service years taught him everything theoretical but he wasn’t provided enough opportunities to practice them. Methodology courses and his practicum experiences were found to be the only significant factors belonging to those years. Even if he did

not believe that methodology courses had contributed to his language teacher cognition, there were significant elements in observations and reflections for which he referred to these courses. As for the practicum, he expressed that he had been very happy to have the opportunity to observe real classroom atmospheres and to practice his teaching skills in spite of being aware of the fact that he was evaluated by his supervisor. In fact, Mert's thoughts and feelings were quite clear while he was making a general evaluation regarding the impact of his pre-service education on his knowledge as a teacher: "my education at university taught me almost everything on how to be an ideal teacher with ideal students, but I was able to apply none of them when I started to work as a teacher because neither me nor my students were ideal" (3rd interview - 10.06.2015). For this reason, it can be concluded that Mert's pre-service education was theoretically very useful but the lack of opportunities to practice his teaching skills made the impact of it less than expected in Mert's eyes.

5.2.3. Experiences as a teacher

After his graduation from the pre-service program, Mert started to work in a private school in which he had his first experiences as an EFL teacher teaching primary and secondary school students. He worked there for one year, gave a short break and then started to work at the English preparatory program of a state university where he has spent about 5 years and is still working. In his narrations, it was very clear that his teaching experiences played a very important role on his pedagogical skills and he really believed that he learnt teaching by experiencing it (3rd interview- 10.06.2015). The results also showed that being a novice teacher, his colleagues and being more experienced were the main elements that contributed to the formation of his teaching skills as a result of his experiences.

5.2.3.1. Being a novice teacher

As it was mentioned in the case of Eda in the previous chapter, the experience of being a novice teacher was very challenging for Mert as well. His narrations on this issue also showed that he had similar experiences like Eda when he first started teaching as an EFL teacher. Referring to those days as "a bigger shock than the one you experience in an ice bucket challenge" (1st interview - 18.03.2015), Mert stated

that he had very difficult times, he even thought about resigning, when he started to teach his first secondary and primary school students although he had been educated in one of the best universities in Turkey. The sentences below uttered by him in different interviews showed how disappointed and problematic he felt during those days:

“I knew a lot about teaching but I lacked the ability to put them into practice” (1st interview - 18.03.2015).

“It was not as easy as we observed in the practicum and school experience at university” (1st interview - 18.03.2015).

“I felt I was learning everything from the beginning by experiencing them” (3rd interview - 10.06.2015).

“I couldn’t do anything in a natural way. Everything was too artificial” 3rd interview - 10.06.2015).

“I felt so stupid when I was not able to cut a paper in the shape of a baby” (1st interview - 18.03.2015).

The statements taken from his narrations illustrated the fact that the days Mert spent as a novice EFL teacher was a process in which he began to realize certain elements in his teaching; a) he began to feel a huge gap between his theoretical and practical knowledge, b) he understood the fact that the issue of teaching was not as easy as he expected, and c) he began to identify his weaknesses as an EFL teacher by experiencing what he knew. Based on these, Mert believed that being a novice teacher made a big contribution to his language teacher cognition although it was a very challenging process.

According to Mert, the most important point that he developed as a teacher during his novice years was his classroom management skills. He stated that he had felt very inadequate to manage his classrooms initially but he learnt a lot on how to behave towards students, how to react in problematic situations and how to organize his classroom effectively when he wanted to make an activity. In some of the instances during the data collection process, he also expressed that the origins of the most of his decisions on his classroom management went back to his novice years. For

example, in the first SR interview, he was asked whether having a U-shape classroom design was his decision and he replied that he loved this design and had been using this for a long time: “I remember a lot of things changed when I first decided to do it with my 7th grades” (1st SR interview - 01.04.2015). In addition, during the second class session, it was observed that a student was continually playing with his smart phone while Mert was explaining the rules of an important grammar structure. After the lesson, the researcher asked him whether he was aware of it. His answer to it was again related to his novice years:

“Of course yes, but I prefer to ignore them..... I had a similar situation with an 8th grader in my first year of teaching. I saw him playing with his mobile, took it and said I would give it only when his parents came to see me. His parents came to school and we had a very serious argument. They thought I had humiliated their son among his friends. This taught me a lot and since then, I have never intervened in such situations. That is their preferences.” (2nd SR interview - 15.04.2015).

Another point on which Mert’s novice years became influential was his awareness on the preparation, selection and application of appropriate activity types during his classroom teaching. In a general sense, while making an evaluation on the impact of his teaching experience, Mert admitted that his experiences as a novice teacher made him more aware on certain aspects of classroom activities and added that “I learnt which activity worked better with which learners and what I should or should not do while organizing or applying an activity” (3rd interview - 10.06.2015). Upon this, he told a very interesting and funny memory which he had with his students in that private school. He thought that although he did not feel good at the time of this situation and even felt discouraged, he learnt his lesson from it:

“I prepared small colourful fish using paper for my 3rd graders and they got mad when they saw them and we spent two or three hours playing with them. I thought I would use these fish and adapt an activity for my 7th graders. I never forget the moment they first saw them. They asked ‘Teacher, what will we do with these small pieces of paper?’, and I eagerly said ‘they are not little pieces of paper, they are fish, and we are going to write some speech bubbles for these little pretty fish’. They only said “Himm...” and you can’t imagine how disappointed their faces were” (3rd interview - 10.06.2015).

The findings showed that being a novice teacher was a very challenging process for Mert. During this period, he learnt a lot about teaching and took an important step towards being a professional teacher. According to him, the most difficult part of this process was his inability to put what he learnt in the pre-service into practice and to see that most of them did not work (1st interview - 18.03.2015). On the other hand, he believed that his novice years were beneficial for him in the sense that he identified his weaknesses as a teacher, improved his classroom management skills and learnt a lot on how to organize and prepare better activities for his learners.

5.2.3.2. Colleagues

During the data collection process, Mert had so many references to his current and previous colleagues that the experiences he had with them deserved a special attention. His narrations on this issue revealed that the colleagues he had both in his current and previous institutions were quite helpful in his gaining appropriate pedagogical skills and adapting the workplace he worked. It was also found that Mert used to observe his more experienced colleagues and he learnt a lot about teaching thanks to his observations.

As it was mentioned before, his novice experiences were quite difficult for Mert and he had problems in managing his classes and preparing effective activities for his students. It was understood from his narrations that, his colleagues, especially the head of English department, were quite helpful for him and he asked about almost everything to them to get their ideas.

“those were difficult times but other teachers at school were quite helpful. I used to ask almost everything to them; ‘what should I do in this lesson?, is it good to teach it in this way?, I did this in that way, is it good?, what should I do if a student does this and many others. Especially Canan teacher, the head of English department, was a perfect teacher working there for years and she helped me a lot. She always tried to create some time for me, I told my experiences to her and she gave me advices on certain issues. These sessions were extremely beneficial for me and contributed to my teaching skills a lot on those days” (1st interview - 18.03.2015).

In addition, Mert reported that he had had many opportunities to attend the lessons of his colleagues as an observer and his perspectives as a teacher had improved a lot thanks to these observations. More importantly, he underlined that such observations were very meaningful for him in the sense that he had the chance to see that those teachers also had problematic moments during their classes: “I began to realize that I was not the only one having problems, and I just lacked the calmness they had while managing these problems” (1st interview - 18.03.2015). Such awareness gradually made him a more conscious teacher and he began to react more calmly and logically to any problems occurring in his classrooms.

The observations he made in those years were also quite beneficial for Mert in learning several activities for teaching language skills. There were even so influential on his practices that he still used some of them while teaching. For example, in the first observed session, Mert conducted a short speaking activity as an introduction in which he encouraged students to talk about their past experiences before he started teaching the grammar point (present perfect vs. present perfect continuous). When he was asked about this activity during the first SR interview, he expressed that he had observed this activity in one of the more experienced colleagues while he had been working in that private school. He also added that the activity was his favourite when he was to teach present perfect (1st SR interview - 01.04.2015). In another instance, he spent about 10 minutes of the second observed session for calling his students to his desk and telling them the mistakes they had done in their writings which they had written in the previous week. He was asked to elaborate on this style in the follow-up stimulated recall and his narrations again referred to his previous colleagues:

“That was what Canan teacher, the head of department, advised me while I was working in that private school. She told me that it would have been better if I had told students’ mistakes calling them one by one and showing their mistakes. She thought that students would take it more seriously if I did in that way. I applied it for my seventh graders in those years and it was useful for them. Then, it became like a habit and I always do it in that way” (2nd SR interview - 15.04.2015).

After his working experience in the private school, Mert started to work at university as an instructor. According to him, initial months as an instructor were also

challenging for him. He reported that he had several problems in adapting this new environment because the working atmosphere and the learner profile were totally different (1st interview – 18.03.2015). The findings derived from Mert’s narrations showed that his colleagues in this institution were also very helpful and he learnt a lot about teaching university students thanks to them.

During his first year as an EFL teacher at university, Mert had the opportunity to observe the lessons of more experienced colleagues and he was also observed by some of the coordinators in the program. He had to complete certain tasks while observing others and he received feedback from the coordinators when he was observed. Mert thought that this process was extremely beneficial for him adapting the atmosphere in the institution, learning the profile of learners and gaining the required teacher awareness for teaching that group of learners.

“Yes, it was like an institutional policy but the colleagues who observed me and whom I observed were wonderful people. Their suggestions and feedback were very important for me because I was working in a totally different place from the previous one. Teachers, students, administration, I mean everything was different. I sometimes felt like a first-year teacher. However, the assistance provided by these colleagues made the process easier, I learnt a lot of things about teaching that age group and I can say that it was the first step of being the teacher I am now” (3rd interview - 10.06.2015).

In addition to his general ideas, findings derived from the classroom observations also showed that the time he had spent with his more experienced colleagues – observations, chatting, discussion - in this institution contributed to his cognition and teaching style a lot. For instance, during the first two observed sessions, it was seen that students went out without taking permission while he was teaching (the number of going-outs was not disturbing). When the researcher asked whether that was his general attitude, he expressed that it was his final decision after observing his colleagues and their attitudes towards students: “Some teachers allowed with permission or some of them did not even allow..... I warn my students at the beginning of the term not to manipulate it and I think this is the best. They should know when to go out or not” (2nd interview - 29.04.2015). In the third observed session, Mert wanted to conduct a group-work activity on the grammar topic he had

previously taught. He gave all the instructions in English but some of the students seemed confused. Instead of using the mother tongue, he insisted on using English and at the end he was able to clarify the confusing points. In the follow-up stimulated recall, he was asked to comment on his attitude:

“That was a very important point for one of the coordinators who observed me when I started working here. She always emphasized the necessity of giving instructions in English and told me that ‘Once you use Turkish, it becomes your habit and it is the easiest way’. For this reason, I always tried hard to explain all instructions in English and now I do it in one way or another even if students’ profile is very low. That is my style now” (3rd SR interview - 13.05.2015).

As it is clear in Mert’s narrations, it was revealed that the colleagues he met in the previous and current workplaces not only helped him develop as a professional teacher especially in his novice years, but also guided him acquiring the pedagogical skills required for different learner profiles. The time Mert spent with these colleagues - discussions, observations, chatting - was found to be quite helpful for him in getting new insights on classroom management and teaching language skills. Thanks to them, Mert gradually became a more experienced teacher having calm and logical decisions in classroom applications.

5.2.3.3. More teaching experiences

Another important factor that contributed to the formation of Mert’s language teacher cognition was found to be his teaching experiences throughout the years he spent as an EFL teacher. In addition to his frequent utterances during the data collection process which emphasized the importance of his teaching experiences, Mert’s narrations revealed the fact that he gained most of his knowledge and skills of teaching by doing or experiencing. Starting from his novice years, all kind of experiences he had while teaching different learner profiles and working in different places made him gain awareness on real classroom teaching and reshape what he learnt during his pre-service education. In his own words, he felt as if he was learning everything from the beginning by experiencing them (3rd interview - 10.06.2015).

The most visible element that Mert admitted having gained through his teaching experience was his language teaching principles. It was quite clear in all his data – classroom observations, interviews and reflections – that he had certain principles on teaching language elements, classroom management and teacher attitudes towards students. More importantly, he frequently underlined the impact of his experiences on the formation of such principles whenever he was asked to elaborate on them. In one of the interviews, he drew a general picture regarding the influence of his experiences on his cognition.

“I cannot deny the fact that I learnt a lot about language teaching at university but as I said before, they were too theoretical for me once I started to teach as a real teacher. For this reason, I can clearly say that I learnt to be a teacher, in a real sense, through my experiences and in time. Now, I have my own teaching style, my own principles and my own behaviours, and all of them are the products of my experiences as a teacher” (3rd interview - 10.06.2015).

Along with this general perspective, some other more specific points observed during the class hours also supported the importance of Mert’s experiences on his teaching philosophy. There were many instances in his classroom teaching in which he emphasized this fact. For example, while he was explaining the slight difference between present perfect and present perfect continuous during the first observed session, he realized that his students were confused and then he began to explain it in Turkish. While he was talking on this issue in the follow-up SR, Mert expressed that though he had been told not to use the mother tongue while teaching English, his experiences had taught him to use it when necessary, especially for confusing points like this (1st SR interview, 01.04.2015). On the other hand, it was quite clear after the second observed session that Mert had a firm attitude towards students; neither too sincere nor too serious. He usually had a smiling face but never behaved students like a friend. He was asked to comment on his attitude during the second interview and the umbrella term for his ideas was again experience:

“Actually this is the ideal attitude for me. There were times in the past when I was very friendly towards my students but they were always ready to manipulate it. Then I became very serious while teaching some groups and they could never dare to make a joke with me, but in this time I did not enjoy what I was doing. I think the current one,

as you call “firm”, is the final and the ideal one for me. I smile at my students but they always know who they are. I am very happy with it” (2nd interview - 29.04.2015).

In another instance, during the third class hour, Mert covered a reading text on drug addiction and as soon as he finished the activity, he wanted the students to close their books, asked some questions about the text and gave pluses to the ones who gave correct answers to his questions. After the session, the researcher asked whether this activity was an improvisation, but he replied that he had been doing it for a long time. He also added that he had improved this on his own and such a questioning activity kept learners alert while conducting a reading activity because they knew that there would be questions at the end (3rd SR interview, 13.05.2015).

Mert’s writings in his reflection reports also included significant elements regarding the impact of his teaching experiences on the formation of his cognition as a language teacher. In his second reflection, for example, he mentioned conducting a listening activity in which he wanted students to close their books and take notes on what they heard from the recorder. While elaborating on this issue in the reflection, he wrote that he had conducted some of the listening activities in the book in this way although the instructions were given differently in the course book. He also stated that he had done this activity for about three years because he believed it helped students improve their listening skills more than the other type described in the course book (summarized from Mert, reflection 2, p. 2). In another report, he wrote about a kind of homework which he had given for the weekend and controlled on the first day of the week. For this homework, he asked students to create model cities using cartoons etc. and describe their cities in the class. On the day of the control, he turned his classroom into an exhibition and visited the stand of all model cities. In the details of this activity, he clearly mentioned that he improved this activity on his own as he gained awareness and experience on students’ interests and on other elements that would attract their attention (summarized from Mert, reflection 3, p. 1).

As all Mert’s narrations revealed, his eight-year teaching experiences had a very important place on his development as an EFL teacher. During his novice years which were quite challenging for him, he learnt a lot about real classroom teaching

and classroom management through experiencing. During these years and his initial months in his second workplace, his colleagues were quite helpful to him in gaining teaching skills and he again learnt a lot about teaching through observing them and having discussion with these colleagues on teaching-related issues. As years passed, all kinds of experiences he had made him develop professionally in terms of his pedagogical skills, and create his own teaching principles which shaped most of his language teaching practices.

5.3. Mert's Classroom Practices

Mert was teaching intermediate learners when the study was conducted. Due to the level of his students, his lessons involved more English compared to other participants. The same data collection process - video-recorded sessions, stimulated recalls, interviews and reflection reports – was followed in order to get in-depth data regarding his classroom practices and factors influencing them. The findings showed that learners were at the centre of his classroom practices which were mainly shaped by his language teaching principles and institutional factors.

5.3.1. Learners

From the very first moment of his observed session, it was very clear that Mert cared his students very much and he paid attention to their needs, interests and learning styles. In all of the sessions, it was observed that he made a big effort to make students feel relaxed, comfortable and energetic in the classroom atmosphere. For instance, during the first two sessions, it was seen that Mert was always standing and walking while he was teaching any subject, even when students were listening to a text and answering some questions. In the second interview, he was asked whether that was his usual behaviour in class and why he was always on the stage:

“If I do not have any health problems, I am always like this because I believe that if you sit behind your desk and do not walk around in your classroom, you can never make your students feel energetic and alert. I also think that this is the main reason why my students are active most of the time because their teacher is active (smiling)..... To cut it short, the answer is quite simple; for my students” (2nd interview - 29.04.2015).

Another important point which Mert constantly emphasized regarding his classroom teaching was his efforts to make the atmosphere a very comfortable one for his students. It was understood from his utterances that he was very careful about creating such an atmosphere and integrating his students into it. His statements below from various data collection times show how important creating a positive atmosphere was for his classroom practices:

“My students feel themselves like at home in my classroom” (1st interview - 18.03.2015).

“I am always very kind and helpful while correcting their mistakes” (1st SR interview - 01.04.2015).

“I try not to have any behaviour that would discourage them” (2nd interview - 29.04.2015).

“If we have a friendly atmosphere, I believe that they will be more active in class” (2nd interview - 29.04.2015).

“I have a positive and smiling face most of the time. Otherwise, you cannot get their real performances” (4th SR interview - 27.05.2015).

In all observed session, Mert clearly reflected his opinions into the classroom atmosphere and almost every moment of all his sessions was very positive and full of student participation. It was also observed that he was consciously careful in all his in-class decisions and movements in order to sustain this atmosphere and he organized his practices around it.

During the data collection process, it was also found out that attracting students' attention was another important point for Mert in shaping his classroom practices. In the first interview conducted at the beginning of the term, Mert actually emphasized how appealing to students' interests and attracting their attention were important for him as a teacher:

“Student interest and attention are very problematic issues for a teacher these days and as a teacher, I believe that any activity you conduct in class or any material that you use should appeal to students' interests. Otherwise, it is very difficult for an activity or

material to reach its goal. For this reason, I do my best to attract my students' attention while I am teaching" (1st interview - 18.03.2015).

Mert was again consistent in reflecting these opinions into his classroom practices and it was seen that he organized some of his activities and he consciously did something while teaching to get students' attention. For instance, during the second observed session in which he taught a grammar structure – relative clauses – he connected to the internet and found a song (You are still the one, by Shaina Twain) after he explained the structure in detail. In the follow-up SR, he stated that the topic was very important and his students began to lose their concentration; so, he wanted to give a short break which both attracted their attention and was related to the topic (2nd SR interview - 15.04.2015). In another example, he again used the internet to draw his students' attention while he was covering a text on drug use in the third observed session. Towards the end of the text, he opened a website which included some statistics on the drug-use of young generation in several countries. For this, he thought that students were to lose their concentration due to the reading and he did this to get them back before the vocabulary part which was very important for their next exam (3rd SR interview - 13.05.2015). Finally, in the fourth lesson, he distributed a short worksheet on a previously taught grammar topic and gave students 5 minutes to complete it. When they finished doing it, he wanted all of them to come to the board with the sheet. Then, he began to tell the correct answers and if a student did wrong, he/she went back to his/her desk while others were loudly saying "goodbye!!!" (Students enjoyed the activity a lot). In the interview, Mert was asked why he preferred to do such a simple question and answer activity in this way, he said that his students were interested in coming to the board and doing something together, so he did it in this way rather than simply telling the answers (4th SR interview - 27.05.2015).

The last important element in Mert's lesson which put forward the importance of learners for his classroom practices was observed during his grammar teaching (present perfect continuous in the first session and relative clauses in the second one). Although he was observed to be a teacher who constantly used English in his classes most of the time, gave all the instructions in English and tried hard to

paraphrase them even if students did not understand them, he used Turkish while he was teaching grammar. At first, he started to teach in English, but towards the end, (especially when he understood that students were getting a little bit confused), he used Turkish to teach every small detail of grammar topics. He enlightened this issue in the second interview, and the reason was again his students.

“As you know me, I do my best to speak English in class but during grammar teaching, it is a bit different. I always think that my students should know every detail of the grammar very well; I mean there should not even be a small gap in their mind about the grammar topic I teach.....Well, it is not because grammar is important for me but because it is important for my students. That is why I need to speak Turkish; to help them understand well” (2nd interview - 29.04.2015).

How Mert’s classroom practices centred on his students was also clear in his reflection reports. There were several elements in almost all his reflections which had the traces of this fact. Similar to the statements he uttered above, he again reported in the reflections that he used Turkish in the same way while teaching grammar, he was very careful while correcting students’ errors and he organized activities appealing to students’ interests. In addition to these, there were very specific points in the reflections which revealed the importance of students for him. For example, he mentioned an activity including family members which he had always used and again planned to use for that week while teaching past perfect, but he changed his plans when he remembered that a student’s father in his class had died because he thought that such an activity would make him very upset (Mert reflection 1, p.2). In his third reflection, he reported that his students were quite interested in movies and just for this reason he brought a reading text on the best and the worst movies in history and covered it instead of the one in the book which he was supposed to cover in that week. He wrote that he just gave the vocabulary items of the text and skipped it (Mert reflection 3, p. 4). In the same reflection, he also added that he did not start a very important topic because two of his students were ill and he waited for the next days to start it when they were in class. Finally, in his last reflection, he wrote about how he helped his students to get prepared for the proficiency exam and it was again quite salient that he performed a lot for his students:

“The last two days were full of doing exercises and tests which I photocopied for them for the proficiency exam..... Normally, finishing the topics earlier and doing such exercises are not tolerated in our school but my students really studied a lot and they needed such exercises..... In fact, it is a bit risky for me to do this but I think my students deserved it” (Mert reflection 6, p. 1).

As it is clear from all his narrations above, Mert paid great attention to his students’ interests, attention and needs, and they significantly shaped what he was doing in classroom atmosphere. Most of his classroom decisions depended on his learner profile and most of the time he behaved quite consciously and carefully to reflect this philosophy into classroom atmosphere. For these reasons, it can be concluded that Mert’s students were at the centre of his classroom practices.

5.3.2. Mert’s language teaching principles

The other factor that was found to be significantly influential on Mert’s classroom practices was his language teaching principles which he gained and formed through his career in language learning and teaching. The reason why they were called as “principles” was that Mert expressed his ideas regarding these principles in such a strict manner that (“this is taught in this way” or “it is impossible to teach it in that way”) the researcher felt as if it was impossible to change his ideas on these principles. In all data collection elements regarding his classroom practices, traces of these principles were quite visible.

The sessions in which he taught certain grammatical structures (present perfect continuous in the 1st session and relative clauses in the 2nd session) were very important in terms of observing how he reflected his principles into classroom practices. In both of the lessons, he followed the same procedure - from the beginning to the end – with different materials or elements to teach the grammar points. At first, he started with a warm up in which he tried to make his students familiar with the upcoming structure. In the first SR, he was asked to elaborate on this warm-up issue and he said it was very important for him and he could never imagine himself starting a grammar teaching without a warm-up (1st SR interview - 01.04.2015). In these lessons, after the warm-up, he started creating a context in which he helped his students discover the structures by writing some sentences on

the board or bringing an extra material including elements of the target structure. After that, he explained the elements and the usage of these structures in detail and by giving very specific examples (he sometimes used Turkish as mentioned before) in a very explicit way. Finally, he presented his students some opportunities in which they could practice what they learnt during the lessons. Since these two grammar teaching sessions were quite similar to each other, the researcher asked Mert whether that was his usual way of teaching grammar. His utterances showed how strict and confident he was in his ideas:

“Yes, this is almost the same when I teach grammar. I start with a warm-up. Then, I create opportunities in which they can discover the structure and after a while, I explain it in detail. At the end, we practice it through several activities.....Well, when we were at university, we were taught to teach grammar in an implicit way but my experiences showed that that is not always possible because you are sometimes required to teach in an explicit way..... Now, I believe that this is the best way to teach grammar and I think it works well because I have the combination of several techniques and my style appeals to almost every student” (2nd interview - 29.04.2015).

The second point which had the traces of Mert’s clear-cut language teaching principles was the issue of speaking. As mentioned before, Mert believed in the effectiveness of input-providing and he used the target language during classroom teaching as much as possible. He thought that his use of English was a unique model for his students and a unique chance in which they were exposed to the target language (1st SR interview - 01.04.2015). During the classroom observations, it was seen that he conducted speaking activities within the purpose of encouraging students to produce previously learnt structures. In the first observed session, for instance, he conducted a speaking activity which he remembered from his novice years, and he encouraged his students to form sentences using present perfect. In the second session which included the teaching of relative clauses, he organized a speaking activity just after the song students listened on relative clauses. In the activity, he showed some pictures to the students and wanted them to form relative clause sentences orally and quickly. In the follow-up interview, he commented on his philosophy preparing such activities and he was again very definite about his ideas.

“My students’ producing sentences orally is vital for me because this classroom is the only chance for them to speak in English..... I usually organize them after teaching a new structure but I also have speaking activities in some other times.....It makes no sense if they do not use already-learnt items while speaking and it is the teacher’s job to create the appropriate atmosphere for them to do it. Otherwise, language teaching is not different from teaching any other subject” (2nd SR interview - 15.04.2015).

Mert’s language teaching principles were also quite dominant and salient while he was covering a reading text and teaching new vocabulary items. During the third observed session, he covered a reading text for which he had done skimming and scanning, read the text with students, paraphrased the sentences which he thought was difficult and asked questions related to the text at the end. Since it was the only reading part that was observed, the researcher asked Mert whether he followed the same procedure when he taught reading. His sentences again revealed that he had certain principles to cover a reading text in classroom atmosphere.

“Yes, I can say that I usually start with skimming or scanning or sometimes ask questions that will make them familiar with the topic. Then we read the text and I try to paraphrase or use my body language to clarify some difficult points. At the end I usually ask questions about the text and grade their performances..... Well, this is typical but I learnt in time that it is very effective if I cover it in this way. They are always alert and they understand every text very well” (3rd SR interview - 13.05.2015).

As mentioned before, Mert started the fourth observed session with a vocabulary game which helped students recall some previously taught vocabulary items. After that, he continued with the book where he stopped in the previous lesson and the next part was a vocabulary section which included some new vocabulary items. He wrote them on the board and asked his students to find their meanings using their dictionaries. When students finished doing this, Mert confirmed the meaning of each item and then wanted them to form sample sentences for each new item. At the end, he listened to the sentences formed by his students and finished that part. In the follow-up SR, there occurred a dialogue on this issue which again showed how persistent Mert was in his ideas.

Mert: I do these parts more or less the same way

The researcher: Do you have a specific reason? I mean, why do you prefer to teach new vocabulary items in this way?

Mert: Well, in fact there is not a very clear or specific reason. It is mostly based on my experiences. I have observed that students learn better when they do it on their own and learning new vocabulary items is a good opportunity for them to do this. They find the meanings and form sentences on their own. I just guide them or correct their mistakes.

The researcher: Have you ever used other techniques such as presenting them in context or asking them to keep vocabulary notebooks?

Mert: Well, in the past yes, when I was a novice or when I just started working here. However, I saw that they again did not work well so I gave up.

The researcher: Ok, but how do you know the one you use now is an effective way of teaching vocabulary?

Mert: Well, my students always have good vocabulary retention and they always get good grades from vocabulary parts of the exams” (4th SR interview - 27.05.2015).

The impact of Mert’s language teaching principles on his classroom practices was also noticeable in his reflection reports. For instance, he mentioned his practices for teaching writing in two of his reports and both of them showed how persistent he was in his practices. He reported that in both of the sessions, he wrote an example essay for each type (opinion and narrative) on his own so that they could serve as models for students in their first drafts and writings, wanted his students to write a draft for the next day, gave feedback for the draft and asked his students to submit the final version two days later (summarized from Mert, reflections 3 and 5). In his fifth reflection, he explained his own justifications why he taught writing in this way.

“My experiences showed me that students always need a model for writing. It is too artificial to teach students ‘you should write in this way, or write in that way.’ They must have something concrete in their hands, so I first write one for them. Then, I give individual feedback to show their mistakes one by one..... Finally, I gave them some time to complete their writings and submit them..... I am not sure whether it is the best way but my experiences showed and I believe that students significantly improve their writing skills in this way” (Mert, reflection 5, p. 4).

It was also obvious in some of Mert's reflection reports that he had certain habits in giving homework to students. He mentioned in most of his writings that he gave several pages of worksheet whenever he finished teaching a grammar topic and he explained the reason of it with a famous statement; practice makes perfect (Mert, reflection 1, p. 5). In addition to this, he wrote about monthly projects which he had given as large-scale homework and in which students were supposed to produce something within the scope and the rubric of the project. The project usually covered the grammar points and vocabulary items taught in the previous month. For example, in one of the projects he mentioned, students were asked to prepare a video in which they introduced one of the tourist attractions in the city on their own and in English by going there and showing all the places in the video. Mert expressed that he used such projects in all learner groups and he had different projects for the learners of different levels. According to him, these projects were extremely useful for students to produce in the target language and to come up with something concrete by using previously learnt structures, phrases and vocabulary items (summarized from Mert, reflection 4).

Finally, although there were not enough opportunities to observe Mert's practices while he was teaching listening during classroom observation period and since the ones during these sessions were short and based on the course book, there were some elements in his reports which gave some information on his approach and ideas on teaching listening. The most important one of these elements was his note-taking activities. In some of his lessons written in his reports, he expressed that he prepared some extra-curricular note-taking activities for the students since he believed that such activities were much more useful for them and the ones in the book were too exercise-based (Mert, reflection 1,2 and 4). In addition to this, he mentioned a song list which included his favourite songs in English and he gave these songs with their lyrics to his students and wanted them to listen frequently. According to Mert, teachers must create some outside opportunities for their students to practice their language skills and these songs were small but effective ways for students to practice their listening skills (Mert, reflection 2).

As a conclusion, all his narrations during the data collection process revealed that there were two central elements in Mert's classroom practices; learners and his language teaching principles. During his classes, Mert made a big effort to create a comfortable atmosphere for his students in which they could feel themselves good, express themselves freely and participate in lessons in a maximum level. Moreover, he always took his students' interests into account while conducting his lessons and preparing materials and tried to keep them alert by attracting their attention throughout the lesson. Shaped around the welfare of learners, his classroom practices were also dominated by his language teaching principles. It was quite salient that Mert formed his own language teaching principles based on his apprenticeship of observation, educational career and teaching experiences, and he was quite persistent in the application of them. He believed that most of these principles were influential ways of teaching language skills and gave the impression that he would hardly ever apply any teaching techniques other than his principles. For these reasons, it was concluded that Mert's classroom practices were mainly shaped around his language teaching principles and learners. Other factors which were also seen to be influential on his classroom practices were mentioned in the following section.

5.4. Mert's Institutional Context

The department where Mert was working during the data collection process was the English preparatory program of a state university. Having approximately 2000 students every year, the school also had over 200 instructors working at the department. Though it seemed a crowded department in terms of students and instructors, physical facilities (buildings, rooms, equipment, etc.) made it look as a modern and well-organized atmosphere. Before the study, the researcher was a little bit familiar with the context and the educational system in the department and one of the purposes of the data collection process regarding Mert was to find out whether his institutional context influenced his practices. The findings on this issue showed that curriculum policies, testing policies and the organizational atmosphere were partly but significantly influenced his classroom teaching.

5.4.1. Curriculum policies

While talking about the department during the first interview, Mert expressed that their department had a curriculum and material development office which was always working very systematically and included about 20 instructors who had MAs or PhDs in the field of curriculum or were working in this area for more than 10 years. The office was responsible for choosing course books, preparing the syllabus for each level every year, adapting the course book based on the syllabus, doing the necessary changes in the curriculum and preparing extra materials for teachers to use in class hours. According to Mert, the office was vitally important for the system of his institution because it gave the most important decisions regarding “what to teach, when to teach and partly how to teach” (1st interview - 18.03.2015). His narrations also showed the existence of such an office, its policies and implementations had both negative and positive influences on Mert’s practices.

It was understood from Mert’s general comments on the curriculum policies of his department that he was happy with them in general. He believed that they endeavoured a lot to create a well-working system and deserved to be respected for that reason. He also thought that their systematization made him a more disciplined teacher because everything he had to do during class hours were always clear and planned.

“Yes, we have a course book but they adapt almost 40% of it. During the year, every week is carefully planned and it is always clear what you are supposed to teach in class. They even prepare some optional materials for you to use in class. Naturally, such planning and a well-organized syllabus make you a planned and disciplined teacher as well” (3rd interview - 10.06.2015).

According to Mert, the most important purpose of this planning was to ensure standards among instructors and their classes. He reported that it was very important for every class to follow the syllabus, cover the same topics, do similar activities and keep the pace of the curriculum. However, Mert thought that although such a strict implementation ensured standardization among instructors and their classes, this system restricted teacher preferences, creativeness and restrained them to integrate their own perspectives into the classroom atmosphere.

“But on the other side, it limits us. We have to follow a certain pre-determined schedule, cover the topics as prescribed or do the activities which we have not prepared. Then what about my ideas, my preferences and my creativeness. Ok, in general it is good but there should be some more space for us” (3rd interview - 10.06.2015).

His partly dissatisfaction with the restrictions of curriculum policies was also observed during classroom observations and found in his reflection reports. There were some specific points in his classes for which he stated that he was not happy. For example, during the second session in which he taught defining relative clauses he mentioned non-defining ones a little bit by giving some examples towards the end of the grammar part. In the follow-up SR, the researcher asked whether it was his preference to talk about non-defining clauses in the same session.

“Of course not, I would never prefer to mention both of them in the same lesson because I think they might be confusing for students to see them at the same time. However, that was stated in the syllabus; to make students familiar with non-defining relative clauses. The examples I gave were even ready by the office. Thus, I had to show these examples and give some information about it” (1st SR interview - 01.04.2015).

In another instance during the third stimulated recall interview, Mert reported that he did not like the text he covered in the session (the text on drug use) and he would have changed it with another extra material if he had had the chance. Even so, he had to cover it in the most enjoyable way for his students because it was in the syllabus and they were required to cover it (3rd SR interview - 13.05.2015). In the same lesson, he also conducted a group-work activity on a previously taught grammar structure. In the activity, each group was assigned a situation that happened in the past and the group was asked to produce some conditional type three sentences on the situation they had. For Mert, this activity was too long and time consuming, and the same structure could be practiced in a shorter time with the same effectiveness but he had to implement it since it was one of the important activities of that week prepared by the office (3rd SR interview - 13.05.2015). In addition to these, there were also some points in Mert’s reflections which revealed his dissatisfaction with some of the curricular implementations. He clearly wrote in his reflections 2, 4 and 5

that he taught some very detailed and relatively unnecessary points (the use of ‘yet’ instead of ‘but’, mixed type conditionals etc.) and conducted several group-work and reading activities just because they were put in the syllabus by the office although he did not want and like to teach those points and conduct the activities.

In general, it was seen that Mert was happy with the current curriculum system because he believed that they did a good job and the things they did made him a more disciplined and organized teacher in classroom atmosphere. However, he seemed to complain about some of the implementations of the curriculum office which he believed limited his preferences and sometimes put him in a situation which compelled him to do the things that he would not actually do. His statements below, in fact, summarized how he felt about the issue of curriculum polices in his institution.

“We have a course book, an adapted course book, and we follow it; that’s OK. We have an office and we have to obey their rules and cover what they present us; that is again not a big problem. However, we are teachers and we have our own principles, techniques and philosophies. I must sometimes have the right to say ‘I did not like yours and I want to do it in this way.’ Isn’t it quite natural?.....Thus, I sometimes create my own spaces and nobody knows it (smiling)” (2nd interview - 29.04.2015).

5.4.2. The organizational atmosphere

The department Mert was working in was very crowded and there were over 200 instructors working there. Having a well-defined organizational scheme, the department seemed to be administered in a very professional way. According to Mert, the department had a very positive, well-organized, disciplined and professional atmosphere and these qualities of his department reflected into his classroom practices through several ways.

The most important element regarding the organizational atmosphere that was found to be influential on Mert’s classroom teaching was the organizational discipline. It was very clear during, before and after the classroom observations that Mert obeyed the rules of his department, he was very careful about the timing of his classes, tried

hard to follow the curricular rules and did his best not to do anything against his institutional atmosphere. In fact, Mert talked about the atmosphere of his institution at the beginning of the term and stated that his current workplace changed him as a teacher and he was fundamentally different when compared to his previous workplace due to the atmosphere of this institution.

“It is totally different from the previous one; much more disciplined and professional. Here, you must be careful about timing, you cannot have any spare time during lesson, you have to follow a central syllabus and so on. All of them made me a fundamentally different teacher.....Honestly speaking, sometimes I was not doing my classes in my previous school; just sitting on my desk and leaving the students free, but here it is impossible to do it” (1st interview - 18.03.2015)

Mert’s narrations revealed that another important factor regarding the organizational atmosphere was the administration of his department. According to Mert, the department was administered in such a smooth way that almost everyone was very happy and this happiness made people very enthusiastic about their jobs (1st interview - 18.03.2015). Besides this satisfactory manner, Mert also added that the administration was very sensitive to the suggestions and problems of the instructors and they immediately tried to find a solution for them. For instance, he mentioned one of his memories he experienced in this school about the use of technological devices in class and he was very happy to see how fast a solution was found for the problem.

“I was having difficulties in using the interactive DVDs in our classes because I had to know the technological equipment well. I mentioned this problem to one of the coordinators and in the following week, a workshop was organized for people having troubles about technology in their classes. Thanks to this workshop, I learnt the system and now I am using it efficiently. I also know the administrator provided solution for some other problems my colleagues had in their classes” (3rd interview - 10.06.2015).

The last element of the organizational atmosphere that was found to be influential on Mert was the collaboration and sharing among colleagues. Encouraged by the administration, the collaborative atmosphere in the institution was one of the most important factors that contributed to the development of instructors according to

Mert. He believed that teachers at the department learn a lot of things on various topics such as activities, student behaviours, classroom interaction, homework etc. and applied them in their own classes (1st interview - 18.03.2015). During the classroom observations and follow-up interviews, Mert also accepted that he gained and performed some of his classroom implications thanks this collaboration and sharing among colleagues. For instance, he used a song (You are still the one, by Shaina Twain) in the second observed session while he was teaching relative clauses and he reported that he had learnt that song from one of his colleagues during a discussion on how students could practice that topic (2nd SR interview - 15.04.2015). In another instance, he distributed a small worksheet on a grammar structure taught at the beginning of the week and wanted students to do the exercises. When he was asked about this worksheet, he reported that all his colleagues teaching the same level had conducted this worksheet activity in their classes to prepare their students for the next exam, so he did it in class (4th SR interview - 27.05.2015).

As Mert's opinions revealed, the organizational atmosphere in his department which prioritized organizational discipline, had a smooth administrative perspective and encouraged collaboration and sharing among the instructors had a partly important place on Mert's classroom teaching and some of his practices. He admitted that he had been a totally different teacher due to this atmosphere and grew as a professional teacher when compared to his previous workplace. Though there were few points specific to this impact demonstrated by classroom observations, Mert's narrations and ideas clearly showed how influential the atmosphere was on his development as an EFL teacher.

5.4.3. Testing policies

During the informal interviews, Mert clearly stated that testing policies in his department were again working quite systematically and strictly like curriculum policies. The testing office which was responsible for performing all testing and assessment activities included instructors who were experts in the field and conducted all the exams of various levels throughout the academic year. In general, Mert seemed not to be influenced by the existence of such an office and he reported

that he would never arrange or change his classroom implications according to exams.

“Yes, the issue of testing is very important in our system but I have never done anything in my classes specifically for testing. I mean I do almost everything presented by the curriculum office and exams are prepared based on the syllabus. For this reason, I do not think it is necessary to do specific things for testing, but that does not mean I disregard or give less importance to it. It is a need for students and I can do everything for it when it is necessary” (2nd interview - 29.04.2015).

In spite of his general ideas which gave the impression that he did not pay special attention to the issue of testing during his classroom practices, there were few points in his observed classes and written reflections revealing the fact that he sometimes kept the issue of testing in his mind while teaching. For example, in his first observed session, he was teaching the difference between present perfect and present perfect continuous and there occurred a moment when students seemed very confused. At this moment, he said that “Don’t worry, I don’t think you will have such a question in the exams. Just simply know this slight difference.” When the researcher asked him about this statement in the follow-up interview, he expressed that students sometimes needed such explanations regarding the issue of testing although they were only concerned with learning most of the time (1st SR interview - 01.04.2015). In the third stimulated recall interview, while he was talking about the reading text he covered in that session, he admitted that he did not like the text and its vocabulary items but he taught them just because these items might be included in the next exam (3rd SR interview - 13.05.2015). Finally, he mentioned in his last reflection that he finished the topics he was responsible for teaching in that week earlier and made some photocopiable exercises with students to make them prepared for the final exam. He also added doing such an activity was not tolerated in his school but he had to do it for his students because they deserved to get good grades in the exam (Mert, reflection 6, p.1).

As it is seen, testing policies in Mert’s department did not have a very direct impact on his classroom practices and Mert did not seem to be a teacher highly influenced by such policies. In spite of this, it was revealed that he sometimes kept this reality in

his mind and did very small adaptations in his classroom teaching and implementations when necessary.

5.5. Conclusion

This chapter reported on the case of Mert who had been a professional EFL teacher for about eight years. What factors formed his cognition as a language teacher, what elements were influential on his classroom practices and decisions and how his institutional context played a role on his classroom teaching were presented throughout the chapter. The findings regarding the elements above are presented in Table 3 below.

Table 4. The summary of Mert’s case

Main Sources of Mert’s Language Teacher Cognition	Mert’s Classroom Practices	The Impact of Institutional Factors
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Language learning experiences <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Language learning aptitude ✓ Teachers in the past • Pre-service education <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Methodology courses ✓ The practicum • Experiences as a teacher <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Being a novice teacher ✓ More teaching experience ✓ Colleagues in the past 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mert’s language teaching principles • Learners 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Curriculum policies • Organizational atmosphere • Testing policies

The findings showed that Mert’s prior language learning experiences, the pre-service education he received and all his experiences as a professional teacher were the factors that were influential on the formation of his language teacher cognition. Mert believed that his language learning aptitude was very high when he was young and

this created a big joy and interest in language learning. His English teachers in the past were so influential in his career that he learnt a lot of things from them on how to teach English effectively and his current practices had the traces of them. In terms of his pre-service education, he thought that he had learnt a lot of things theoretically during the methodology courses and the practicum, but he had very few opportunities to put them into practice during those years. He experienced the insufficiency of his practical knowledge when he started teaching English as a real professional teacher and had difficulty in a real classroom atmosphere, which he called as a bigger shock than an ice-bucket challenge. Both negative and positive experiences he had as a novice teacher developed him in such a degree that he felt as if he was learning how to teach from the beginning. Besides his novice years, his further experiences and the colleagues he had in his career contributed a lot to his cognitive development as a language teacher. As a result of this process, it was clear that Mert had his own language teaching principles which were the outcome of all his language-related experiences.

The results regarding his classroom practices demonstrated that learners and Mert's language teaching principles were at the centre of his classroom implementations and his classes were mainly shaped around these two factors. He paid great attention to the welfare of his students and tried hard to create a classroom atmosphere in which students would feel comfortable. He took their needs and interests into consideration while conducting lessons and organizing activities and he also made a big effort to keep their attention in a high level. On the other hand, he seemed to have very strict ideas on teaching language skills and he seemed to be very persistent in applying these principles while teaching. He also believed in the effectiveness of these implications and he even gave the impression that he would never use a different way other than the ones he used to teach. These principles were also quite visible in every aspect of his classroom practices from teaching language skills to classroom management.

Finally, the institutional context Mert was working in was found to be partly but significantly influential on his classroom teaching. The curriculum policies in the department made Mert a very planned and organized teacher who was very

conscious on the planning of his classroom practices and he was very happy with the curricular implications there. However, he also admitted that such a standardized curriculum policy sometimes put him in a difficult situation and he had to teach several points or perform activities which he would not do. He thought that it would have been better if the policies had given him more chance to prefer his own techniques and show his own creativeness. In addition to this, Mert praised the organizational atmosphere in the institution which was administered smoothly and encouraged all teachers to collaborate and share ideas. During the data collection process, Mert expressed that he had learnt a lot from this collaborative atmosphere and this was quite clear in his utterances and classroom observations. Finally, it was seen that testing policies partly influenced his classroom decisions. In general, he believed that he would not do specific changes or arrangements for testing in his classroom teaching but his observed actual practices showed that he kept the issue of testing in his mind and made small adaptations in his classroom teaching when necessary.

CHAPTER SIX

THE CASE OF ZEYNEP

6.1. Introducing Zeynep

Zeynep, the most experienced teacher among the participants of this study, has been an EFL teacher for ten years at the school of foreign languages of the state university in her hometown. Grown up there, she became a very successful student in primary school and thanks to her success; she started to study at the secondary school part of an Anatolian high school in the city centre. There, she started to learn English for the first time, which she called as “a new way of life in those years” (1st interview - 19.03.2015). At this school, she had different teachers, some of whom were quite traditional whereas others used more communicative and contemporary methods to teach English. In spite of this difference, she thought that all her teachers contributed to her knowledge of English considerably and she enjoyed learning English with them (1st interview - 19.03.2015). When her secondary-school years finished, she started high school at the same place and she was one of the students of the first language class of her high school. After spending the high school years to get prepared for the university entrance exam through quite traditional ways of language teaching, she took this exam, had almost 95% correct answers but had to go to the ELT department of an average university because these departments of best universities were receiving students from Anatolian teacher training high schools (a well known regulation during those years).

Although she started with such a disappointment to her pre-service education, she was always one of the best students of her term. She expressed that she had very good and sincere relationships with her teacher educators in the department. In terms of the contribution of her pre-service education, she thought that she learnt a lot on how to teach English and the pre-service education was at the centre of her career. However, she admitted that she had to change and revise some of her ideas and

knowledge on teaching English when she started to work as a professional English teacher because the atmosphere of reality was a bit different from the one she learnt at pre-service (1st interview - 19.03.2015). One year after her graduation, she started working as an instructor at the school of foreign language of the university in her hometown and she is still working there. Initially, she taught English to freshman students, which she called as “the most meaningless thing I have ever done” (1st interview - 19.03.2015). One year later, she was assigned to the English preparatory program of the school and she began to teach prep school students in their one year compulsory program. At the time of the study, she was teaching pre-intermediate (in fact, she thought that they were elementary but she was covering a pre-intermediate course book) twenty two hours per week.

Contrary to other two participants, Zeynep seemed more exhausted and burnt out as a teacher (maybe because she has been working at the same department since she started teaching English). It was very clear that her knowledge of English language teaching were not really reflected in her classroom practices. In other words, though she seemed to know a lot about the issue of language teaching, most of her classroom practices were routine and ordinary, the reasons of which were dealt throughout the chapter. She completed her MA in educational sciences about seven years ago. She said that she once dreamt to pursue her PhD but it was impossible after getting married and having children. She was also visibly influenced by the atmosphere in her institution, which will be dealt in the further sections.

Starting with these introductory paragraphs, this chapter focused on the case of Zeynep revealing how her language teacher cognition formed, what factors became influential on it, how her actual classroom practices were shaped and to what extent her institutional context was influential on her classroom practices. All these elements were presented in the light of her narrations derived from her data collection process.

6.2. Main Sources of Zeynep’s Language Teacher Cognition

Based on her narrations, it was found out that Zeynep’s cognition as a language teacher was formed through her experiences as a language learner, the pre-service

education she received at university, and her teaching experiences she had during both her novice and experienced years. Putting the pre-service education in the centre of her knowledge base, she believed that her experiences both as a language learner and as a language teacher were also quite influential in her learning-to-teach process.

6.2.1. Language learning experiences

6.2.1.1. Enjoying language learning and forming habits

As mentioned before, Zeynep first started learning English when she started secondary school and her first experiences with English as a learner were quite positive. Besides her success in other school subjects, she was a very successful and hardworking student in English as well. As it was stated in her utterances, there was an important difference between her success in English and in other courses; she extremely enjoyed studying and learning it.

“I remember those days clearly. It was like a new world for me. I was learning everything from the beginning and it was extremely enjoyable for me. Some evenings, I was just studying English and nothing else because it was a different pleasure for me; maybe because speaking another language and feeling like someone else” (1st interview - 19.03.2015).

The joy of learning a new language was so dominant in her educational life that Zeynep was sometimes just studying English and nothing else for days and she remembered her mother getting angry with her because she was not doing anything about other important courses such as Maths, Turkish and Science. In those days, doing something related to English was so enjoyable for her that she spent almost all her free time doing different activities related to English like reading stories, drawing cartoons in English, sticking vocabulary items on the wall of her room etc. (1st interview - 19.03.2015). As her English improved through the years, the pleasure she got from the activity of language learning got bigger. During her high school years, when she became the student of the language class, she subscribed to an international news magazine (The Newsweek), which she called as “a quite marginal act on those days”. Moreover, she had two pen-friends from France and Germany and she frequently corresponded with them.

Zeynep admitted that since she had great pleasure and joy for learning English and her activities were so frequent that she naturally formed certain habits which both helped her in this learning process and made her a successful language learner. During the interviews, she gave some examples regarding her habits while studying English.

“For example, I was keeping a separate vocabulary notebook and I was writing the phonetics, parts of speech, English and Turkish definitions and an example sentence. That was my favourite and improved my English a lot.....Then, I used to beg my dad to buy cassettes of English singers; you know internet was not that much popular in those years, and I loved listening to their songs..... and more importantly, I loved to be in English classes and did my best to benefit from my teachers, exercises, homework etc. I never regarded them as compulsory things but they were enjoyable tools for me to learn a new language” (1st interview - 19.03.2015).

The data regarding Zeynep’s knowledge base showed that her habits which she formed while she was a language learner had some influences on her current practices as well. For example, in the first observed session, it was seen that there were many cartoons (they looked a bit sloppy) stuck on the wall of the classroom referring to some vocabulary items or phrases. When she was asked why she preferred them, she reported that she also liked sticking cartoons when she was a student and believed in its benefits (but she complained about the quality of her students’ works). During her third observed session, before she made students listen to a song (You’re beautiful, James Blunt) in their course book, she distributed worksheet including the lyrics of the song and students listened to it by following its lyrics. When the researcher asked the reason of distributing the lyrics of the song in the follow-up SR interview, she replied that it was one of her favourite activities to find the lyrics of the song and listen to it by following the lyrics. She also stated that it was very useful for her listening skill on those days (3rd SR interview - 14.05.2015). In addition to these examples in the observed sessions, there were two important points in her reflections reports which had the traces of her language learning habits in the past. In all her reports, it was clear that she wanted her students to keep vocabulary notebooks, controlled them every week and graded the quality and tidiness of them. As it was mentioned before, she believed in the effectiveness of

this activity because she did the same thing when she was a learner and benefited a lot. For this reason, she had the idea that it might also improve her students' vocabulary knowledge and embraced this activity (but she again complained in her reflections that her students were not aware of the value of this activity and were very careless in keeping it – Zeynep, reflection 1). Secondly, it was understood from the statements in her third reflection that, in that week, she wanted her students to bring all the writings they had written in this term and she would make a revision on those writings. The researcher asked this issue to Zeynep in an informal interview whether she wanted her students to keep all their writings and if so what the reason was for it. She replied that it was not compulsory but she strongly advised them to keep the writings because when she was a learner, she used to keep all her writings and compositions and she benefited from this habit a lot. For that reason, she believed that keeping the writings they had written would also be useful for her students.

As her narrations revealed, Zeynep enjoyed studying and learning English a lot when she was a student and this pleasure made her form certain habits which she benefited from a lot during her language learning process. It was also demonstrated that these habits which she gained years and years ago had traces on her language teacher cognition and classroom practices since she thought that they could be beneficial for her students as well.

6.2.1.2. Teachers in the past

During the years she spent as a learner, Zeynep had many English teachers, some of which were quite influential in her career as a teacher. Based on her narrations, it was seen that attitudes and personality of her teachers, some of her memories with them and several language teaching techniques of these teachers were very important factors, the effect of which were still visible in her pedagogical perspectives.

In terms of their language teaching styles, Zeynep reported that she had had different types of teachers having traditional or contemporary methods for teaching English. However, she thought that such differences had not been a problem for her because she had enjoyed both types of classes and learnt many things from different teachers.

“Engin teacher was a more traditional one. I mean his lessons were more grammatical and he was teaching more structure based. But I can say that I had the basics of my grammar knowledge in his lessons.....On the other hand, Emine teacher was a livelier and more energetic one, maybe because she was younger, but her lessons were quite different and I remember we looked forward to them. She taught us other skills through dancing, storytelling, role plays, songs etc. We used to speak a lot in her classes and that was wonderful for us.....I remember on those days, I was dreaming to be a teacher like Emine” (1st interview - 19.03.2015).

During the interviews, Zeynep also reported that attitudes of English teachers towards students were really different from others. She remembered that her English teachers’ behaviours towards her and other students were so friendly and encouraging that they used to spend time with these teachers even after school. To explain the situation clearly, Zeynep said that “they were so popular among students that everybody dreamt to be an English teacher on those days” (1st interview - 19.03.2015).

Among the English teachers in Zeynep’s educational life as a learner, one had a very important and different place in her life. When she started high school and chose the language department in the 10th grade, she had a new teacher called Öznur and she became so influential in her life that Zeynep began to make her decision to be an English teacher after meeting her. According to Zeynep, Öznur teacher was a perfect model for her both as an individual and as a teacher, she had many memories with her during the years at high school and these memories were perfect lessons for her as a growing teacher candidate. One of those memories she told below was very influential on her and she said she would never forget it:

“I never forget; one day Öznur teacher wanted us to buy a textbook. All my friends bought it on the next day but I couldn’t buy it because my family had some financial problems on those days. In the lesson she asked if we had bought it and everybody said yes but I said no. In the break time, I spoke to her and told my situation. She understood me and said no problem because she knew how hardworking and successful I was. Two days later, she called me to teachers’ room and I was a little bit afraid. She opened her bag, gave me the book and said ‘you must study more to be a good English teacher and I strongly believe you will do it.’ I could not believe how

generous and kind she was and I cried. Then, I kissed her hands and gave the promise that I would be a teacher like her” (1st interview - 19.03.2015).

Observations and reflections on Zeynep’s classroom practices also provided significant data on how the experiences she had with her teachers in the past had still an impact on her current perspective and language teaching practices. It was found out that Zeynep especially embraced the practices of her past teacher whom she called as traditional. For instance, in her second, third and fifth reflection reports, she wrote that she prepared achievement vocabulary tests for her students during that week and gave performance grades to them based on their grades on these tests. She reported that one of her teachers in the past (Öznur teacher) implemented such quizzes when she was a student and now she believed that these tests make students study and refresh their vocabulary retention (Zeynep, reflection 2, p. 2). In her second observed session, as another example, there was a short five-sentence paragraph before the grammar topic. After she read this paragraph loudly, she wanted her students to form pairs and translate it into Turkish in five minutes. After the session, she was asked whether she used such translation activities in her classroom teaching and the reason for this. Her statements again referred to her past experiences

“Well, in fact I use it frequently. Yes, when we were at university, we learnt that translation should not be preferred while teaching English but I don’t think it is harmful or dangerous for students. I mean, we also learnt English with such techniques; for example we had a teacher in secondary school called Engin, I guess I mentioned him, and he was always doing this activity and we enjoyed translating texts into Turkish” (2nd SR interview - 16.04.2015).

During the years she spent as a learner, Zeynep always had a positive relationship with her teachers and her narrations on them revealed that they were both as individuals and as teachers, had important places on Zeynep’s development as a student and her decisions regarding her future. It was also found out Zeynep currently had several classroom practices and language teaching techniques which were once the practices of her teachers in the past. Since she believed in their

effectiveness on her in these years, she currently implemented them in her class hours.

6.2.2. The pre-service education

As Zeynep mentioned in her interview, her pre-service education started with a disappointment because she was not able to prefer high-ranking universities in Turkey due to an educational regulation though she deserved it based on her correct answers in the nation-wide university entrance exam. She also reported that she had to overcome this disappointment quickly, and in a short time, she became a good student in the department and spent four successful years during which she had good and sincere relationships with her instructors, learnt a lot about language teaching and developed her teaching abilities. Zeynep's narrations on her pre-service education revealed that teacher educators in the department, methodology courses and partly the practicum were influential on the development of her cognition as a language teacher.

6.2.2.1. Teacher educators

During her pre-service years, Zeynep had many instructors in the department and she got various courses from them. In addition to their contribution to Zeynep's academic and pedagogical knowledge, she believed that some of them were also good models in terms of their characters and attitudes. One of those instructors was a woman who was giving the "Speaking II" course in Zeynep's second term in the program. While talking about her pre-service years, she mentioned this instructor and underlined the fact that she was impressed by her a lot during that course.

"First of all, she was a perfect speaker of English. I always wished I could have an accent like her. She conducted her lessons smoothly and time even flew in her lessons. She prepared very interesting activities that encouraged us to participate and speak English in class. Though she was trying to improve our speaking skill and was not teaching how to teach speaking, I learnt a lot from her on how speaking should be taught" (3rd interview - 11.06.2015).

Another teacher educator who was found to be influential on Zeynep's development as a prospective teacher was a man who gave the 'School Experience I' course in her

second year. According to Zeynep, he was a perfect model for all the students in the department due to his attitudes towards students, his academic knowledge and the quality of feedback he gave in his lessons.

“He had been a teacher in a state school for about six or seven years and then he started to work as an instructor in our department. For this reason, he knew a lot about teaching in a real classroom atmosphere..... He prepared some tasks and we did them during and after our observations. Then, we had discussion sessions in our lessons based on these tasks. His narrations, memories and feedback were enlightening for us and I remember we were taking notes on whatever he was saying” (3rd interview - 11.06.2015).

The teacher educator who was helpful for Zeynep in gaining some practices on language teaching skills was an assistant professor who was giving the course of “Methodology I” in the first semester of Zeynep’s third year. What was important regarding this instructor’s impact on Zeynep’s development as a teacher was that she constantly referred to the sayings of this instructor while she was talking about the impact of her pre-service education. In her narrations which focused on the pre-service education in a general perspective during the first and third interviews, she stated that she had learnt many things on planning lessons, organizing activities, teaching vocabulary and teaching English to young learners. Zeynep also added that though the instructor had a fair attitude towards her students, she was very successful in setting such a balance with them and Zeynep always admired her stance as a teacher educator (1st interview - 19.03.2015).

Although Zeynep told to have sincere and good relationship with all her instructors in the department, the instructors mentioned above were told to be the ones who left significant and valuable traces on Zeynep’s development as a teacher. She also mentioned few times about these instructors and their practices during the follow-up interviews and in her reflection reports. After the first session, it was understood that Zeynep had a firm attitude in her class while conducting her lesson. She usually smiled but always had a distance with her students. When the researcher asked how and why she set such a relationship, she replied that she managed it in time but the roots of her attitude went back to her instructor’s (the assistant professor) style which

she always admired to have during those years (1st SR interview - 02.04.2105). In the third session, she made students listen to a song and after that she began to teach the vocabulary items which students were not familiar with. She first drew some pictures or used her body language before explaining their meanings. In the follow up SR, she expressed that she always used these techniques while teaching new words and she learnt their usage and effectiveness from this assistant professor during her methodology course at university (3rd SR interview - 14.05.2015). On the other hand, she wrote about a speaking activity in her second reflection in which she distributed students certain problems and wanted them to give some advices to the people who were having the problems. On this activity, she commented that it was the adapted version of an activity which she originally learnt from the instructor giving the speaking course at university. She also added that she had been using it for years while she was teaching the modal verbs “should – shouldn’t” (summarized from Zeynep, reflection 2).

In general, Zeynep reported that teacher educators were quite influential on her developing perspectives as a prospective teacher and helped her conceptualize certain attitudes and practices which still existed both in her mind and in her classroom practices. In her narrations, it was also obvious that her experiences with the instructors she met during her pre-service education had an important place in her development.

6.2.2.2. Methodology courses

Zeynep reported that she had taken various courses related with language skills, linguistics, English literature, language teaching methodology, teaching practice etc. According to Zeynep, the contents of most of these courses were too theoretical and lacked practices that would help her in her future classroom teaching. All the courses which were not directly related with language teaching and learning, such as literature, linguistics or translation, improved her academic and intellectual knowledge and made her feel more knowledgeable, but they did not have a significant impact on her development as a prospective teacher. She also underlined that her ideas on these courses became more valid when she started to work as a teacher.

“These courses were really interesting and I learnt a lot of things about English literature, sub-branches of linguistics like phonology and syntax, or about the issue of translation. However, even in those days, I began to question how I would use them as a teacher or what I would do with that knowledge. Honestly speaking, me and most of my friends thought we would never need this knowledge when we became teachers. After we graduated and started working, unfortunately we were right. Now, I remember almost nothing about these courses” (1st interview - 19.03.2015).

On the other hand, she felt just the opposite about the courses which focused on topics related with language learning and teaching itself. Among these courses, Zeynep expressed that the ones related with language teaching methodology (Methodology I and II) and approaches and methods in language teaching were the most useful ones for her and they considerably contributed to her knowledge of teaching.

“I think the best or let’s say the most useful ones for me were the methodology courses in my third year and the approaches and methods in my second year. I can say that I gained the basics of my language teaching knowledge in these courses. I also remember our discussion with friends and I think that most of us had something in our minds, a perspective or a kind of philosophy, on how to teach a language after taking these courses” (3rd interview - 11.06.2015).

Zeynep’s observed classroom practices and her narrations in the reflection reports also demonstrated that Zeynep gained several perspectives regarding language teaching practices in these courses. In her first and third sessions, for instance, she taught two grammatical structures – past simple vs. past continuous and comparatives vs. superlatives – and she followed the same way while explaining these two different topics. She wrote example sentences on the board highlighting the target structures, made students familiar with them, explained the structures and provided practice opportunities for them. In the second interview, she gave details on her practices and her utterances showed that she learnt most of her background knowledge in methodology courses at university.

“That’s the way I usually teach grammar. I know from our methodology courses that using implicit ways, I mean, not teaching the structures directly and showing some examples to students or giving them in a context always work better. That’s why I

started the topic in this way.....Yes, I also criticize myself for not creating enough opportunities for them to produce but at least I apply presentation and practice parts, don't I?" (2nd interview - 30.04.2015).

During her second session, she covered a reading text which was about the first meeting of boys with their girlfriends' families. During this part of the lesson, she followed the steps of teaching reading; asking students about their ideas in the pre-reading, reading and helping students to understand in the while-reading and asking comprehension questions and summarizing the text in the post-reading. In the follow-up SR, she expressed on this method that it was her classical way of covering a reading text. She also added that she learnt it while she was taking the methodology I course at university and her instructor giving that course taught it in a very effective way (2nd SR interview - 16.04.2015). In addition to these observed practices, Zeynep mentioned many others in her reflections for which she emphasized the impact of methodology courses on language teaching and learning. Some of these practices included a vocabulary teaching activity using TPR (Zeynep, reflection 1, p.1), a task-based activity in which students prepared a role-play activity on the first day experiences of an English course (Zeynep, reflection 3, p. 4), a group-work activity on a sentence completion task to practice passive voices (Zeynep, reflection 5, p. 1) and an activity of composition writing in which students wrote an example opinion essay for the final exam (Zeynep, reflection 6, p.3). In all of these examples, Zeynep mentioned the elements which she gained in her pre-service courses to implement these activities in her real classrooms and why she preferred to do such practices.

As these illustrations put forward, the methodology courses Zeynep took in her pre-service years were found to be significantly influential on her perspectives and practices on the activity of language teaching. She also reported the fact that the basics of her cognition as a language teacher went back to those years and these courses were quite useful for her in gaining these skills. For that reason, it can be said that these methodology courses had an important place in the development of Zeynep's language teacher cognition.

6.2.2.3. The practicum

Zeynep had her first experiences on being in a real classroom atmosphere in her second year when she took the course of school experience I. As mentioned before, she reported that this course was very useful for her because of the fact that the instructors' tasks, lecturing and feedback were very effective and beneficial. In the last year of her pre-service education, she took the practice teaching course in which she had her first real-like teaching experience in a real classroom atmosphere. During the data collection process, no significant data was found regarding the impact of her practice teaching experience on her classroom teaching, teaching philosophy, classroom management or attitudes towards students. However, it was understood that the practicum experience helped Zeynep to generate some general perspectives regarding how the experience of teaching in a real classroom or dealing with students would be.

During the practicum, Zeynep had the opportunity to teach four or five times due to the workload of the instructor who was responsible for the practice teaching course. According to her, four times of teaching were quite few for a prospective teacher to practice his/her teaching skills and putting what he/she had learnt so far into practice. While talking about this course, she complained about the situation.

“Not much, just four or five times, and each of it was at most 25 minutes. That was very few for us. I spent three years there and what could I do in this twenty-five-minute lesson to practice what I had learnt? Yes, I had the chance to have ideas about real classroom setting and teaching but that was definitely not enough for us” (1st interview - 19.03.2015).

During this interview, Zeynep mentioned a very important situation, the impact of the teacher educator giving that course. She reported that after the teaching experience in her first lesson which she mostly prepared with her ideas and preferences, she was harshly criticized by this instructor due to some elements such as the content of the lesson, materials used in it and her stance throughout the session. For this reason, the other times she taught were completely different from the first session and she prepared most of her lessons totally based on the instructors' ideas.

“One week before the teaching, I was going to his office and asking about his ideas on what and how to conduct the next lesson, I was trying to integrate everything he suggested because he was grading us and each of my lessons had a percentage and I had to pass it. If I had not taken his ideas into consideration and had prepared the lessons based on my ideas, I was sure I might have failed the course” (1st interview - 19.03.2015).

Another important point Zeynep mentioned on the issue of practicum was the role of her school mentor who had been an English teacher for about twelve years though not being a graduate of an ELT department. On those days, she initially thought that she would prepare her lessons in collaboration with this mentor and he would help her in any points she needed assistance. However, after a while, she became aware of the fact that the mentor was even disturbed by the existence of these trainees in his lessons.

“Let the assistance aside, he was about to say ‘do not come to my class again, I don’t like you’. It was very clear that he was doing it compulsorily and reluctantly. He had no contribution on my teaching skills and we just had to spend some time with him” (1st interview - 19.03.2015).

In spite of these negative points, Zeynep thought that all her experiences during the pre-service, especially the practice teaching, were valuable for her because she started to have the feeling of being the teacher in a real classroom atmosphere. Her utterances in the third interview summarized her feelings in this period.

“The small amount of practice or the attitudes of the mentor and the instructor were the negative sides, but in general, I loved to be there as a teacher candidate and I was happy to be in this process because I had my initial ideas and feelings on what it was like to be a teacher in a real classroom and dealing with real students, and sometimes their problems. Of course it would have been better if we had had more chance to put all our theoretical knowledge into practice and to see whether they worked or not in real life, but even this weak form of the practicum was useful for me” (3rd interview - 11.06.2015).

6.2.3. Getting experienced as a teacher

Zeynep finished the pre-service program in its normal period, four years, but did not work for about one year due to some private reasons. After that, the university in her town opened the English preparatory program for some departments, which created job vacancies at university. She applied for that program and started to work at university as an English instructor. However, she was initially assigned for giving the English course for freshman students and after a while she started to work in the preparatory program. During the data collection process, it was clearly found out that all her teaching experiences, starting from her novice years, were significantly influential on the formation and reformation of her cognition as a language teacher.

6.2.3.1. Being a novice teacher

As a Turkish EFL teacher, Zeynep had her first teaching experiences while giving the course of ‘English I’ to freshman students at university. She had very clear memories on those days because she thought that she had never been in such a difficult situation ever.

“I am not joking but at first I could not believe where I was. A very crowded classroom full of teenagers, different looks on me, some of them were just two or three years younger than me, all of them knew they could not learn English in just three hours in a week and were not listening to me. I mean everything was such nonsense and meaningless that I got extremely desperate” (1st interview - 19.03.2015).

Starting her initial work experience in such a discouraging environment and with these negative feelings, Zeynep tried hard to spend one year teaching English to these freshman students. She expressed that her situation was so bad and unbearable that she did not have any opportunities to apply what she knew about language teaching; just wrote everything on the board and made students do a lot of exercises. For this reason, she thought those days were “not valuable enough to mention as real teaching experiences” (1st interview – 19.03.2015).

Her second year as an instructor at university was much better for her. She was assigned in the preparatory program in which she had almost twenty hours to teach students who were motivated and eager to learn English. Zeynep reported that her

first experiences in this atmosphere were more positive since she just focused on teaching English. While talking about these days, she admitted that her teaching, in terms of language teaching and classroom management, was completely based on her knowledge of language teaching she gained in her pre-service education. She tried to implement what she had learnt during this process; embraced the elements that worked and revised or gave up doing the one that did not work well.

“In fact everything I knew was what I had learnt in pre-service so I had to implement them in my classes quite consciously. For example, when a student misbehaved, I told myself ‘Ok first try to ignore it, then make eye contact etc.’, or while teaching vocabulary, ‘Ok, don’t give the meaning first, try to contextualize it or make something so that they guess its meaning etc.’ You see, very rule-based. When I saw that my application reached its aim or students liked it, I embraced but if it did not, I put it aside to think about it.....Yes exactly, like trial and error” (1st interview – 19.03.2015).

While talking about her novice years, Zeynep admitted that these years were very important for her career because she became aware of the reality of teaching. According to her, her pre-service education was mostly theoretical and the opportunities provided for her were not enough to practice their teaching skills and to see the realities of a classroom. She also believed that working as a teacher after these years was a bit shocking but at the same time useful to see her own weaknesses and strengths as a teacher. For her, the first years she taught were like a transition period from theory to reality, which made her shape a considerable amount of knowledge about teaching. While making a general evaluation on the impact of these years on her language teacher cognition, she underlined this fact.

“Of course, like every teacher, these years were also challenging for me because, let teaching aside, you try to establish yourself as a teacher in the eyes of students and struggle, yes struggle, to be their teacher. In terms of teaching, you start as an idealist teacher and try to apply everything you know and expect them to go smoothly. However, that is not the case. I remember most of my ideas changed during these years and I had to generate new ones which were more practical for me” (3rd interview - 11.06.2015).

As it is seen, though they were not directly reflected into her practices, the years Zeynep spent as a novice teacher were quite influential on the formation of her language teacher cognition since she had to revise and adapt most of her knowledge on being a teacher. It was also revealed that, starting with these years, language teaching experiences she had in her institution made her a teacher who was quite different from her initial years.

6.2.3.2. Getting more experienced

Zeynep spent about ten years in her institution teaching different groups of learners, working with different colleagues and being assigned for different duties and offices during this process. Data derived from her narrations and classroom practices showed that these years which made her an experienced teacher had both negative and positive effects on her self-perception as a teacher, cognition and language teaching practices.

First of all, in general, Zeynep underlined the fact that getting experienced influenced her in two main points. The first one was that it made her a more self confident teacher who was sure about her classroom implications, conducted her classes smoothly, had a good stance while teaching, and managed any potential problems in class. On the other hand, there were several points which she called as the negative effect of experience. According to her, she got a more routine, less idealist, boring and ordinary teacher who gave up applying creative activities, taught the same things in the same way every year, stayed in the constraints of the institution and became a predictable teacher regarding her reactions, opinions and practices. She also reported that these two points sometimes clashed with each other and her teaching sometimes changed because of this clash (summarized from the 3rd interview - 11.06.2015).

Secondly, Zeynep's narrations yielded important points regarding the impact of her teaching experiences on the formation of her language teacher cognition. Zeynep thought that her initial opinions and perspectives on language teaching and being a teacher were totally dominated by her pre-service education. She was doing everything consciously and with the purpose of learning whether they worked well or not. As time passed and she got more experienced, she began to have certain ideas

that worked well in terms of language teaching and being a teacher whereas she had to give up some others which she thought did not work in real classroom teaching (1st interview - 19.03.2015). While making a general comment regarding how her teaching experiences developed her language teacher cognition, she emphasized the fact that they had an important place on her development as a professional teacher.

“It was the experience that shaped me as a teacher; I mean after pre-service I was like dough and my experiences baked me..... I learnt a lot from my experiences, especially regarding the practicality of my knowledge I gained in pre-service. I embraced some of the practices but I had to give up some of them as well. At the end, I slowly became the teacher I am now and maybe this situation will change as well in the future with new experiences” (3rd interview - 11.06.2015).

Observations of Zeynep’s classroom practices and her reflection reports also yielded significant results and it was found out some of her practices were based on her language teaching experiences in the past. In her first observed session, while she was explaining the difference between past simple and past continuous, she drew a time line and gave examples on it to make students understand their difference better. On this issue, she said in the follow-up interview that she learnt to do it through experience and it was effective in teaching their difference (1st SR interview - 02.04.2105). At the end of this session, she made a wrap-up which summarized the session in a few minutes and gave some homework on the topic she taught. After the session, she reported that it was a routine wrap-up of the days when she taught a grammar topic and she learnt in time that it was beneficial for students (1st SR interview - 02.04.2105). In addition to her short translation activity in her second session, she conducted another one in the fourth session in which students translated a few Turkish sentences into English (they were conditional Type-2 sentences in Turkish). Underlining the fact that she used it as a revision of the previous session, she reported on this issue that she made such translation activities since she learnt through her experiences that translation and the use of L1 were not as bad as they were taught during pre-service (4th SR interview - 28.05.2015). As a final example, while she was asking comprehension questions on the text she covered in the second observed session, she gave permission to the students who wanted to answer the questions (the same student answered three questions). In the SR interview- the

researcher asked why she preferred to do so rather than selecting students randomly, and her answer again showed the influence of her experiences.

“I remember I was exactly doing the way you mentioned and I used to think that it made students alert and more active. However, in time, I felt that I was being too insistent and some irrespective students were saying that they did not want to answer when I wanted them to do so, which put me in a very difficult situation in classroom atmosphere. Thus, I gave up doing it and now I give permission to students who want to answer the question” (2nd SR interview - 16.04.2015).

Zeynep’s reflections also included several important points regarding her experiences. For instance, she mentioned one of her writing classes in her second reflection. In this session, she taught her students how to write a formal e-mail and, to do it, she wrote an example mail on the board and wanted students to write a similar e-mail by changing the receiver and the topic. She made a comment on this practice in her reflection and reported that she was applying very different techniques such as mapping, brainstorming or drafting in the initial years of her career but then she began to think that that was a big workload for her and applied a simpler way, which she taught was as effective as the previous ones for her learner profile (Zeynep, reflection 2). In addition to this, she wrote about two activities, one for teaching grammar and the other for teaching vocabulary, which she developed based on her experiences. In the first one, while she was teaching certain modal verbs (have to, must, can, can’t), she found some interesting facts about the life in different countries with their pictures and taught these structures based on these pictures (Zeynep, reflection 3). In the other one, which was a revision activity, she wrote about a hundred previously-taught words on the board in the break time and closed them with a curtain. When students came to the class, she opened it and gave two minutes to students to keep as many words as possible in their mind. Then, she closed it again, wanted students to write the items they remembered and gave pluses to students who remembered most. She reported on this activity that she found it on her own, frequently applied it every year and all of her students enjoyed it a lot (Zeynep, reflection 5).

As all her narrations demonstrated, Zeynep's teaching experiences had an important place in her professional career because they led to several important changes in her life as teacher. First, her self-perceptions changed as a teacher from being an idealist teacher to a routine and predictable one. Secondly, she has revised and reshaped some of her knowledge of language teaching due to her experiences throughout the years. Finally, her experiences have made her gain several activities and implementations which she still uses in her lessons as classroom practices. For this reason, it is concluded that the years Zeynep spent for language teaching served as a process through which she revised and reconceptualised most of her cognition on language teaching and adapted it in accordance with her ongoing experience.

6.3. Zeynep's Classroom Practices

Zeynep was teaching pre-intermediate students (in fact; elementary in her eyes) at the time of the data collection process. In all her video-recorded classes and reflection reports, it was observed and felt that she was complaining a lot about her students, the content of the course book was too dominant in her class and she seemed as if she was not reflecting her real teaching performance in the classroom atmosphere. Based on this, it was found out her classroom practices were mainly shaped by the learners' profile, the course book she used and her views on language teaching.

6.3.1. Learners

Contrary to the impact of the learner profile on the other participants' (Eda and Mert) classroom practices, which mainly encouraged these teachers to create something good for their students, the case of Zeynep was quite different. It was understood from most of her narrations and reports that Zeynep had to decrease the quality of all her practices and sometimes performed in a way, which she did not believe in the effectiveness, because of the learner profile she had. In other words, she arranged her practices according to her learners, but this time, the situation was negatively different.

How the profile of Zeynep's students influenced her classroom practices was firstly quite visible in her attitudes towards students. It was observed a few minutes after the

first session started, one or two students sitting at the back put their heads on the desk and started to sleep. Moreover, while a student was listening to something through headphones connected to her mobile, another one was constantly texting. Briefly, some of the students were totally uninterested in what she was teaching. During the lesson, Zeynep did not do anything about these students and her utterances during the interview explained why she did not do anything about it.

“Yes, I am always aware of them but honestly speaking I am fed up with such students. When I was younger, it was impossible in my class to do anything irrelevant and I would never allow it..... I struggled a lot for such students; listened to their problems and tried to motivate them, and even argued with them. At the end, I was the bad teacher or nothing changed and all my endeavour was in vain. Now, as you see, I have given it up and I do nothing for such students” (1st SR interview - 02.04.2105).

During her first and third observed sessions, she focused on two grammar points. In both of the sessions, she started teaching the structures by giving some examples and making students familiar with the topic, but while explaining the main points to them, she used Turkish all the time. In the follow-up interviews of both lessons, the researcher asked whether she normally used Turkish while teaching grammar. She reported that she did not believe in the effectiveness of using Turkish and she had not used it that much in her past experiences. According to her, the reason was her students because they did not understand her when she explained in English and they definitely needed some Turkish explanation (1st and 3rd SR interviews). Another important point that was observed in these sessions was that she wanted her students to do some exercises (both in the book and in a worksheet) on the structure but she did not conduct an activity in which students can practice more and produce some sentences on the target item. In other words, it was observed that the production part of her grammar teaching was missing. On this issue, she presented her ideas during the follow-up SR of the first session and again the reason was found to be the learner profile.

“Of course, I know how this kind of production is important when teaching a grammatical structure. Believe me, I used to prepare very creative activities and exercises for my students in the past and they produced very good sentences on the covered topic in these activities. However, I can't do it with these students and for the

last few years. I prepare but they do not participate, and I get angry. Then, I start to think why I should do this” (1st SR interview - 02.04.2105).

As mentioned before, Zeynep covered a reading text in her second observed session. During the while-reading part of this session, she read the text herself, students followed it, and then she translated every sentence of the text with students (creating a bit messy classroom atmosphere). She uttered on this activity that she usually had to translate the texts since her students did not understand them when they were covered in English. She also added that she preferred translation as a separate activity and she was happy with using translation in that way (2nd SR interview - 16.04.2015). In addition to this, in a listening activity she conducted during the five minutes of the third session, she followed a very different way. She wanted her students to open the scripts at the end of the book, follow them by listening to the text and then answer the comprehension questions. Being aware of the fact that it became like a reading activity rather than a listening one, she reported in the SR interview that the learners had difficulties in understanding such listening texts, so she changed the type of the activity to make it a simpler one for them (3rd SR interview - 14.05.2015).

Zeynep’s reflections also included several points which put forward the important role of the learner profile on her classroom practices. In her first reflection, she mentioned a presentation activity in which she asked students to prepare and make a presentation about their families, hometown and future plans by using a slide show. She wrote that she loved and made this activity for years and it was a compulsory one for her students every year, but she had to make it an optional one due to her learners this year (Zeynep, reflection 1). Besides, while mentioning a situation in another reflection, she emphasized how she had changed some of her practices due to the learner profile. She expressed that there were photocopyable worksheets in their course book and she usually gave them as homework to practice previously taught topics. However, in the week of that reflection, she started to give them during the class hours and made students do it in class since they did not do them when they were given as homework: “They are very useful worksheet and they wasted them when I gave them; that’s why we do it in class now” (Zeynep, reflection 2, p. 2). As

a final example, she wrote about a writing activity for which she admitted that she did something which she had never done before. She was going to teach an opinion paragraph in a week towards the end of the term. She wrote an example one on the board and asked students to write another one. She wrote that she spent an hour to explain how to write but their writings were terrible at the end. For this reason, she collected the writings, corrected all the mistakes and gave them back to students, which she called she had never done before (Zeynep, reflection 5).

It was very noticeable in Zeynep's narrations and her classroom teaching that the learner profile she was teaching significantly influenced her practices and most of them were affected negatively. In general, she had to decrease the quality of her practices; sometimes performed practices which she thought were not normally effective or had to teach in a way which she had never used before. Contrary to other participants of this study, the learner profile was not a driving force for classroom practices but a challenging factor for the teacher. In sum, Zeynep's utterances below showed the degree of this impact and how she felt about it.

“I am also not happy with some of, even most of my practices I use in class but I have no other chance. I know my potential, my creativity and my skills but most of them do not work with that profile. You have to be as simple and clear as possible; otherwise they do not understand anything. I did not experience such things in the past but I don't know, may be this generation is different, but you must sacrifice yourself, your teaching, your perspective to be able to teach them something. Otherwise, everything is in vain” (2nd interview - 30.04.2015).

6.3.2. The course book

Another important factor which was observed to be significantly influential on Zeynep's classroom practices was the course book. Other than several grammar topics and some of the vocabulary items, Zeynep strictly followed the content of the book and she hardly ever did any other thing. In fact, she mentioned the importance of the course book for her classroom practices during the first interview at the beginning of the term. She stated that she mostly followed the content of the book

but tried to enrich it with her own creativity, activities and ideas (1st interview - 19.03.2015). However, observations of her class hours revealed that the impact of the course book on her classroom practices was actually much more than she mentioned in this interview and her practices were sometimes dominated by the content of the book.

During the observed sessions, there were several moments (teaching grammatical structures, some of the vocabulary teaching, a short translation activity, some parts of covering the reading text, and one of the listening activities) in which Zeynep's teaching acts were not based on the course book. Except for these, most of her teaching was totally guided by the course book. For instance, during the first two sessions, it was observed that she followed the every item in the course book, her teaching acts had the same sequence with the items in the course book and she even did not do any revisions or changes in their order which had the potential to make the session flow more smoothly. During the second interview, the researcher asked her about the effect of the course book and how she felt about it, and her utterances indicated that it had to be in this way.

“Of course, it is a little bit disturbing but it is sometimes very useful for a teacher, I mean you have something to follow in your hand and you arrange everything according to its content.....That was not case in the past and I tried to integrate a lot of things from my own experiences, creative ideas and activities but for the last few years, I prefer to follow just the course book because that is what every teacher here does and everything is based on what the book presents us” (2nd interview - 30.04.2015).

In the second session, there was a short pronunciation section in the book which focused on the intonation of several vocabulary items. It was very clear that neither the profile, motivation and proficiency of learners nor the enthusiasm of Zeynep were high enough to teach and learn these pronunciation items. Surprisingly (the researcher thought that Zeynep would skip that part), she focused on the items and tried to teach them with her usual manner though she was aware of the fact that just few students seemed interested. Summarizing this situation in the follow-up SR to her, the researcher asked why she insisted on teaching it. She clearly replied that “I

was also aware how reluctant the students were and that part was irrelevant to their capacity but I had to cover it because it is in the book and I am responsible for teaching it” (2nd SR interview - 16.04.2015). In another example that occurred in the third observed session, there was a speaking activity in the book which, briefly, wanted students to create dialogues by forming sentences in comparatives and superlatives and ask each other some questions. Although the activity was open to creativity or revision and it was very easy to arrange it according to the interests of students, Zeynep preferred to do it as it was. When she was asked this issue in the SR interview, she did not tell a specific reason regarding the way she did it: “I did it because the instructions were in this way in the book” (3rd SR interview - 14.05.2015).

Zeynep’s last observed session was the one in which the issue of course book dominance was very clear. Other than starting the session with a very short translation activity and skipping a listening part, everything she did in class was what the course book presented in this unit. She made students listen to a dialogue, explained the meanings of vocabulary items, asked questions on this dialogue and wrote some useful phrases on the board and asked students to write them down as well. Towards the end of the lesson, though she did not receive any reactions from most of the students in terms of participation, she continued to cover the remaining parts of the unit. In the follow-up interview, she was quite sure about herself and stated that she did not care whether most of the students were not listening to her and she had to cover the unit that week (4th SR interview - 28.05.2015).

It was seen during classroom observations and in the interviews that the course book Zeynep used had an important place in her practices but this impact sometimes turned out to be dominance. Without doing any changes or revisions, or integrating any other outsider activities or material, Zeynep was sometimes observed to be implementing only what the course book presented her as the content or material. In her final interview, she honestly touched upon this issue and admitted this dominance, but it was seen that she had some reasonable facts.

“In fact, as I said before, I was not like that. Yes, we had course books in the past as well but I was making revisions and adaptations on it or adding new activities or items

to its content.....I should admit I have changed a lot, and maybe become lazier because I have thought that nothing changes even if you do a lot of work.Everything is based on the course book in this school; exams, syllabus, curriculum. That's why I strictly follow it" (3rd interview - 11.06.2015).

6.3.3. Zeynep's language teaching philosophy

Zeynep's classroom practices were mainly shaped by the learner profile she had and the course book she used. On the other hand, as the background of some of her practices and her narrations put forward, she had her own philosophy and ideas on language teaching which were constructed throughout the years she spent in the area of language learning and teaching, but it was also observed that she was able to reflect her philosophy into classroom atmosphere to some extent.

The number of points which had the traces of her philosophy was not too many but Zeynep had very clear explanations on them which showed her language teaching philosophy. One of the examples of these points was her attitude towards translation. She admitted during the interviews that she used translation in her classes as a teaching technique and believed in its effectiveness though she was not taught about translation like that. That means, she constructed her own ideas as she got more experienced in her profession. Secondly, she mentioned both in the interviews and reflection reports that she had certain ways of teaching and revising vocabulary and it was found out that she observed these techniques from her teachers in the past and embraced them as a teacher since she knew they would be useful for students. On the other hand, although she reported that she knew both implicit and explicit ways of teaching grammar, she preferred explicit ways in the observed classes to teach the target structures and referred to it as the "usual way of my grammar teaching" (2nd interview -30.04.2015). In terms of reading, she applied the steps of a typical reading course with small revisions and conducted her reading lessons accordingly. All of these examples showed the fact that she had a philosophy in her mind on how to teach a language but some other factors such as the learner profile, the course and institutional factors, which will be mentioned in the next section, prevented her from reflecting her philosophy into her classroom teaching.

During the last interview, being aware of the fact mentioned above, the researcher asked Zeynep how she felt about her current teaching performance, profession, and practices. First of all, she admitted that combined with the responsibilities in her private life, the course load at school and the learner profile made her feel very exhausted and her mood was reflected into her teaching performance negatively, which made her unhappy as a teacher at the end. The sentences below, which she uttered in this interview, enlightened her opinions on this issue:

“I know this is not my real performance and I am sure I would be a different teacher if I worked in a better university. I got a very good education on language teaching in the past and during my initial years, I am not exaggerating, but I was a very good teacher. I could always choose the best way and apply it to teach a point, but all these problems I have today have made me a different, exhausted and burnt-out teacher. I am not happy with this situation but it is not easy to change it in this atmosphere” (3rd interview - 11.06.2015).

6.4. Institutional Context

During the data collection process, Zeynep was working as an instructor at the English preparatory program of a state university. The program was compulsory for the students of several departments like business administration, international affairs, economics, tourism, engineering etc. The department received about 700 students every year and 30 EFL instructors worked there. English is taught integratively in the department and instructors had 20-25 hours weekly course load.

In the previous section, Zeynep slightly touched upon the issue of her working context and she implied that the atmosphere in her institution influenced her teaching performance negatively and it was hard to change it. Data on this issue supported Zeynep’s implication and revealed that the organizational atmosphere in her institution and the lack of a testing and curriculum policy influenced Zeynep’s classroom practices significantly.

6.4.1. The organizational atmosphere

Zeynep was working in this department for about ten years at the time of the data collection process. Thus, she was very familiar with the atmosphere, other colleagues

and the system of the institution. During her first interview conducted at the beginning of the term, she mentioned the atmosphere in the institution and most of her utterances had negative connotations. She reported that the school had serious administrative problems, the atmosphere was so easygoing that instructors might not do their lessons whenever they did not want, there was not a control mechanism to set a disciplined atmosphere, attitudes of her colleagues were quite discouraging and she felt that almost everything was done for the sake of doing it (1st interview - 19.03.2015). When the data driven from other data collections were obtained, it was seen that the aforementioned atmosphere in Zeynep's institution were directly influential on Zeynep's mood, motivation and enthusiasm, which indirectly influenced her teaching performance in classroom atmosphere.

First of all, it was found out that Zeynep was quite disturbed by the attitudes and behaviours of her colleagues. She reported that some of them were so irresponsible that they sometimes did not do their classes and did not care what students would do in their exams. Some others, who had more than 20 years of experience in this school, were very unmotivated, closed to new ideas and they were used to believe that nothing would change this bad situation at this school. She also added that administrators were also instructors and they were not capable of finding solutions to such problems and they could not manage these issues at school. While mentioning all these during the interview, she also expressed how she felt about this situation.

“When all of these factors combine, there occurs an unbearable, easygoing, slack atmosphere which I hate to be in. We do not even have any meetings at the beginning or end of the terms, can you believe it? We just get our books and go to classes when the academic year starts. No one cares what happens in this school. Isn't it difficult to conduct your lesson effectively in such an atmosphere?” (2nd interview - 30.04.2015).

Another point which negatively influenced Zeynep was the lack of discipline in the institution. She believed that it was probably the most important problem they had in the institution because most of the instructors behaved unethically and negatively due to the lack of this discipline mechanism. While mentioning this situation, she told some of her memories she had in this school in which she caught an instructor giving the exam questions to students two days before the exam, she saw an instructor

eating cakes and chips and watching a movie with his students when he was supposed to get the students ready for the next exam, or nothing happened when she caught a student cheating in the exam (2nd interview – 30.04.2015). Experiencing these unusual events in this context, she thought that she sometimes felt herself like a fool when she tried to be a hardworking and good teacher in this institution.

In addition to her narrations describing the situation in her institutional context, she also talked about how such an atmosphere influenced her as a teacher and her classroom implications. The very first thing she uttered was that it was the atmosphere of this institution which made her the teacher she was now (3rd interview - 11.06.2015). She reported that she was a very hardworking and idealist teacher in her initial years in this school but the atmosphere she was working in made her an ordinary one. Her idealism decreased year by year and she began not to do all extra activities and preparations as the years passed. At the end, she believed that the decrease in her positive self-perception and idealism also was reflected into her teaching performance and she began to be a teacher who simply followed the course book and did just what she was responsible for. The utterances below also supported how the atmosphere in this institution influenced her negatively.

“When you look around, you see nobody doing an extra work. When you try to do something new and good, they immediately resist. When you do all your lessons, you feel like a fool. The worst thing is that has been the case for years. How can you be motivated to prepare extra, activities, new materials or apply different techniques when you see that everyone is just covering the book and doing nothing else? In time, you change unconsciously and become a teacher like them” (3rd interview – 11.06.2015).

During the data collection, Zeynep was sometimes observed to be a teacher simply covering the content of the book and her narrations on the situation of her institution demonstrated that it was the atmosphere in her institution which made her an ordinary teacher. It was also found out that this atmosphere influenced her habits and practices as a teacher negatively and slowly made her a teacher who simply covered what she was supposed to do. For this reason, it was concluded that the

organizational atmosphere in Zeynep's institution did not have a direct but had a significant indirect impact on her classroom practices.

6.4.2. The lack of a testing and curriculum policy

In the case of other participants, it was found out that there were certain testing and curriculum policies in their institutions and they were applied systematically to make the academic year a more planned and organized language teaching process. It was also revealed that these policies had relatively positive effect on the participants' classroom practices. However, in the case of Zeynep, the situation was just the opposite. The findings derived from her narrations showed that there were not any well-defined or systematically applied testing or curriculum policies, which led to course book dominant classes and had negative influences on Zeynep's classroom practices.

As it was revealed in previous sections, Zeynep's class hours were sometimes considerably dominated with the content of the course book she used and she hardly ever applied something out of the book. Her narrations put forward that one of the main reasons of this situation was the lack of a curriculum policy and an office responsible for doing it. According to Zeynep, the lack of such a policy made teachers be dependent on the book because it was the only source that they could rely on during the process (3rd interview - 11.06.2015). While talking about this issue, she told how they arranged the curriculum in their school and her narrations, which were a bit tragicomic, showed it was the lack of a curriculum policy which made her lessons more book-based.

“At the beginning of the term, two instructors sit together and distribute the units of the book to the weeks of the term. They prepare a table and we call it the curriculum; I am not joking. What does that mean? Our curriculum, syllabus, program, all of them is the book. So what I am supposed to do is to cover the given units in time, and nothing else. That is the system which makes our classes course-book based” (2nd interview - 30.04.2015).

Moreover, she added that she heard from her friends working at other universities that they had curriculum offices in their institutions which were responsible for

arranging the curriculum, making adaptations in the book and preparing extra materials, and she got angrier due to their own situation. Zeynep also said that she touched upon this issue in the administrative and annual meetings for a few times to set a curriculum office but she could not do it because of other instructors' resistance.

The lack of a testing policy was found to be the other factor which had some negative effects on Zeynep's practices. During her class hours, it was observed for numerous times that she made constant reminders about the exams and she always uttered sentences like "they may ask this, you may see that kind of a question, these items can be asked in this way etc." She was asked why she made such reminders and her answer showed how testing was important in their school.

"because it is the only aim for the students in our school to get good grades and pass the preparatory year. I mean getting good grades is more important than learning well for them. To be honest, since I know how important exams are for them, I constantly use these reminders to attract their attention to the lesson. When I say you may see this topic in the exam, they get more alert and careful" (2nd interview - 30.04.2015).

Zeynep told that there was not a testing policy or an office responsible for it, and according to her, that was another reason which increased course-book dominance in their school. During the second interview, she told how exams were prepared in their school and her narrations revealed every aspects of that testing problem.

"Every year, different four or five instructors become responsible for preparing questions and about 90% of these questions are prepared from the test master of the book, which means the exams are full of fill-in-the-blanks, matching or True-False questions. When students start to understand that the questions are very similar to the ones in their books and workbooks, they begin to pay attention only to course-book. Again you have no chance other than covering that book" (2nd interview - 30.04.2015).

She also added that she tried to prepare some cloze tests or different types of questions to assess different skills of students and to create awareness among other instructors when she was assigned for preparing questions, but she was warned by the administration to prepare questions based on the test master. After that moment, she promised herself not to do anything innovative for her institution.

It was clear that these problems in Zeynep's institutional context also created some problems for her and these problems were found to be significantly influential on Zeynep's self-perception as a teacher, her ideas and classroom practices. These problems compelled her to be a teacher who conducted her lessons based on the book and the exams. Being exhausted, bored and a little bit disappointed due to these problems in her institution, she uttered in her final interview that she believed it would have been very different if she had worked in a more professional context.

“As I said before, I am not happy to be here and that is not real me teaching in that school. Everything would be different if I worked at another university, a more professional one with more responsible colleagues and well-functioning offices. I mean, as a teacher, you become the part of the system you are working in and the system in this institution does not work well and naturally neither do I. I do not know what happens in the future but it is very difficult to change this situation” (3rd interview - 11.06.2015).

6.5. Conclusion

This chapter outlined the case of Zeynep; what contributed to the formation of her cognition as an EFL teacher, how her classroom practices were shaped and what institutional factors were influential on her classroom practices. The results on her case were presented in Table 4 below.

Table 5. The summary of Zeynep’s case

Main Sources of Zeynep’s Language Teacher Cognition	Zeynep’s Classroom Practices	The Impact of Institutional Factors
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Language learning experiences <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Enjoying language learning and forming habits ✓ Teachers in the past • Pre-service education <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Methodology courses ✓ Teacher educators ✓ The practicum • Experiences as a teacher <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Being a novice teacher ✓ More teaching experience 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learners • The course book • Zeynep’s language teaching philosophy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The organizational atmosphere • The lack of curriculum and testing policies

The findings regarding the case of Zeynep put forward that her language learning experiences, the pre-service education and her language teaching experiences starting from her novice years contributed to the formation of her language teacher cognition. During her learner years, Zeynep had several teachers whose practices and perspectives on language teaching had traces on Zeynep’s pedagogical knowledge as a teacher. Her language learning process in these years was so enjoyable that she formed certain habits which made her a successful language learner and eventually made her decide a career in the field of language teaching. Although she started her pre-service education with a disappointment, her narrations revealed that she was a successful pre-service teacher in these years, and the teacher educators in the department, methodology courses and her practice teaching experiences helped her develop as a prospective teacher and significantly contributed to her cognition as an EFL teacher. When she started working as a teacher, she had a process in which she had to revise most of her knowledge of language teaching and adapt it according to

the needs and realities of her classroom teaching experiences. Spending her novice years as a trial and error and a reconceptualization process, she began to have routines as a teacher as she got more experienced.

Data on Zeynep's class hours yielded important findings regarding the characteristics of her classroom practices. It was revealed that her classroom practices were mainly shaped by the learner profile, the course book she used and partly her language teaching philosophy. Zeynep reported that she had to decrease the quality of her language teaching practices and simplify everything she did in class due to the low level of her students. It was also observed that most of her classroom practices were based on the content of the course book and it was sometimes considerably dominant in her classroom teaching, the reason of which was found to be the status of the book in her institution. On the other hand, she tried to reflect her language teaching philosophy into her classroom practices when she had the opportunity to do, but it was found to be influential to some extent.

Finally, the results showed that there were several serious problems in Zeynep's institutional context and these problems influenced her self-perception, mood and classroom practices negatively. Zeynep expressed that the organizational atmosphere in her workplace was quite bad in terms of administration and relationship with other colleagues, which created a very easygoing and undisciplined environment. Moreover, her narrations revealed that there were not any curriculum and testing policies or offices in her school and the language teaching process worked unsystematically. This situation compelled her to conduct her lessons totally based on the course-book and this situation made her quite unhappy in her workplace. For this reason, it was concluded that the institutional context had a seriously negative impact on Zeynep as an EFL teacher.

CHAPTER 7

DISCUSSION

7.1. Introduction

The study aimed to explore the main sources of the participant teachers' language teacher cognition, the characteristics of their classroom practices, the institutional factors that shaped their practices and how these three constructs were interconnected. The results regarding the foci above were presented case by case in the previous chapters and are also shown as a summary in the Table 6 below.

Table 6. The summary of the cases

The Case of Eda	The Case of Mert	The Case of Zeynep
<i>Main Sources Language Teacher Cognition</i>	<i>Main Sources Language Teacher Cognition</i>	<i>Main Sources Language Teacher Cognition</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Language learning experiences <i>language learning habits</i> <i>Teachers in the past</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pre-service education <i>Teacher educators</i> <i>Methodology courses</i> <i>The practicum</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Experiences as a teacher <i>Being a novice teacher</i> <i>More teaching experience</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Language learning experiences <i>Language learning aptitude</i> <i>Teachers in the past</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pre-service education <i>Methodology courses</i> <i>The practicum</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Experiences as a teacher <i>Being a novice teacher</i> <i>More teaching experience</i> <i>Colleagues in the past</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Language learning experiences <i>Enjoying language learning and forming habits</i> <i>Teachers in the past</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pre-service education <i>Methodology courses</i> <i>Teacher educators</i> <i>The practicum</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Experiences as a teacher <i>Being a novice teacher</i> <i>More teaching experience</i>
<i>Eda's Classroom Practices</i>	<i>Mert's Classroom Practices</i>	<i>Zeynep's Classroom Practices</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The course book Eda's language teaching philosophy Improvisational teaching Learners 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Learners Mert's language teaching principles 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Learners The course book Zeynep's language teaching philosophy
<i>The Impact of Institutional Factors</i>	<i>The Impact of Institutional Factors</i>	<i>The Impact of Institutional Factors</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Testing policies Curriculum policies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The organizational Atmosphere Testing policies Curriculum policies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The organizational Atmosphere The lack of curriculum and testing policies

Based on these cases, this chapter presents and discusses the findings derived from the cross-cases analysis of the data by providing the figures which are constructed based on this cross-cases analysis and describes the language teacher cognition of the

participant teachers, the characteristics of their classroom practices and the impact of the institutional context on them. Finally, the chapter presents a model called Clusters of Language Teacher Cognition (CLTC) which demonstrates how the constructs mentioned above are interconnected and shows the elements which the teachers have cognition about.

7.2. The Participant EFL Teachers’ Language Teacher Cognition

The first research question of this study investigated the main sources which contributed to the formation of the teachers’ language teacher cognition. The results derived from the analysis of the cases demonstrate that, based on the grounded theory paradigm, they construct their cognition through a process which includes their language learning experiences in the past – causal conditions, their pre-service education – the core phenomenon, previous institutional contexts – the context, their novice years as a teacher – intervening conditions and their teaching experiences - strategies. At the end of this process, they gain language teacher cognition – consequences - which forms the basis of all their language teaching activities. The model illustrating this process is shown in Figure 9.

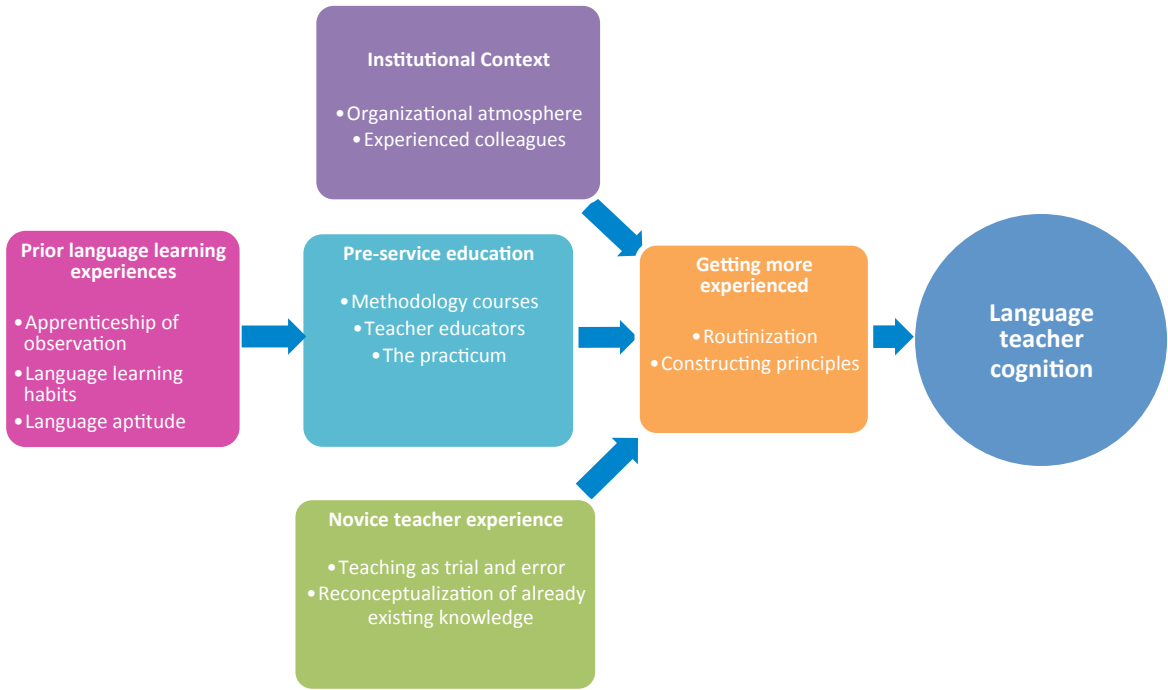


Figure 9. Main sources of the teachers’ language teacher cognition

7.2.1. Prior language learning experiences

In the literature, there are numerous scholars who put forward that teachers' prior experiences as language learners help them construct very initial conceptualizations on how languages should be taught. According to Grossman (1991), pre-service teachers start their programs with already existing knowledge and concepts on teaching methods and certain beliefs on their subject areas. Parallel to this view, the current study yields significant results regarding the impact of EFL teachers' language learning experiences on their language teacher cognition and demonstrates that they are the causal conditions of the process of language teacher cognition development based on the grounded theory paradigm.

The main point regarding prior language learning experiences is about the teachers in the past. Introduced to the literature with the famous work of Lortie (1975), the term apprenticeship of observation refers to the phenomenon which put forward that learners spend a considerable time observing and evaluating professionals and this might have significant influence on their beliefs and knowledge about teaching. This study also demonstrates that the apprenticeship observation is valid for EFL teachers and its impact is so noticeable that the roots of some of their current practices go back to the years when they were learners. This impact is both visible as a positive transfer of their past teaching experiences or an avoidance of disliked ones. Eda, for instance, has decided to be an affectionate teacher who is always very careful to be kind when she gives feedback to her students or warns them about something due to the negative experience she had with her primary school teacher. On the other hand, she prepares a game, which she remembers from high school years, for her students to help them revise their vocabulary knowledge, and this situation stands for a positive transfer of previous experiences. Mert, the second case of the study, also reported similar experiences. He had quite positive experiences and memories with two of his teachers, Canan and Muammer, who were influential on his interest and enjoy in the language learning process. It is observed that Mert has embraced some of these teachers' attitudes and techniques and still uses them in his classroom practices. Zeynep, another case of this study, admirably mentioned one of her teachers in the past and admitted that she wished to be like her in those years. She

also expressed how she was influential on her to choose this profession. It was also found that she embraced some of the classroom practices of another teacher though she called him as traditional. These findings of the study show parallelism with many studies in the literature. Erkmén (2013), investigating the language teaching beliefs of in-service Turkish EFL teachers, found out that language learning experiences in the past had an important role on teachers' teaching beliefs. Bailey et. al. (1996) revealed that past teachers' personality, caring and commitment had influential roles on pre-service students' language learning philosophies. In addition to this, parallel to Zeynep's preferences for traditional techniques in grammar teaching, Woods (1996) demonstrated that teachers might prioritize certain skill-based implementations which they were exposed to in the past. As for the transfer of learning and teaching experiences which were both reported by Mert and Eda, Golombek (1998) and Numrich (1996) put forward that teachers might embrace or avoid certain practices based on their experiences in the past. For these reasons, parallel to many studies in the past, it is concluded that apprenticeship of observation also plays an important role on language teachers' cognition and this phenomenon has a noticeable impact on their classroom practices.

Another important factor which is found to be influential on the participant teachers' cognition and is related to their prior language learning experiences is their language learning habits. It is revealed that teachers enjoyed language learning when they were students and during this process, they constructed certain principles on how language skills are learnt based on their habits they benefited in their own language learning process. For instance, Eda writes the grammar structures on the board so that her students can take notes, or she gives lots of drilling exercises to students since she used to do the same when she was a learner. Zeynep, as another example, used to keep a separate vocabulary notebook or learnt a lot through sticking vocabulary cartoons on the wall of her room when she was a learner. Now, she wants her students to do the same things since she believes that they are quite effective for learning and revising vocabulary items. Similar to these findings, some of the participants in Hayes' (2008) study also reported that they loved language learning very much in the past and this positive attitude guided them to be language teachers. Besides, Bailey et. al. (1996) also concluded that their motivation in the past to learn

the language was one of the factors influencing teachers' language teaching philosophies. In addition to these findings in the literature, this study also concludes that language teachers' cognition is also influenced by their language learning habits in the past since they think that these habits are effective language learning techniques and they currently use them in their language teaching profession.

The last factor regarding language learning experiences in the past was strongly emphasized by one of the participants of the study, Mert. He definitely believes that his language learning aptitude is very high and he has a special ability in language learning. According to him, his language learning aptitude always made him a successful learner, which, in the end, played a very important role in his decision to be an EFL teacher. Thanks to his aptitude, he developed certain habits which helped him improve his English and become more successful. The existence of such a special ability is also supported by Hayes (2008). Reporting the significant utterances of his participants on this issue throughout the study, Hayes put forward that some of the primary preferences of language teachers might stem from their aptitudes on this particular subject, which is language. The results in the case of Mert show parallelism with Hayes (2008) and reveal the fact that language learning aptitude might play an important role on EFL teachers' cognition as well.

These findings demonstrate that the participant EFL teachers have very initial conceptualizations on how languages are learnt and taught based on their language learning experiences in the past which include their teachers, language learning habits and aptitudes. It is also seen that these experiences are so influential that they have their places in teachers' current language teaching philosophies and classroom implementations.

7.2.2. The pre-service education

Found to be the core phenomenon in the grounded theory model thanks to its high frequency as a category in participants' narrations, the pre-service education serves as a very important construct in the teachers' cognition on language teaching. It is revealed that they gain a considerable amount of knowledge on language teaching

through methodology courses, the practicum and the manners of teacher educators even though the programs have several insufficiencies.

The first element of the pre-service education is methodology courses given during the program. It is revealed that teachers learn a lot of things on how to teach a language and gain certain skills on both theoretical and practical levels. Eda, for instance, reported that she had learnt a lot in these courses on how language skills were taught in different ways and how to prepare different settings to maximize learning. She also learnt certain methods to teach grammar and how to conduct a reading lesson during these courses. Mert, on the other hand, believed that the methodology courses in his pre-service education had been quite theoretical, but even so, he had learnt a lot in these courses. It was observed that some of his language teaching principles were totally based on his pre-service education like his grammar teaching as presentation-practice-production, his target language use during classroom teaching and techniques for teaching reading (skimming and scanning). Finally, Zeynep, spending four successful years as a prospective teacher in her program, called the methodology courses as the most useful ones and reported that these courses had contributed to her language teacher cognition considerably. She was also observed to utilize some techniques which she had learnt during these courses. The impact of these courses on language teachers is also investigated in the literature of SLTE. Although there are very few studies reporting the zero-impact of methodology courses like Peacock (2001), findings of many studies support the results of the current study. Chiang (2008) reported the positive findings of a methodology course with several practical elements on pre-service teachers and came up with the conclusion that the efficiency of such courses could be increased with field-work integration. Studies conducted in Turkish context (Coşkun & Daloğlu, 2010; Seferoğlu, 2006) revealed the fact that methodology courses were important and effective elements of the pre-service programs though they sometimes presented a mismatch between materials and practical implications. Besides, in his longitudinal study, Özmen (2012) tracked the language learning and teaching beliefs of student-teachers and put forward that methodology courses were one of the most important elements that shaped student-teachers' practices. Parallel to these findings, this study demonstrates that methodology courses presented throughout the pre-

service language teacher education are important components of the program and they significantly contribute to the cognition of the teachers although they are, to some extent, regarded as being theoretical and lacking practical elements.

Secondly, the participants' narrations show that teacher educators in the pre-service programs also play a significant role on teachers' learning-to-teach process and contribute to their language teacher cognition. Though the issue has not received enough attention in the literature of SLTE, the findings of this study put forward that teacher educators in the program have considerable impact on prospective teachers with their both positive and negative qualities. For instance, Eda reported to have learnt many things from the assistant professor who had given methodology courses and she still used them as an EFL teacher whereas she criticized some of the teacher educators not being collaborative and supportive enough. Zeynep, having very good and sincere relationship with the teacher educators in her department, mentioned similar things. She expressed that there were two instructors whose personality as an educator, feedback and manners towards her were very important for her in those years and she took them as models during her learning-to-teach process. For these reasons, it is seen that though not revealed with empirical data in the literature, this study put forward that teacher educators might play important roles on teachers' development since pre-service students take them as models when they are in the program and embrace their qualities if they find them useful and beneficial.

The final point regarding the impact of pre-service education on the participant teachers' cognition is the issue of "practicum" which is regarded as the most important component of pre-service education programs (Gebhard, 2009). In the literature, it has received a considerable attention and numerous studies have been conducted focusing on several aspects of pre-service teachers' practicum experience; however, they put forward contradictory results. Mattheoudakis (2007) examined the impact of a pre-service program on prospective teachers and it was found that the program led to significant development in student-teachers' beliefs in general whereas their practicum experience did not result in the expected changes. Similarly, Gan (2013), focusing on the challenges prospective ESL teacher faced, found that student-teachers were not able to realize the pedagogical principles that they learnt

through the program in the expected level. On the other hand, some other studies (Brown & MacGannon, 1998; Özmen, 2012; Yuan & Lee, 2014) yielded positive influences of the practicum experience and put forward that it led to significant positive change on student-teachers' cognition and contributed to their development. Based on the narrations of participants, this study also yields important findings on the issue of practicum. Eda, for instance, reported that she had benefited a lot from her teaching experiences and her mentor's feedback though her supervisor did not significantly influence her ideas and beliefs. Expressing very similar things on her practicum experiences, Zeynep also mentioned the process positively and said that she had felt as a teacher for the first time thanks to this experience. Even Mert, who believed that his experiences during this process were not real ones and complained a lot about his supervisor due to her grading policies, reported to have had clear ideas regarding student and teacher behaviours in a real classroom atmosphere. For these reasons, reporting the findings from the perspective of working teachers, this study reveals the practicum experience is very important in teachers' cognitive development in the sense that they, as prospective teachers in those years, generate initial conceptualizations and have certain opinions regarding the realities of classroom in their practicum and all teaching experiences they have in this process contribute to their language teacher cognition in spite of certain weaknesses, such as mentoring, supervising and the amount of practice teaching, in the implementation of it.

The impact of pre-service education on language teachers' cognition is one of the controversial issues in SLTE literature, and the issue is a central one in the study of teacher cognition (Borg, 2003). However, this study yields important results contrary to this controversy. Although participants reported several elements to be improved regarding their pre-service education, it is clearly seen that the pre-service education is the core phenomenon of the grounded theory model regarding the main sources of EFL teachers' cognition and it is revealed that it is the most influential factor on teachers' learning-to-teach process and the process significantly contributes to the formation of their language teacher cognition.

7.2.3. Institutional context

There is a common view among practitioners that institutional factors influence teachers' cognition and practices directly or indirectly but there are very few studies in the literature focusing on the extent of this impact. Calling these factors as institutional exigencies, Burns (1996) demonstrated that these factors had the potential to shape teachers' decisions on planning and the content to be taught. In another study, Valencia (2009) outlined the participants' narrations which put forward that their classroom practices were shaped by contextual factors such as schooling, testing policies and learners. Similar to these results, it is revealed by the current study that institutional context plays an important role on teachers' cognition and their practices, directly or indirectly. The indirect impact of institutional factors on the participant teachers' cognition is seen as a result of classroom practices and it will be discussed in the following sections. As for the direct impact of it, there were clear points in the participants' narrations which showed that they learnt from the elements of their institutional context. It was noticeable in Mert's narrations that he developed as a professional teacher in his first year at the private school he worked as an EFL teacher. He especially underlined the fact that his colleagues were quite helpful to him when he had problematic situations. Besides, the time he spent with these colleagues through formal and informal discussions contributed to his learning-to-teach process as a novice teacher. On the other hand, Zeynep was influenced quite negatively from the atmosphere in her institution including the learner profile she had in her first year and the attitudes of her colleagues when she started working as an EFL instructor. It was also quite clear that both of the participants learnt a lot from their experiences with these elements in their institutions and these learning processes contributed their language teacher cognition. Based on this, it can be concluded that the study yields important findings regarding the role of institutional context on the participant teachers' cognition as well.

7.2.4. Experiences as a novice teacher

Novice teacher experience, as a research topic, has received a considerable attention in the field of SLTE for the last few years. The reason for this attention is that the period spent as a novice was found to be a transition process which included

teachers' adaptation to classroom realities and was often referred to as a reality shock (Farrell, 2006b; 2012; Faez & Valeo, 2012; Kumazawa, 2013; Warford & Reeves, 2003). According to Farrell (2009, p. 182), "ideals that novice teachers may have formed during the teacher education programme are often replaced by the realities of the social and political contexts of the school." Providing a direct and complete support for this opinion, the results of the study demonstrate that novice years of EFL teachers serve as a period in their learning-to-teach process in which they face with the realities of working conditions and a classroom atmosphere and reconceptualise their already-existing knowledge and adapt it according to realities of their schools and classroom contexts.

The situation of novice teacher experience explained above was quite salient in the case of all participants of this study. Mert, for instance, reported that his initial experiences as a teacher were like an "ice-bucket challenge" which even made him sometimes feel like a fool. The biggest problem he had was his inability to put all the knowledge he had during his pre-service education into practice and because of this, he had incredibly difficult times in which he was not able to manage his classroom and conduct activities appropriate for his learner profile. The other participants, Eda and Zeynep, reported to have had similar experiences when they started working as teacher. Referring to this experience as a reality shock, Eda expressed that she was extremely disappointed with the socio-cultural and economic situation of the school and learners. While she was expecting to teach advanced topics to her students, it was both challenging and disappointing for her to teach "parts of the body" or "colours" as an initial teaching experience. On the other hand, Zeynep also experienced very difficult times in managing her students and teaching English at the same time when she started working as an instructor and she even did not count them as teaching experiences in her career. All these narrations show how being a novice teacher is also a challenging experience for EFL teachers.

The point how experiences as a novice teacher contribute to EFL teachers' cognition is another significant finding of this study. The results reveal that teachers, after facing the realities of classroom and school context, go through a process in which they test their knowledge of teaching through trial and error or experimenting,

embrace the implementations and principles that work and avoid the unpractical ones, and eventually reconceptualise their previous knowledge or adapt it according to the realities of the act of teaching. Mert, who believed that all his teaching experiences were very valuable for him, put a special emphasis on his experiences as a novice teacher and reported that he had felt like learning to teach again after pre-service. He admitted that he had been able to see his weaknesses as a teacher, become more aware on certain aspects of classroom teaching through living and experiencing them and improved his classroom management skills thanks to his novice experiences. Zeynep, another participant, also referred to those years as “challenging but fruitful”. She reported that her initial classroom practices had been totally based on the knowledge she gained in the pre-service education. For this reason, she called her novice years as a transition from theory to reality in which she had to reshape a considerable amount of her knowledge of teaching according to her learners and the context. Finally, Eda, whose way of teaching in those years was totally dominated by pre-service knowledge and who strictly applied what she had learnt in this process, expressed her novice experiences taught a lot of things to her. She reported that, in time, all her implications had begun to serve as a kind of trial and error mechanism through which she tried to find the best way that would fit the situation in which she tried to manage misbehaviour, to teach an instructional point or to make a decision in classroom atmosphere. All these findings derived from participants’ narrations support the ones in the literature. Farrell (2006b) stated in his case study on a first-year English teacher that novice years served as a kind of transition from a teacher education program to life in a real classroom, which included a delicate, and sometimes conflicting, role between learning to teach and learning to become a teacher within an established school culture. In addition to this, Tsui (2003) put forward that novice teachers were mostly concerned with their own survival in term of classroom management and the content of instruction during those years. Another important finding in the literature was that novice teachers increased their perceptions of preparedness as a teacher by gaining experience in the classroom (Faez & Valeo, 2012).

Combined with the findings in the literature, this study demonstrates that novice teacher experiences are crucially important for EFL teachers because a) they face

with the realities of classroom and school context, b) they are able to identify their weaknesses and strengths with their very first experiences, c) they have the opportunity to evaluate their already-existing knowledge of teaching through experimenting and trial and error, d) they eventually reconceptualise and adapt this knowledge according to the requirements of their context. For those reasons, the term “experiences as a novice teacher” is placed as the intervening conditions in the model since it is found to be referring to the process in which teaching experiences intervene with the existing knowledge of language teaching and lead to a reformulation in language teachers’ cognition.

7.2.5. Getting more experienced

It is a well-known fact among scholars and practitioners in the field of SLTE that teaching experiences play a crucial role in professional development and teacher expertise (Tsui, 2009). Parallel to this widely-accepted opinion, this study yields significant findings regarding the impact of teaching experience on EFL teachers’ cognition.

All the participants of the study emphasized the considerable impact of their teaching experiences on the development of their language teacher cognition. For instance, referring to her experiences as “they made me the teacher I am now”, Eda thought that her experiences throughout the years had both negative and positive influences on her as a teacher. She admitted that these experiences decreased her idealism but on the other side, made her a more confident teacher with a better stance. Although she had many opportunities to evaluate the value and effectiveness of her teaching principles and revise them, her teaching became more routinized each another day. In addition to this, Mert’s narrations, parallel to Eda, revealed the fact that he gained most of his knowledge and skills of teaching by doing or experiencing. He reported that all kind of experiences he had while teaching different learner profiles and working in different places made him gain awareness on real classroom teaching and reshape what he learnt during his pre-service education. As years passed, he developed professionally in terms of his pedagogical skills, and created his own teaching principles which shaped most of his language teaching practices. Finally, it was found that Zeynep’ teaching experiences also had an important place in her

professional career because they led to several important changes in her life as a teacher. Throughout the years, she turned to be a routine and predictable teacher from being an idealist one. On the other hand, she reshaped some of her knowledge of language teaching due to her experiences throughout the years. At the end, her experiences made her gain several activities and implementations which she still used in her lessons as classroom practices.

These findings are also supported by the existing studies in the literature which also put forward the significance of teaching experiences. The study conducted by Crookes and Araraki (1999), investigating the sources of ESL teachers' ideas for teaching, concluded that teachers referred to their teaching experience most as the source of their ideas. The utterances of one of the participants in this study were quite striking: "As you have more practice, then you know in the classroom what will work or what will not work" (p. 16). Moreover, Sun (2012) and Chou (2008) focused on their participants' personal practical knowledge and concluded that teachers' classroom practices were direct results of their teaching experiences and their reflections. Similar to these, one of the participants in Ulichny's (1996) study also reported that her prior teaching experiences were significantly effective on her current teaching practices. Finally, in their study examining pedagogical reasoning skills of teachers, Richards, Li and Tang (1998) revealed that experienced teachers were better than their novice counterparts in several skills; a) deeper understanding on the subject matter, b) integrating language learning and curricular goals, c) presenting subject matter more appropriately and d) thinking about the subject matter from learners' perspective.

Backing up the findings in the literature, the results of the study maintain that EFL teachers' teaching experiences throughout the years have significant contribution to their cognition either positively or negatively. It is quite clear that teachers begin to construct their own teaching principles and philosophies as they get more experienced, which makes them a more confident teacher having a better stance and being aware of what she/he practically does in classroom atmosphere. However, the years spent as a professional EFL teacher might also make teachers predictable ones whose practices turn to be their routines and who lose their idealism each another

day. The common point of all these inferences is that, whether negative or positive, teaching experiences lead to considerable changes and reformulations in EFL teachers' cognition.

7.2.6. Language teacher cognition

When the results derived from the participants' narrations are examined, it can be clearly seen that each of them refers to a phenomenon which includes certain beliefs, knowledge and attitudes regarding language teaching while talking about the sources of their teaching. Eda, for instance, constructed a philosophy which guided her classroom implementations, attitudes towards students and beliefs on how to teach a language. Mert, as a disciplined teacher, had very strict principles which he applied persistently and believed to be the best ways to teach a language and to be a good teacher. Though not being able to reflect into her classroom practices completely due to several reasons, Zeynep was also observed to have a language teaching philosophy which she constructed through the years and she had the potential to realize it in another workplace. Based on these findings, this study puts forward that the participant EFL teachers construct language teacher cognition through all their foreign-language-related experiences including their apprenticeship of observation, learning experiences as students, their pre-service education, previous institutional contexts, their novice years and other teaching experiences. Since these experiences are unique to individuals, language teacher cognition is also unique for every language teacher.

In SLTE literature, language teacher cognition is often-citedly defined as “what teachers know, think and believe and of its relationship to classroom practices” (Borg, 2006, p. 1). However, based on the unique experiences of EFL teachers, this study posits that language teacher cognition is a broader phenomenon which refers to the accumulation of all language-teaching-related experiences that cover a process starting from very early language learning experiences to current language teaching practices rather than being what teachers simply know, believe and think about the act of language teaching. It covers all kinds of beliefs, aptitude, attitudes, learning habits, assumptions and conceptualizations related with language teaching which are constructed in time throughout a developmental process. It also refers to all the

background sources contributing to language teachers' beliefs and knowledge development, and to the factors influencing and shaping their classroom implementations.

7.3. EFL Teachers' Classroom Practices

This study also aimed to identify the characteristics of the participant EFL teachers' classroom practices and find out the factors which are influential on the shaping of them. The findings derived from semi-structured interviews, stimulated recalls and reflection reports show that EFL teachers' language teacher cognition, the learner profile, institutional factors, several intervening factors are influential on teachers' decision making, which, in the end, results in their classroom implementations. The grounded theory model illustrating the formation of this construct is presented below in Figure 10.

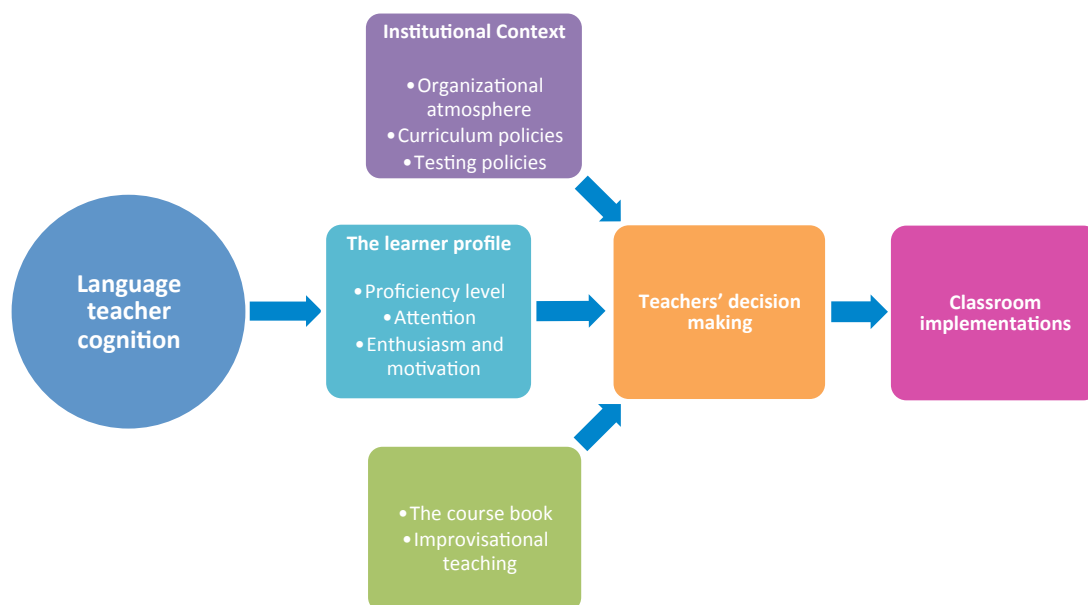


Figure 10. Formation of EFL teachers' classroom practices

7.3.1. Language teacher cognition: The basic of teachers' practices

As mentioned before, language teacher cognition, which is the outcome of teachers' knowledge, belief and attitude development regarding language teaching and formed by their language-teaching-related experiences, also serves as a unique construct which forms the basis of language teachers' classroom practices. The results reveal that it is the basic of the teachers' practices and they constantly refer to their language teacher cognition as the source of most of their in-class decisions.

Zeynep and Eda had their own language teaching philosophies as their language teacher cognition. During their observed class hours and in their reflection reports, they referred to their opinions and ideas on how to teach language elements or how to behave in a certain situation. For instance, though she was partly able to reflect it into classroom atmosphere, Zeynep had very clear explanations which showed her language teaching philosophy. As an example, her narrations on using translation as a teaching technique showed how she constructed her own ideas as she got more experienced in her profession. During the data collection process, she also reported certain ways of teaching and revising vocabulary and it was understood that she had observed these techniques from her teachers in the past and embraced them as a teacher since she knew they would be useful for students. Besides, she mentioned certain ideas for teaching grammar, reading and listening which she gained during her pre-service education or through her teaching experiences. Similarly, Eda also talked about her language teaching philosophy, which she constructed as a result of her experiences as a learner, as a pre-service teacher and as an in-service one, as the sources of her classroom practices. She was observed to benefit from all her experiences and used them in harmony rather than sticking into one or making one of them dominant in her classroom. It was also revealed that her language teaching philosophy, as a combination of all her experiences, was reflected in all her attitudes as a teacher such as her relationship with students, her classroom management style and her instructional activities. Mert, on the other hand, was observed to have his own language teaching principles. They are called as principles due to his persistent and assertive reference to them. Mert reported to have formed his own language teaching principles based on his apprenticeship of observation, educational career

and teaching experiences, and he was quite persistent in the application of them. He believed that most of these principles were effective ways of teaching language skills and gave the impression that he would hardly ever apply any teaching technique other than his principles. As it seen in the cases of all participants, their language teacher cognition is the main source of the practices they utilize in classroom atmosphere for every aspect of their teaching.

Studies focusing on language teachers' classroom practices generally aimed to identify the factors which influenced their decisions. For this reason, there are few studies in the literature investigating the sources of language teachers' classroom practices. According to Woods (1996), language teachers had certain internal factors, composed of their professional life as a whole, which guided their classroom practices. Another important contribution, which is quite similar to the findings of this study, was made by Breen et. al. (2001). Tracking the classroom practices of 18 ESL teachers in Australian context, they came up with the conclusion that teachers realized certain principles through the application of certain sets of implications and all of these principles and implications were unique to individuals. In addition to this, Chou (2008), investigating the personal practical knowledge of Taiwanese EFL teachers, put a special emphasis on teaching experience and concluded that their practices were direct reflections of their previous teaching experiences.

In addition to supporting the findings of previous studies in the literature, this study extends the notion of language teacher cognition. It is revealed with this notion that the origin of language teachers' classroom practices is not only the product of their previous teaching experiences or professional coursework but also the outcome of all other language-related-experience. For this reason, language teacher cognition is placed as the causal conditions in the grounded theory model of language teachers' classroom practices.

7.3.2. The learner profile

In the data analysis focusing on the participant teachers' classroom practises, narrations and reflection reports, the issue of learner profile is found to be the most frequent category. For this reason, it is seen that the learner profile places in the

model as the core phenomenon which shows that learners, with their proficiency level, attention and enthusiasm, are always in the centre of their teachers' classroom practices.

Eda's students, for instance, were found to be a main factor which played a significant role in the formation of her classroom practices. During her classroom teaching, she adapted most of her implications and activities according to her learner profile and considerably prioritized the feelings of her students to make them feel relaxed in classroom atmosphere. She also gave very short breaks during classroom teaching to get their attention back. She had certain student-friendly approaches for the issues of affective filter and corrective feedback, and she reported she could change and adapt any teaching activity based the learner profile. Parallel to Eda's perspective on learners, Mert also paid great attention to his students' interests, attention and needs, and his classroom practices were significantly shaped by these factors. He made a big effort to make his students feel comfortable and energetic in class. Most of the time, he behaved quite consciously and carefully to reflect this philosophy into classroom atmosphere and he was generally successful in creating such an atmosphere which was full of positive student participation. He cared his students so much that he spoke Turkish while teaching the detailed points of several grammatical structures. Unlike the cases of Mert and Eda, Zeynep's practices were influenced by her learner profile in a negative way. In general, she thought that the quality of her classroom practices decreased due to the learner profile and she sometimes had to teach in a way which she had never used before. Contrary to other participants of this study, the learner profile in Zeynep's case was not a driving force for classroom practices but a challenging factor for the teacher. Even so, how learners were influential on the shaping of classroom practices was also very noticeable in Zeynep's classes.

The importance of learners for teachers' classroom practises was also demonstrated by several studies in the literature. Gatbanton (1999) and Mullock (2006) examined language teachers' instructional decisions to identify their foci using the framework of pedagogical thought units. In both of the studies, it was revealed that students were the second most frequent reason behind teachers' instructional decisions, which

meant teachers took their students into account in most of their in-class decisions. In another study which aimed to identify the factors influencing teachers' decision making and instructional practices, Woods (1996) came up with a list of external factors, most of which were related to students and their features. Supporting the practices of Eda and Mert to get their students' attention back at the time of teaching, Bailey (1996), examining teachers' departures from their lesson plans, put forward that accommodating students' learning styles and promoting learner involvement were two main reasons for their departures. On the other hand, Richards and Pennington (1998) maintained that teachers sometimes depart from their principles due to the low level of learners, which provides an exact support for the case of Zeynep. Finally, in her study which focused on pre-service ESL teachers' instructional actions and decisions, Johnson (1992) identified eight categories of instructional decisions, five of which included students' motivation, language skills, involvement, understanding and affective needs.

In line with the studies in the literature, the results of this study also demonstrate that learner profile is at the centre of the participant language teachers' classroom practices. They try to create an appropriate atmosphere for their learner profile, prepare or adapt activities in order to appeal to learners' needs and interest and they even depart from their lesson plans to provide learner involvement. Due its vital role on these practices, the learner profile is in the core phenomenon of the model provided by this study.

7.3.3. The institutional context

In spite of the call for research on the impact of institutional factors on teachers' cognition and classroom practices (Borg, 2003), there has been little recent attempt to identify the degree of this effect in the literature of SLTE. Studies conducted on this issue yielded important results regarding the effects of several aspects of the institutions on teachers' practices. Although details of it will be discussed in the following sections, this study also puts forward that the institutional context has a significant and considerable influence on language teachers' practices.

First of all, it was very clear that all participants' teaching characteristics were, in a way, shaped by the organizational atmosphere they were working in. For instance, working in a very disciplined and systematic environment, Mert was also a very organized and disciplined teacher in his practices. Unlike him, Zeynep was quite easygoing and sometimes conducted her lessons just for the sake of doing them because she was working in a undisciplined atmosphere which had serious administrative problems and there was not a control mechanism to solve it. In addition to this, there were several institutional elements such as testing policies, curriculum policies, organizational atmosphere which were significantly influential on language teachers' practices and their influences will be specifically discussed in detail referring to related literature under the title of institutional context as a separate construct. Placed as the context in the grounded theory model for classroom practices, institutional factors are found to be one of the important constructs that shape the teacher's classroom practices.

7.3.4. Improvisational teaching and the course book

The data on the teachers' classroom practices clearly show that what they decide to do in their classroom is generally shaped by their language teacher cognition, the learner profile and institutional factors. However, there were several moments during the observed classes and in the reflection reports of teachers which revealed that there were also two other factors that might affect their practices. These factors, improvisational teaching and the course book, were influential in the ways that they sometimes occurred through spontaneous decisions due to several reasons (improvisational teaching) or created moments which compelled teachers to do certain practices (the course book).

Eda's improvisational teaching moves were noticeable in almost all of her observed sessions. In some of these, she wanted to test to what extent her students understood the topic or she wanted to attract students' attention with some other spontaneous acts. Though she reported to have been unaware of doing these improvisations during the class hours, it was observed that she was very good at it and gave the impression that all these acts were like parts of her lesson plans. On the other hand, despite his planned and pre-organized practices, Mert was also observed to make spontaneous

acts during his classroom teaching especially for his students' interest, needs and motivation. He taught certain details of several grammatical structures without planning them or spontaneously used the internet for songs or pictures that would attract his students' attention. All these improvisational acts of the participant teachers' support the current findings in the literature. According to Richards (1998), teachers sometimes made on-the-spot modifications on their practices to increase learners' participation or interest. Bailey (1996) maintained that promoting students' involvement and serving the common good were the main reasons of teachers' improvisational teaching. Finally, it is also seen that Mert and Eda's departures from their plans mostly resulted in positive ways. For this reason, it can be concluded that, as Smith (1996) stated, teachers' departures from their lessons and improvisational teaching acts are not always a shortcoming of their work but the results of constant interaction between students and teachers at a particular time and context.

The other factor which is found to have both positive and negative intervening impact on teachers' classroom practices is the course book. It was observed that, as part of their curriculum policies, all participant teachers had to cover a course book during their classroom teaching and the extent of covering was based on the policies of the institution. For instance, while Zeynep was strictly following the book and sometimes doing nothing else, Mert covered it based on the instructions of the curriculum office. No matter what the extent of using a course book is, the results show that course books used by language teachers have intervening effects on their practices.

In the case of Eda, for example, she was happy with certain implications stated in the book in general. However, she sometimes felt just as the server of it. The important point in her case was that she had to apply certain practices that she did not want to or she could not do certain activities in certain ways because the book required her to do it in different ways. Similarly but more strongly, the role of the course book was also salient in Zeynep's practices. However, the impact in her case sometimes turned out to be dominance. Without doing any change or revision, or integrating any other outsider activity or material, Zeynep sometimes was observed to be implementing only what the course book presented her as the content or material. Although she had

several ideas on her mind about the content of her classroom teaching, she had to cover the book through the instructions of the teacher manual. The institutional context she was working in had also an effect on this situation but her dependency on the course book was more related to her preferences. According to many scholars in the field (Cunningsworth, 1995; Richards, 2001; Tomlinson, 2003; cited in Demir & Ertaş, 2014) course books are important materials in language classrooms which not only assist and guide teachers in the content of their teaching and practices but also provide a wide range of selections in terms of classroom implementations. However, such an impact of course books which identifies their intervening roles on the teachers' classroom practices and shows its negative or positive effects is in need of research in the literature and calls for further research studies.

As the results reveal, teachers' improvisational teaching acts and course books have intervening influences on their practices. Most of their improvisational acts are done to serve the common good but the course book, on the other hand, may sometimes compel teachers to cover undesired content or cover the content in different ways. For these reasons, these factors are determined as intervening factors in the classroom practices model.

7.3.5. Teachers' decision making and classroom implementations

Placed as the strategies and consequences in the grounded theory model of classroom practices, teachers' decision making and classroom implementations are among the important points that have received a particular attention among the scholars in the field of SLTE. Woods (1996) conducted a longitudinal study on the decision making processes and planning of ESL teachers and identified several factors which provided insight into this process and factors shaping it. These factors, referred to as internal and external, were found to be considerably related with all instructional decisions teachers made in classroom atmosphere. In Turkish EFL context, Vancı-Osam and Balbay (2004), in their comparative study, investigated the decision-making patterns of student-teachers and cooperating teachers. The results showed that while the cooperating teachers were concerned with matters related with the nature of classroom activities, student-teachers were more concerned with classroom management. Finally, evaluating the nature of decision-making process, Freeman

and Richards (1996, p. 164) stated that “When teachers teach, they revise their planning decisions, respond to students’ understanding and participation, and form new decisions that redirect the lesson. In other words, teachers interact creatively between plans, student responses, and teacher improvisation.”

Exactly similar to the view of Freeman and Richards (1996), this study puts forward the complex and dynamic nature of the language teachers’ classroom practices. The results reveal that their decision-making is a multi-faceted process which takes its source from their language teacher cognition, puts the learner profile in its centre, is shaped by institutional exigencies and sometimes intervened by improvisational acts or the content of course books. Since the teachers need to take all these factors into account whilst teaching and compose them in harmony to create the best implication, decision-making is a multi-faceted process. It is also dynamic because the process is constantly adapted based on changing situations and factors that occur in particular classroom and institutional contexts. The unique nature of this phenomenon is salient in all the participants of the study, Eda, Mert and Zeynep, who had to consider all these elements while teaching and integrate them to their practices in the most effective way and whose decision-makings had to include different elements due to changing situations.

Identifying the influential factors and revealing the unique nature of language teachers’ decision making on classroom practices, this study demonstrates that language teachers’ decision making is a complex process which is considerably influenced by any changing conditions and factors. For this reason, it is concluded that investigating this phenomenon in different context is vitally important for the literature of language teacher cognition and will significantly contribute to the field.

7.4. The Impact of Institutional Context on Classroom Practices

Towards the end of 1990s, when language teacher cognition, as a field of inquiry was consolidated, there occurred an interest on what kind of impact institutional factors had on teachers’ cognition. Based on the significant results of studies conducted in these years (Burns, 1996; Crooks & Araraki, 1996; Richards & Pennington, 1998) there has been an ongoing call for research that would provide more insight into this

issue. Responding to this need in the literature, this study yields important results on the impact of institutional context on teachers. It is found out that the organizational atmosphere, testing policies and curriculum policies which are the most salient factors related with the institutional context and considerably influential on language teachers' classroom practices directly or indirectly. The figure below presents these factors in an organized way.

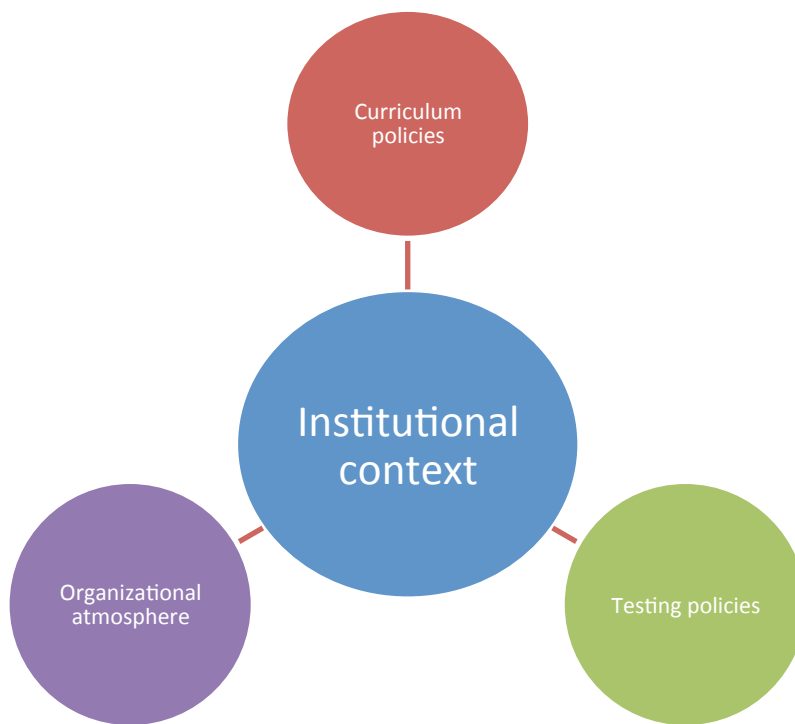


Figure 11. Institutional factors influencing classroom practices

The first institutional element that is found to be indirectly influential on language teachers' classroom practices is the organizational atmosphere they are working in. It is revealed that the administrative discipline in the institution, the systematic working, attitudes of colleagues and the atmosphere in general have important effects on teachers. These factors were especially quite noticeable in the cases of Mert and Zeynep. For instance, Mert, as a teacher, clearly reflected the perspective of his institution with his disciplined and organized attitudes. The organizational

atmosphere in his institution paid attention to organizational discipline, and this atmosphere promoted by collaboration and sharing among the instructors had important place on Mert's classroom teaching and on some of his practices. He admitted that he had been a totally different teacher due to this atmosphere and grew as a professional teacher when compared to his previous workplace. There were several points justifying this impact in his classroom observations, but Mert's narrations and ideas clearly showed how influential the atmosphere was on his development as an EFL teacher. Unlike him, Zeynep was negatively influenced by the organizational atmosphere in her institution. It was found out during the data collection process that her institution had serious administrative problems, attitudes of her colleagues about conducting their lesson were unethical and discouraging, and there was not a control mechanism to set a disciplined atmosphere. Such a negative atmosphere was found to be directly influential on Zeynep's mood, motivation and enthusiasm, which indirectly influenced her teaching performance in classroom atmosphere.

The results show that curriculum policies in the participants' institutions also have significant effects on the participant teachers' classroom practices. Moreover, these policies have the potential to shape all the instructional content teachers need to cover in their class hours, which may have direct and indirect effects on teachers. For example, it was observed that Mert was happy with their curriculum policy because it made him a more disciplined and organized teacher in classroom atmosphere. However, he also seemed to complain about some of the implementations of the curriculum office, which he believed, limited his preferences and sometimes put him in a situation which compelled him to do the things that he would not actually do. He reported that he had to cover a topic in a very different way or teach a topic in a more detailed way but he could not do it due to the curricular restrictions. For that reason, he wished to have had more freedom in terms of his preferences. On the other hand, curriculum policies had an indirect impact in the case of Eda. Although the content of classroom teaching was mainly determined by the curriculum of her school, it did not have a direct impact on shaping Eda's classroom practices. In other words, the impact of curriculum was found to be an indirect one which sometimes compelled Eda to follow a certain schedule, did not sometimes allow her regarding what she

wanted to do, or put her in a difficult situation with wrong content sequencing. It was also revealed that this situation did not worry Eda much, but it would make her feel better if it allowed her more freedom in her class. Finally, the issue of curriculum reflected in a very different way in Zeynep's case. It was found out that there were not clear and well-defined curriculum policies in her institution and that made her a teacher who just followed the content of the course book and just covered what she was supposed to cover in certain weeks. For this reason, it is seen that lack of such a policy may also have important effects on teachers' practices.

Finally, testing policies in institutions were found to be significantly influential on language teachers' classroom practices. It was observed that teachers, keeping the issue of testing in their mind, may sometimes prioritize certain topics or elements that are supposed to be asked in the exam and make constant reminders about the exams during their class hours. For example, since the scope of the exams were based on the content of the book, Zeynep constantly reminded her students that several points would be asked in the exam while she was teaching based on the book. She also believed that focusing on these points and making exam-related reminding kept her students alert. Similar to Zeynep, Eda was also influenced by the testing policies in her institution. It was concluded that the issue of testing took an important place in her classroom practices. During the observed sessions, she constantly made some reminders to students about their exams, prepared questions, materials and worksheets that included exam-like elements and integrated them into her classroom implications. Perceiving this impact of testing quite natural, she also reported that her students needed such practices and testing was the main reason of all such practices.

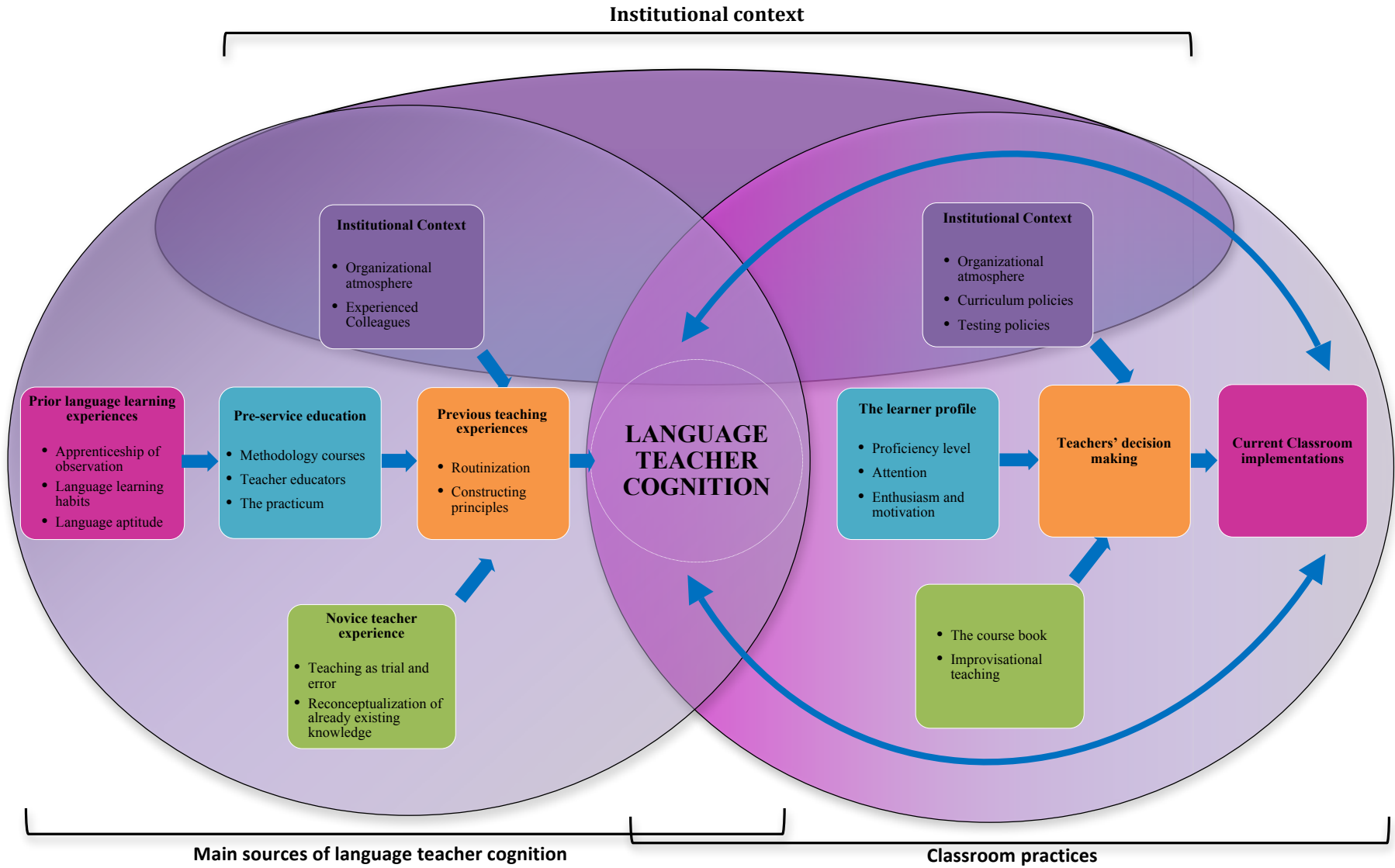
Burns (1996) referred to these factors as "institutional exigencies" and found out that they potentially shaped teachers' practices. The results of this study are clearly in line with Burns (1996). It is revealed that the organizational atmosphere, curriculum policies and testing policies, as the sub-constructs of institutional context, affect language teachers' classroom practices. According to the results of Richards and Pennington (1998), which are also parallel with the current study, teachers' classroom practices may change according to testing policies, learner profile, and students' needs. Illustrating the case of Zeynep in which she just covered the book

and did nothing else, they also stated that, due to these factors, “teachers might get stifled by the overriding concern to maintain an orderly class and to cover the prescribed material of the school syllabus” (p. 183). In addition to this, Nishino (2012) found out that exam-related expectations in a context or among learners influenced teachers’ classroom practises, and this situation was very noticeable in Zeynep and Eda’s practices. They constantly made reminders or prepared materials for their students based on their exams. Finally, Kang and Cheng (2014) put forward that teaching context was an important factor on teachers’ practices and it may lead behavioural change on teachers. That result was also salient among the participants. Working in a very disciplined, systematic and organized institution, Mert was also an organized and disciplined teacher whereas Zeynep was quite easygoing one most probably due to the slack atmosphere she was working in. Eda, on the other hand, was neither very organized nor easygoing just like her institutional context. Based on these findings, it is concluded that the atmosphere in the institutional context is clearly reflected in all teachers’ practices.

7.5. Clusters of Language Teacher Cognition: A Data-based Model

The last research question of this study aimed to identify in how the constructs discussed so far; language teacher cognition, classroom practices and institutional context, were interconnected. The results derived from the cross-cases analyses put forward Clusters of Language Teacher Cognition (CLTC); a model which presents a figurative conceptualization of language teachers’ cognition and schematizes the constructs which language teachers have cognition about.

Figure 12. Clusters of language teacher cognition (CLTC): A data-based model



CLTC presents a detailed explanation of language teachers' cognition, their classroom practices, the impact of institutional context on them and how these three constructs are interconnected. As it is clear, the model consists of three clusters; formation of language teacher cognition – classroom practices – institutional context, each of which represents one of the constructs of this study. Each cluster is detailed in itself which presents the elements that are influential on the formation of each cluster. In the model, the cluster of institutional context shows the elements which are related to the conditions in institutions and have important effects on both the cognition and classroom practices of language teachers. The cluster of the formation of language teacher cognition presents the process which demonstrates the sources of language teachers' cognition and reveals the elements which are influential on the development of it but do not have the possibility to be re-experienced. For that reason, prior language learning experiences, the pre-service education, experienced colleagues and the atmosphere of previous institutions, novice years as an EFL teacher and other teaching experiences take place in that cluster. In this sense, the development of language teacher cognition is linear. The third cluster, on the other hand, which stands for the elements that shape teachers' classroom practices refers to a dynamic process which is symbolized with the arrows in it. That means, any classroom implementation which is the outcome of this process serves as a new experience for teachers and extends their cognition that forms the basis of this process. Language teacher cognition, functioning as the interface between these two clusters, has a central role in the model. It is linear in one sense and cyclical in the other. It is linear due to the fact that most of its elements are acquired through the experiences which are not possible to be re-experienced and they set certain persistent principles in language teachers' cognition. It is cyclical and dynamic in the other sense that any language teaching experience as a classroom implementation extends it as additional knowledge and has the potential to revise, reformulate and adapt already existing constructs and principles. In other words, language teacher cognition and classroom practices have a mutual relationship through which they feed each other.

Clusters of Language Teacher Cognition (CLTC) presents a figurative conceptualization with its certain distinctive features. First of all, the model schematizes an abstract phenomenon; that is language teacher cognition, and transforms it into a concrete and simply well-defined one which can be understood following the elements influential on it. The elements on which language teachers have cognition are clearly presented in the model. Secondly, the model is data-based and it is derived from the lived experiences of EFL teachers, their narrations on them and observations of their practices in real classroom settings. Finally, CLTC provides a detailed research framework for further studies and prospective researchers. The factors which are found to have an impact on the formation of language teachers' cognition and classroom practices are determined. Investigating these factors or their relationships separately in different national, cultural or educational contexts provides new horizons for researchers and their potential findings will contribute to the literature significantly. For these reasons, CLTC is thought to be a significant contribution to the literature of SLTE.

CHAPTER 8

CONCLUSION

1. Summary of the Study

Language teacher cognition research has received a considerable attention towards the end of 1990s when the field of SLTE was consolidated. Although studies conducted in those and the following years have made significant contributions to the literature of SLTE, there occurred a terminological variability, which eventually led to confusion among both researchers and practitioners in terms of language teachers' cognitive processes.

Aiming to provide a solution to this terminological confusion and present a unifying framework that would conceptualize the elements language teachers have cognition about, this study investigated the sources of language teacher cognition, the factors that shaped their classroom practices, the points through which the institutional context influenced them and how these constructs were interconnected to each other. Participants included three Turkish EFL teachers working at the English preparatory programs of different state universities and having different teaching characteristics. Based on a qualitative case design, a pre-determined data collection schedule which lasted for 5 months was followed. The data was collected through three semi-structured interviews, 12 hours of classroom observation and video-recording (4 hours for each participant), 12 follow-up stimulated recall interviews, weekly written reflection reports and document analysis. The obtained data were analyzed through the grounded theory approach (Strauss & Corbin, 1998) which included a systematic data analysis process and eventually yielded a theory grounded in the data. In addition to this, several procedures were followed to increase the trustworthiness of the study.

Based on the narrations and detailed descriptions of each case, the results demonstrate that prior language learning experiences, the pre-service education,

previous institutional contexts, being a novice teacher and teaching experiences are the main sources of the participant EFL teachers' cognition. Teachers' language learning experiences in the past which include their teachers, language learning habits and language aptitude are found to be very influential on their language teacher cognition and they are even the source of certain classroom practices. The pre-service education, on the other hand, is at the centre of the process of language teacher cognition development with teacher educators, methodology courses and the practicum experience. Besides, it is reported that novice years as a teacher play a very important role on language teachers' cognition since they experience the real classroom atmosphere and have to re-conceptualize or adapt all their existing knowledge of teaching according to this reality. Finally, with more teaching experiences throughout the years, teachers construct their own philosophies and certain routines or principles about language teaching. It is revealed that language teachers, through this process, construct cognition about language teaching which is the outcome of their all language-teaching-related experiences and represents their all accumulated knowledge, beliefs and attitudes as professional teachers.

The results also show that language teachers' classroom practices are shaped by their language teacher cognition, the learner profile, institutional elements, improvisational teaching and the course book as the intervening factors. Teachers' cognition serves as the origin and the background of their classroom practices. During classroom teaching, they put their students at the centre of their practices and adapt them according to the proficiency, enthusiasm and attention of the learners. These practices are sometimes intervened by teachers' improvisational acts and the content of the course book they used. Taking all these elements into account, teachers make their decisions and implement their practices. The model of classroom practices presented by this study shows that language teachers' classroom practices is the product of a multifaceted process in which they need to consider several elements and made spontaneous decisions for classroom implementations.

In terms of the institutional context, it is found out that the organizational atmosphere, curriculum and testing policies significantly influence teachers' classroom practices. The organizational discipline and the attitudes of colleagues

influence language teachers' classroom teaching indirectly. It is also seen that teachers' in-class decisions are significantly shaped by the existence or non-existence of curriculum offices and during classroom teaching, teachers constantly make to-the-point reminders or prepare specific exam-like materials for students so that they can get prepared for their exams.

The study finally puts forward a conceptual model, clusters of language teacher cognition (CLTC), which describes the interconnectedness of three constructs mentioned above and presents the elements language teachers have cognition about in a detailed way. In the model, three constructs – sources of language teacher cognition, classroom practices and the institutional context - are shown with their sub-elements to provide a detail description of these constructs. Besides, putting language teacher cognition in the centre as the interface, the model also schematizes the process how language teachers' cognition turns into their classroom practices.

2. Limitations of the Study

Although it is based on a systematic data collection and analysis procedures and yields significant results on language teacher cognition, this study has certain limitations in terms of its research methodology. First of all, the study has a purely qualitative case design conducted within an interpretive framework. For this reason, all kind of criticism and weakness stated in the literature are also valid for this study. Secondly, the primary data sources of the study are based on the oral and written narrations of three participants and a limited number of classroom observations. Though several procedures were followed to increase the credibility of the findings and the trustworthiness of the study, it is not easy to generalize them. Finally, the participants included three instructors working at state universities. It would have been a distinct advantage for the study if language teachers from primary, secondary or high schools had been included. By doing so, teachers with different contexts could have been investigated. However, in spite of these limitations, the researcher believes that the study presents important results on language teacher cognition due to its in-depth investigation of the cases, and planned and systematic data collection and analysis procedures.

3. Implications and Suggestions for Further Research

One of the most important features of the current study is that all the findings are based on the unique narrations of experienced EFL teachers who have been involved in the field of language learning as a student or a teacher for years. For this reason, since it is derived from the lived experiences of practitioners, this study has several implications that should be taken into consideration in both pre-service and in-service levels:

- As it is demonstrated by this study and supported by many others in the literature, pre-service students come to their programs with some initial conceptualizations about language learning and teaching in their mind. In order to benefit from these conceptualizations and prevent any potential clashes that might occur with the input they get in the program, the pre-service education should include a kind of orientation element which would not only help these students discover their own potential but also ease their adaptation process for the program.
- In spite of the controversial findings regarding the role of the pre-service education in the literature, this study puts forward that their pre-service education is at the centre of language teachers' learning-to-teach process. Three elements are found to be vitally important for prospective teachers by this study and the participants have reported several issues that could be regarded as the drawbacks of the programs. For this reason, this study offers the following suggestions for pre-service programs for the betterment of these issues:
 - The participants expressed that they sometimes found methodology courses offered in the programs too theoretical. As Chiang (2008) maintains, when combined with certain fieldwork elements, the effectiveness of these courses would increase. For this reason, it is believed that these courses should be supplemented by such fieldwork elements through which student-teachers can turn their theoretical knowledge into practice.

- It is also revealed that teacher educators in these programs are vitally important for student-teachers. However, the participants in this study reported several negative issues regarding the attitudes, feedback and teaching characteristics of teacher educators. For this reason, it is believed that these qualities of teacher educators should be increased through teacher educator trainings which would help them improve these skills so that they can be much more beneficial in guiding the prospective teachers in the program
- Parallel to numerous studies in the literature, the practicum experience is found to be lacking sufficient amount of practice teaching for student-teachers. It is an undeniable fact that increasing the amount and the quality of such teaching experiences will definitely contribute to learning-to-teach processes of prospective teachers.
- The fact and the importance of novice teacher experience is another result of the current study. It is demonstrated that novice teachers experience a serious reality shock in their initial years and they have to adapt or reconceptualize most of their knowledge of teaching based on the realities of the school and classroom context. For this reason, it is believed that, rather than a “go and teach” perspective after graduation, this challenging process should be handled systematically and under supervision by including this experience into the pre-service program as a post-program orientation or internship component.
- The results also show that classroom practices include a multifaceted process in which language teachers need to take numerous factors into account in order to make the best instructional decision for their learners. Since handling all these factors, most of the spontaneously, is a challenging work, in-service training sessions should be provided to language teachers so that they can manage to handle such processes more effectively.
- Institutional exigencies are found to be significantly and directly influential on language teachers’ practices. Moreover, it is seen that the participants’ teaching characteristics obviously reflected their institutions’ perspective. It is

thought that betterment in language teaching institutions' atmosphere, policies, educational systems and administration will definitely affect teachers' classroom practices in a positive way.

Along with these pedagogical suggestions, this study also yields significant findings that will guide further research in the field of teacher cognition. The clusters of language teacher cognition (CLTC), presented by the current study as a language teacher cognition model, highlight a number of elements and sub-elements which language teachers have cognition about. It is a need for the development of language teacher cognition as a field of inquiry that all these elements should be investigated separately and in-detail in different educational, national, cultural and institutional context. For this reason, the findings of this study also serves as a research agenda and provides a research ground for prospective researchers interested in the field of teacher cognition both in national and international levels.

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APPENDIX A

First Interview Questions

1. When did you start learning English?
2. Can you tell me about your experiences as a language learner in schools?
 - a. How were you taught English?
 - b. What kind of activities did your teacher do most?
 - c. Did you like learning English?
3. Can you tell me about your English teachers in the past?
 - a. How were their attitudes?
 - b. Did you think they were good teachers? If so, why?
 - c. Any experiences that you never forget
 - d. Did you have a teacher that you loved / hated? Why?
4. Why did you choose the language class/department in 10th grade? What factors affected your decision?
5. How were the 10th and 11th grades in your language classes? What did you learn? How were the subjects taught by your teacher/s and were you happy with them?
6. You had some other chances but why did you choose an English language teaching department in OSS exam? What were your initial feelings at the beginning of your career?
7. Did you have any reasons for choosing the university in which you studied ELT?
8. Can you tell me about your experiences in your first year as a pre-service teacher?
 - a. How were the initial courses?
 - b. Did they contribute to you as a learner and a prospective teacher?
 - c. How were the initial attitudes of teacher educators in your department?
9. Let's talk about your university years in detail
 - a. What courses did you take during your BA?

- b. What do you think about the school experience courses in the first years?
 - c. Were the methodology courses effective in developing your skills?
 - d. Were there any teacher educators who influenced you positively / negatively as a teacher?
 - e. What do you think about the practicum in your last year? How was it conducted? Were you happy with your instructor's style? Was it effective in developing your teaching skills?
10. In a general sense, can you please evaluate the years you spent in pre-service education? In what aspects was it beneficial for you as a teacher?
11. Were you able to find a job after you graduated? Can you tell me about this process?
12. Can you tell me about your experiences in your first year as an English teacher?
- a. What was the first place you started to work as an English teacher?
 - b. How did you feel in a real classroom atmosphere in your first days? How were your relations with your students?
 - c. What kind of a methodology did you implement in your classes while teaching?
 - d. Were you able to do what you wanted to do? Why / why not?
 - e. What was your first aim in your classes?
 - f. Did you have a mentor? How did he/she help you? What did you learn from him/her?
 - g. How were your relations with other teachers and the administrators?
13. Did you feel any change in your teaching philosophy as you proceed in your job?
14. How can you evaluate the second year in your job? Were you a different teacher, if so in what aspects?
15. Can you tell me about the other teaching experiences so far? Anything influenced you as a teacher?
16. Let's talk about your current workplace?
- a. Are you happy to work here? Why / why not?

- b. How long have you been teaching here? Which students have you taught so far?
 - c. Are you the same teacher compared to your first year here? Did you change as a teacher? If so, in what aspects? Did this institution shape your teaching?
17. What is your current teaching philosophy?
- a. How should a language be taught?
 - b. What kind of a classroom atmosphere do you have?
 - c. What kind of activities do you use in your class hours?
 - d. What kind of materials do you use?
18. How is your relationship with your students, colleagues and administrators?
19. Do you think you are a good English teacher? Why / why not?

APPENDIX B – 2nd INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

2ND Interview Questions - EDA

**** The participant were asked to elaborate on each item with the guidance of the following questions**

1. General Classroom Management Behaviours

- A humanistic atmosphere in class
- Friendly relationship with students
- Rare monitoring during class hours
- Always calling students with their names

1. Is it your routine behaviour in class?
2. Why do you prefer it?
3. How did you learn to use it as a teacher behaviour?

2. Flow of sessions

- Starting with a revision or warm-up
- Giving short breaks during the class (usually with humour or memories)
- Following a course-book
- Improvisational teaching

1. Is it a part of your routine flow in class?
2. Why do you prefer it?
3. Do you think it is ideal for you? Why / why not?

3. Teaching Language Skills

- An obvious PPP approach in teaching grammar
- A combination of implicit and explicit teaching in grammatical structures
- Using L1 a lot during teaching (especially grammar)
- An insistence on sentence production after teaching structures
- Steps of teaching reading are followed

1. Do you usually do it while teaching?
2. Why do you prefer it?
3. Do you think it is effective? If so, how do you know it?
4. Is it an ideal way of teaching for you? Why / why not?

4. Institutional factors

- Following a pre-selected course-book
- The effect of testing on classroom practices
- Keeping the pace of curriculum
- Relationship with colleagues and administration

1. How do you feel about this situation?
2. How does it influence your classroom practices?
3. How does it shape you as a teacher?

2ND Interview Questions - MERT

**** The participant were asked to elaborate on each item with the guidance of the following questions**

1. General Classroom Management Behaviours

- Firm behaviours towards students
- Indifferent attitude towards reluctant students
- U shape design in class
- Being energetic, monitoring and standing during Class hours

1. Is it your routine behaviour in class?
2. Why do you prefer it?
3. How did you learn to use it as a teacher behaviour?

2. Flow of sessions

- Starting with a revision or warm-up
- Following the instructions of the coursebook
- Integrating technology into the sessions
- Small breaks with topics that would attract students' attention (general culture)

1. Is it a part of your routine flow in class?
2. Why do you prefer it?
3. Do you think it is ideal for you? Why / why not?

3. Teaching Language Skills

- Starts with a short speaking activity
- Speaking English during the lesson but using L1 while teaching grammatical structures
- Combination of explicit and implicit teaching
- Encouraging student production through speaking
- Very detailed explanation of grammatical points and examples

1. Do you usually do it while teaching?
2. Why do you prefer it?
3. Do you think it is effective? If so, how do you know it?
4. Is it an ideal way of teaching for you? Why / why not?

4. Institutional factors

- Following a pre-selected course-book
- The effect of testing on classroom practices
- Keeping the pace of curriculum
- The disciplined atmosphere of the institution

1. How do you feel about this situation?
2. How does it influence your classroom practices?
3. How does it shape you as a teacher?

2ND Interview Questions - ZEYNEP

**** The participant were asked to elaborate on each item with the guidance of the following questions**

1. General Classroom Management Behaviours

- Firm attitude towards students
- Tolerance for disruptive student behaviours
- Encouraging participating students
- Always calling students with their names

1. Is it your routine behaviour in class?
2. Why do you prefer it?
3. How did you learn to use it as a teacher behaviour?

2. Flow of sessions

- Starting with the following part of the course-book –
- No revision or warm-up
- Following a course-book
- No technology integration into the sessions
- Telling memories or interesting facts during the session

1. Is it a part of your routine flow in class?
2. Why do you prefer it?
3. Do you think it is ideal for you? Why / why not?

3. Teaching Language Skills

- First explaining the rules, then doing exercises while Teaching grammar
- A combination of implicit and explicit teaching during the presentation of grammatical structures
- Intensive worksheet exercises on target structures
- Steps of teaching reading are followed.
- Small translation activities

1. Do you usually do it while teaching?
2. Why do you prefer it?
3. Do you think it is effective? If so, how do you know it?
4. Is it an ideal way of teaching for you? Why / why not?

4. Institutional factors

- Following a pre-selected course-book
- The effect of testing on classroom practices
- Keeping the pace of curriculum
- Relationship with colleagues and administration

1. How do you feel about this situation?
2. How does it influence your classroom practices?
3. How does it shape you as a teacher?

APPENDIX C

Third Interview Questions

1. What do you think about the effect of your past experiences as language learners on current teaching philosophy and practices? In other words, how did they shape you as a teacher?

- Teachers in the past and their attitudes
- Any unforgettable memories
- Studying and learning habits

2. To what extent has your pre-service education been effective on you as a teacher? How did it contribute you grow up as a professional teacher? Can you please elaborate on it?

- Methodology courses
- School experience tasks
- Teacher educator
- Practicum

3. What do you think about the role of teaching experience on your development as a professional teacher? What did you learn from your experiences? Have you experienced any negative or positive things as you get more experienced as a teacher?

- Real classroom atmospheres after pre-service
- Working in different contexts
- Different learner profiles
- Any changes in teaching philosophy and practices as you got experienced

4. Can you please talk about the role your institutional context on your classroom practices and teaching philosophy? You can also talk about your previous working places.

- Course books
- Curriculum and testing policies
- Organizational discipline
- Colleagues

5. Finally, what do you think are the main factors that have made you the teacher you are now? Can you please elaborate and exemplify your ideas?

APPENDIX D

Sample Coding Scheme – Eda’s First Interview

	Codes	Themes	Categories
Eda	Negative attitude of a teacher, Demotivating teaching style, Friendly teacher attitude, Enjoyable activities, Supportive teacher attitude, Criticising teachers,	Teachers in the past	Previous Language Learning Experiences
	Studying hard and regularly, Taking thick notes during classes, Doing a lot of drilling exercises,	Language learning habits	
	Courses not beneficial, Initial courses improving English, teaching-related courses as effective, Practical implications learnt in methodology courses, Practices appealing to teaching skills,	Methodology courses	Pre-service education
	Negative attitudes of T.E., Positive attitudes of T.E., Feedback preferences of T.E., Teacher educators as a model, Classroom practices of T.E.	Teacher educators	
	Thinking about how to be a good teacher, The influence of the mentor teacher, Practicing the knowledge of teaching,	The practicum	

	peer feedback, Not enough opportunities to practice, Negative attitude of the supervisor		
	Disappointment and reality shock, Bad learner profile and teaching atmosphere, Setting up rules in class, Problems in classroom management, The impact of pre-service, Teaching as trial and error, Comparing herself with others,	Being a novice	Experiences as a teacher
	Being more confident, Changing initial habits, Teaching as a routine, Having stable and certain activities, Decreasing idealism, Constructing principles of teaching	Getting more experienced	

APPENDIX E

Sample Lesson Plan

Name of the Course	:	
Name of the Instructor	:	Eda
Grade Level	:	Elementary
Lesson Topic	:	The use of quantifiers (some & any)
Duration	:	40 minutes

INTRODUCTION

In this lesson, I am going to deal with the use of “some, any” and their similarities and differences. The determiners “some, any” are the most commonly used quantifiers in daily speech of English native speakers. The students are already familiar with these structures since they come across with them in the reading or listening texts in the book but they do not exactly know how to use them in grammatically correct ways. After the lesson, it will be easier for students to use these elements in their written and spoken utterances.

OBJECTIVES

Students, having completed this course, will be able to;

- Describe the similarities and differences between “some” and “any” correctly in given contexts
- Correctly expand their knowledge about the usage of “some” and “any” to the new contexts that they haven’t come across before
- Create at least 5 sentences by making use of “some” and “any” correctly whenever they are asked to do so.
- Compare their knowledge about the topic “some” and “any” with that of other determiners effectively under any possible condition
-

MATERIALS

- **Board and board marker**
- **Course book, workbook**
- **Some worksheet on the topic**

ACTIVITIES

In order to open the session by contributing to the students' positive mood, I will start it with an enjoyable activity as a warm-up. I will make them participate to it as much as possible. Then I will try to direct their attention to the start point of the topic by referring to the related part in the book. Till the grammar part, I will follow the instructions stated in the course-book.

Starting to teach the grammar point, I will first write several examples on the board that would make students familiar with the usage of quantifiers and help them differentiate their usage. After the discussions on the examples, I will write the rules on the board and explain the topic in detail emphasizing the use of "some, any" in positive, negative and interrogative sentences and the differences between them. Then, I will give students some time to take notes and do the exercises at the end of the book related with that unit.

After that, I will get students' answers one by one and make detailed explanations on each sentence. I will also answer students' questions, if any. After doing the exercises on the book, I will distribute a worksheet which will include some fill-in-the-blank, multiple choice and matching exercises to help students practice the topic. I will give them some time to answer it and then I will get their answers by giving permission to different students.

Towards the end of the lesson, I will do an activity in which students will be asked to produce sentences using the target structure. First of all, I will tell them to think about their rooms in the dorm and describe it using the target structures. Secondly, I give students one or two minutes and ask them to think about their dream house. As they utter sentences for the components of their dream house using the target structure, I will draw each component on the board and create their dream house.

CLOSURE AND ASSIGNMENTS

In closure part, which covers the last one or two minutes, I will sum up what we have covered in the lesson that day. I will tell them the topic of the oncoming lesson, and I will ask them to do the related exercises from their work book , and to repeat what has been covered in the lesson.

APPENDIX F

Consent Form

Dear Colleague,

I wish to carry out a research study on language teachers' cognition by making use of your class hours as data and you as participants. I plan to analyze the content in your class hours with a focus on your teaching practices.

Based on your voluntary participation, pseudonyms will be used throughout the study so that your name will not appear in any report or manuscript. Any data you provide will always be kept confidential

Please, do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions.

Researcher: Gökhan ÖZTÜRK

gokhanoztrk@gmail.com

(272) 228-1398

School of Foreign Languages

Afyon Kocatepe University, Afyonkarahisar, Turkey

For the Participant:

I voluntarily give my consent to the researcher above to make use of the language and/or content in my actual class hours that will be observed or recorded. In addition, I voluntarily agree on acting as a participant on the condition that my identity will be kept confidential at all times and my name will not appear in any documents that is open to public.

Please, choose one of the options below to indicate your decision.

- a. Yes, I give my consent.

Name Surname:

Date:

Signature:

APPENDIX G

TURKISH SUMMARY

İngilizcenin bir dünya dili olarak her geçen gün yaygınlaşması, bu çağdaki öğrencilerin dil öğrenimindeki gereksinimlerini karşılamamak için etkin öğretmenler yetiştirmeye olan ilgi ve özeni de beraberinde getirmiştir. Bu amaç doğrultusunda, dil öğrenmenin kalitesini artırmak için yapılan tüm çalışmaların merkezinde ikinci dil öğretmeni eğitimi bulunmaktadır.

Öğretmen eğitimi genel olarak “alandaki bireylerin mesleki bilgilerini geliştirmek amacıyla yapılan çalışmalar bütünü” şeklinde tanımlanmaktadır (Freeman & Johnson, 1998, p. 398). Richards (1990, p. 15)’ a göre “ikinci dil öğretmeni eğitimi mesleğe yeni başlayanlara etkili öğretmenlerin sahip oldukları kabiliyet ve yeterlilikleri kazandırmak için çeşitli fırsatlar sunmalıdır.” Bu amaç doğrultusunda, ikinci dil öğretmeni yetiştirme alanı yıllar içerisinde çeşitli teori ve paradigmalardan önemli ölçüde etkilenmiştir. Günümüzde genel olarak öğretmeyi-öğrenme sürecini öğretmenlerin kendi sosyokültürel bağlamları, uygulama toplumu ve yansıtıcı uygulamalarıyla iç içe olan etkileşimle bir süreç olarak gören sosyokültürel paradigmanın etkisi altında olan bu alan (Johnson, 2006), yaklaşık yarım yüzyıldır hem kapsamı hem de araştırma temelleri bakımından önemli değişikliklere uğramıştır.

Her ne kadar günümüzde yeni bir alan olarak algılansa da, ikinci dil öğretmen eğitiminin kökleri dil öğretiminin bağımsız bir alan olmaya başladığı 60’lı yıllara dayanır. Bu yıllarda dil öğretmeni yetiştiren programlar genel olarak öğretmenlerin sınıf ortamlarında yeni metotları kullanmayı öğrenebilecekleri alan dersleri ve pratiklerden oluşurdu. Bu programların amacı ise öğretmen adaylarını herhangi bir dil öğretimi ortamında kullanabilecekleri teori ve bilgilerle donatmaktı (Freeman & Johnson, 1998). Freeman (2002, p. 4)’ a göre “öğretmeyi-öğrenme öğretimi gereken konuda özel olarak uzmanlaşmayı ve bu içeriği öğrencilere ulaştıracak metotları edinmeyi içerirdi.” Programlara yeni katılan öğrencilerin hiçbir öğretmenlik bilgisine sahip olmadığı düşünülür, çalışan öğretmenler ise öğrenmeyi

gerçekleştirecek metot ve tekniklerin sınıf ortamındaki uygulayıcıları olarak algılanırdı.

Öğretme olayının bir aktarım olarak algılandığı bu modelde alan araştırmaları tamamen öğretme eyleminin sonuçlarına odaklanmıştır. Bu doğrultuda yapılan çalışmalar çoğunlukla öğretmen davranışlarının öğrenci başarısı üzerinde olan etkisini araştırmıştır. Öğretmeyi birbirinden bağımsız davranışlar bütünü olarak gören bakış açısı ve süreç-sonuç odaklı araştırma değerleri bu yıllarda hep iç içe olmuştur çünkü araştırmalardan elde edilen sonuçlarla eğitilen öğretmenlerin öğretim etkinliğinin artacağına inanılırdı.

70'lerin sonlarına doğru alandaki öğrenme ve öğretmenlere yönelik görüşlerde önemli değişiklikler olmuştur. Walberg (1977) ve Lortie (1975)'nin çalışmalarıyla alandaki bilim insanları öğretme eyleminin sadece basit davranışlar bütünü olmadığını ve öğretmeyi-öğrenme sürecinin davranışçı bir bakış açısı olan süreç-sonuç araştırma paradigmasıyla açıklanamayacağını düşünmeye başlamışlardır. Ayrıca mevcut bakış açısının öğretmenlerin önceki yaşamlarını ve tecrübelerini göz ardı ettiği vurgulanmıştır (Freeman & Johnson, 1998).

Temelinde bu sorgulamalarla, öğretmenlerin inançlarını, biliş süreçlerini ve bunların davranışlarla olan ilişkilerini araştıran bir kısım çalışmalar yapılmıştır (Denscombe, 1982; Shavelson & Stern, 1981). Öğretmenler artık başkalarının teorilerinin uygulayıcıları olarak değil düşünme süreçleri olan, sınıf ortamında kritik kararlar veren ve kararları birçok faktörden etkilenen bireyler olarak görülmeye başlanmıştır. Öğretmenlerin bakış açıları, tecrübeleri ve düşünce süreçleri araştırmacıların gözünde daha çok değer kazanmış ve çalışmalar öğretmen davranışlarını basit bir şekilde incelemek yerine neyi niçin yaptıklarını araştırmıştır.

Alanda değişimin on yılı olarak adlandırılan 80'li yıllar günümüzde bile hala kullanılan ve kaynak gösterilen birçok kavramın oluşmasına tanık olmuştur (Freeman, 2002). Geçmiş yıllarda öğretme eyleminin doğasını açıklamakta yetersiz kalan süreç-sonuç paradigması yerini bu eylemi öğretmenlerin bakış açısıyla araştıran ve onların düşünme ve anlama süreçlerine odaklanan nitel ve yorumlayıcı çalışmalara bırakmıştır. Freeman (2002)'a göre öğretmenlerin zihinsel süreçlerine ve

bu süreçlerin davranışlarını nasıl şekillendirdiğine odaklanan nitel çalışmalar bazı tekrar-tanımlamaları da beraberinde getirmiş, öğretmenlerin sosyo-politik olarak nasıl algılandığı ve zihinsel süreçlerinin nasıl araştırılması gerektiği konularında da bir yeniden yapılanmaya sebep olmuştur. Bu bağlamda, yapılan ilk çalışmalar öğretmenlerin karar verme süreçlerine odaklanırken (Shavelson & Stern, 1981), öğretmenlerin zihinsel süreçlerini daha geniş bir kapsamda inceleyen bazı diğer çalışmalar alanda daha etkili olmuştur. Shulman (1987) pedagojik alan bilgisi terimini ortaya atmış ve öğretmenlerin alan bilgisinin alan bilgisi, pedagojik alan bilgisi, müfredat bilgisi, eğitim bağlamı bilgisi, genel pedagojik bilgi, öğrenci bilgisi ve eğitim amaçları bilgisi olmak üzere toplam 7 boyuttan oluştuğu sonucuna varmıştır. Alanda etikli olan diğer bir kavram ise Clandinin ve Connolley (1987) ile Elbaz (1981) tarafından ortaya konulmuştur. “Bireysel pratik bilgi” kavramını oluşturan bu bilim insanları, öğretmenlerin sahip oldukları bilgilerin yaşantı ve tecrübelerinin bir ürünü olduğunu ve sürekli olarak yenilendiğini savunmuşlardır.

Alandaki araştırma değerlerinin merkezindeki bulunan kavramların bu denli değişmesi, öğretmen yetiştirme programlarının içerik ve kapsamına doğrudan etki etmiştir. “Bir birey olarak öğretmen” imajı değer kazanmış ve birçok insan bu kavramın öğretmen yetiştirme programlarına entegre edilmesi gerektiğini düşünmeye başlamıştır. Freeman (2009), bu değişimin öğretmen yetiştirme programlarının kapsamını bilgi ve beceri kazandırma başlangıcından bireysel bir kariyer gelişimine çevirdiğini düşünmüştür.

Öğretmeyi-öğrenme eyleminin kavramsallaştırılmasında köklü değişikliklerin yaşandığı 80’li yıllara kıyasla 1990-2000 yılları arası bu değişimleri daha da derinleştirmiş ve var olan eğilimleri sağlamlaştırmıştır. Yorumlayıcı araştırma temeliyle bütünleşen bu bakış açısı, alanda dört temel değişimle özdeşleşmiştir (Crandall, 2000)

- a) Davranışçı bir bakış açısından yapılandırmacı bir bakış açısına geçiş
- b) Öğretmen adaylarının dil öğrenirken yaşadıkları tecrübelerinin öğrenme ve öğretme üzerine sahip oldukları inançları etkilemesi
- c) Öğretmen yetiştirme programlarının öğretmen adaylarını sınıf atmosferinin gerçeklerine ayak uydurabilecek şekilde yetiştirememesi

- d) Dil öğretimi alanının uygulayıcıları arasında hakim olması gereken ve araştırma destekli daha profesyonel bir bakış açısı

Bu değişime bağlı olarak, araştırmacıların temel odağı öğretmenlerin neyi bilmesi gerektiğinden çok bildiklerini nasıl öğrendiklerini olmaya başlamıştır. Bu doğrultuda öğretmenlerin bilgi temellerini araştıran birçok çalışma yapılmış ve bu çalışmaların sonuçları göz önüne alınarak dil öğretimi yetiştirme alanının temeli yeniden oluşturulmuştur (Freeman ve Richards, 1998). Bu yeniden oluşum, ikinci dil öğretimi yetiştirme alanında dil öğretimi bilişi adına yeni bir araştırma alanı yaratmıştır.

Dil öğretimi bilişi “öğretmenlerin düşüncelerini, bilgilerini, inançlarını ve tüm bunların sınıf uygulamalarıyla olan ilişkisini ifade etmektedir” (Borg, 2006, p.1). 90’lı yılların sonuna doğru öğretmenlerin düşüncelerini, bilgilerini ve inançlarına odaklanmadan onları anlayabilmenin mümkün olamayacağını savunan bir bakış açısıyla birlikte dil öğretimi bilişi üzerine yapılan çalışmaların sayısında büyük bir artış olmuştur. Bu araştırmaların birçoğu öğretmenlerin bilgi temelinin ve bunun bilişsel süreçler ve sınıf uygulamalarıyla olan ilişkisini araştırmayı amaçlamıştır. Yapılan tüm bu araştırmalar, alandaki bilim insanlarının ve öğretmenlerin bakış açılarını genişletmiş, öğretmenlerin öğretmeyi-öğrenme süreçlerini anlaşılmasına ciddi katkı sağlamış fakat aynı zamanda alan yazında kavramsal kargaşalara yol açmıştır (Borg, 2003).

Günümüzde ikinci dil öğretimi yetiştirme alanında hakim olan mevcut sosyo-kültürel paradigma öğretmenleri çevreleriyle sürekli iletişim halinde olan ve yansıtıcı araştırmalarla kendi pratiklerinden öğrenen, aktif karar mekanizmaları olarak görür (Johnson, 2009). Alanda hakim olan bu görüş sayısız araştırmayla desteklense de öğretmenlerin dil öğretimi nasıl öğrendikleri hala merkezi bir tartışma konusudur ve bu konudaki mevcut bilgilerin daha iyi anlaşılabilmesi için daha fazla araştırmaya gerek duyulmaktadır (Meijer ve diğerleri, 1999; Freeman, 2009).

Dil öğretimi bilişi alanında şuana kadar yapılan çalışmalar daha çok hizmet-öncesi öğretmenlerinin bilgi temeli üzerine ya da İngilizceyi ikinci dil olarak öğrenen öğretmenlere odaklanmıştır. Bu yüzden özellikle İngilizcenin anadili İngilizce

olmayan öğretmenler tarafından öğretildiği ortamlardaki İngilizce öğretmenlerinin bilgi temelleri üzerine yapılacak çalışmalara ihtiyaç duyulmaktadır. Buna ek olarak, öğretmenlerin bilgi temellerinin sınıf uygulamaları ve kurumsal bağlam çerçevesinde incelenmesinin bir çok bilim insanı tarafından dil öğretmeni bilişi alanına katkı sağlayacağı düşünülmektedir (Bailey, 1996; Burns, 1996). En önemlisi, Borg (2003)'un da dediği gibi, 90'lı yılların sonunda ortaya çıkan kavram karmaşasının giderilmesi ve daha kapsayıcı bir kuramsal çerçevenin üretilmesi alandaki en öncelikli amaçlardan biri olmalıdır.

Yukarıda belirtilen çalışmalar ve sonuçlar ışığında yorumlayıcı bir yaklaşım izleyen bu çalışma İngilizceyi yabancı dil olarak öğreten Türk öğretmenlerin bilişini incelemektedir. Öğretmenlerin dil öğretmeni bilişinin nasıl oluştuğuna, sınıf uygulamalarının özelliklerine ve hangi durumlardan etkilendiğine ve bu uygulamaların üzerinde etkisi olan kurumsal faktörlere odaklanılmıştır. Çalışmanın temel amacı, İngilizceyi yabancı dil olarak öğreten öğretmenlerin bilişini kavramsallaştıracak kuramsal bir çerçeve ortaya koymaktır. Çalışmanın araştırma sorularını aşağıdaki maddeler oluşturmaktadır.

1. İngilizceyi yabancı dil olarak öğreten Türk öğretmenlerin İngilizce öğretmeni bilişinin temel kaynakları nelerdir?
2. İngilizceyi yabancı dil olarak öğreten Türk öğretmenlerin sınıf uygulamalarının özellikleri nelerdir?
3. Hangi kurumsal faktörler öğretmenlerin sınıf uygulamaları üzerinde etkilidir?
4. İngilizce öğretmeni bilişi, sınıf uygulamaları ve kurumsal bağlam birbirleriyle nasıl bağlantılıdır?

Çalışmada çoklu durum deseni kullanılmış ve araştırma soruları her bir katılımcı detaylı veri toplama sürecinde derinlemesine incelenerek cevaplanmıştır. Katılımcıları Türkiye'deki farklı devlet üniversitelerinin İngilizce hazırlık programında çalışan 3 İngilizce okutmanı oluşturmaktadır. Katılımcıların belirlenmesinde amaçlı örnekleme tekniği kullanılmış ve katılımcılar belirli kriterlere bağlı kalınarak belirlenmiştir. Çalışmanın verileri katılımcılarla birlikte kararlaştırılan bir program dahilinde 2014-2015 akademik yılının ikincş döneminde yaklaşık 5 aylık bir süreçte toplanmıştır. Süreç içerisinde katılımcılarla 3 yarı

yapılandırılmış görüşme, on iki saatlik ders gözlemi ve bunları takiben çağrışım tekniğine dayalı görüşmeler yapılmış ve bunlara ek olarak katılımcılardan sınıf uygulamaları üzerine haftalık yansıtıcı yazımlar istenmiştir. Toplanan veriler sistemli ve planlı bir şekilde kuram oluşturma tekniğiyle analiz edilmiştir. Analiz süreci, nitel içerik analizine benzer bir şekilde açık kodlamayla başlamış, toplanan ilk veriler kodlanarak ilerleyen süreçteki veri toplama araçlarına ışık tutmuştur. Açık kodlama sonucunda ortaya çıkan kategoriler, Strauss ve Corbin (1998)'nin kurma oluşturma kriterleri doğrultusunda eksen kodlama şemasına yerleştirilmiştir. Bu şema hem İngilizce öğretmeni bilişi hem de sınıf uygulamaları kavramları için yapılmıştır. Son olarak, ortaya çıkan şemalar seçici kodlama ışığında kavramsallaştırılarak, çalışmanın odak noktaları üzerine bir model ortaya konulmuştur.

Katılımcıların ilki olan Eda ile ilgili sonuçlar Eda'nın İngilizce öğretmeni bilişinin oluşmasında geçmişteki dil öğrenme tecrübelerinin, üniversitede aldığı öğretmenlik (hizmet-öncesi eğitim) eğitiminin, mesleğe başladığı ilk yıllarda ve daha sonra yaşadığı öğretmenlik tecrübelerinin önemli ölçüde etkili olduğunu ortaya koymuştur. Eda'nın anlatımlarından lise yıllarında nasıl iyi bir öğretmen olunabileceğine dair kavramlar oluşturmaya başladığı ve çalışma alışkanlıklarına bağlı olarak bir dilin nasıl öğretilmesi gerektiğine dair fikirler oluşturmaya başladığı anlaşılmıştır. Üniversitedeki eğitimi boyunca aldığı öğretme metodolojisi ile ilgili dersler, bölümündeki öğretmen eğitimcileri ve stajyer öğretmenlik süreci bir öğretmen adayı olarak Eda'nın gelişimine ciddi katkılar sağlamıştır. Üniversiteden sonra öğretmen olarak çalışmaya başladı ilk yıllarında bir gerçeklik şoku yaşayan Eda'nın sınıf uygulamaları çoğunlukla deneme-yanılma şeklinde devam etmiştir. Eda yıllar içerisinde birçok öğretmenlik prensibini ve alışkanlığını değiştirdiğini ve mevcut öğretmenlik görüşünün yaşadığı tecrübelerle şekillendiğini ve bu sürecin sonunda bir dil öğretme felsefesi oluşturduğunu bildirmiştir. Sınıf uygulamalarından elden edilen sonuçlar, bu uygulamaların şekillenmesinde Eda'nın dil öğretim felsefesinin büyük ölçüde etkili olduğunu göstermiştir. Eda'nın sınıf ortamında aldığı kararların büyük bir bölümünün İngilizce öğretmeni bilişini oluşturan unsurlar ile doğrudan ilişkili olduğu sonucuna varılmıştır. Eda'nın sınıf içi uygulamalarını etkileyen bir diğer unsurların ise öğrenciler, anlık kararlar ve kullanılan ders kitabı olduğu belirlenmiştir. Öğrencilerin sınıf uygulamalarının merkezinde olduğu, Eda'nın onlara

karşı mesafeli ama samimi bir tutum içinde olduğu ve öğrencilerin sınıf ortamında kendilerini rahat hissetmeleri için özenli davrandığı gözlenmiştir. Bunun yanı sıra, Eda'nın ders esnasında önceden planlanmamış anlık kararlar verdiği fakat bu kararların dersin akışını bozmadığı görülmüştür. Kullanılan ders kitabının da Eda'nın sınıf uygulamaları üzerinde gözle görülür bir şekilde etkili olduğu belirlenmiştir. Eda kitabı kullanmakla ilgili nötr hissetse de kitabın bazen kendi tercihlerini uygulaması konusunda kısıtlamalar yarattığını, bu durumun da bazen kendisini mutsuz ettiğini belirtmiştir. Son olarak, Eda'nın çalıştığı kurumda var olan ölçme –değerlendirme ve müfredat politikalarının Eda'nın sınıf için uygulamalarını dolaylı olarak etkilediği belirlenmiştir. Eda, ölme-değerlendirme bu süreçte öğrenciler için çok önemli olduğunu ve öğrencilerin bu duruma verdiği önemin ölçme-değerlendirmeyi kendi uygulamaları açısından da önemli kıldığını belirtmiştir. Eda'nın gözlemlenen dersler esnasında bu durumla ilgili sürekli hatırlatmalar yaptığı öğrencilere sınavlara hazırlanmak için materyaller hazırladığı görülmüştür. Müfredat uygulamalarının ise Eda'nın sınıf uygulamaları üzerinde dolaylı olarak etkili olduğu belirlenmiştir. Eda belli bir müfredatı takip etmenin bazen konu tekrarı yapılmasını veya bir konunun daha ayrıntılı işlenmesini engellediğini belirtmiştir. Ayrıca belirli bir müfredatı takip etmenin kendisi için bir sıkıntı olmadığını fakat bir öğretmen olarak sınıf içinde daha fazla özgürlüğe sahip olmayı istediğini de eklemiştir.

Elde edilen veriler çalışmanın bir diğer katılımcısı olan Mert için de önemli sonuçlar ortaya koymuştur. Mert'in geçmişteki dil öğrenme tecrübelerinin, üniversitede aldığı öğretmenlik eğitiminin ve şimdiye kadarki öğretmenlik tecrübelerinin sahip olduğu İngilizce öğretmeni bilişinin ana kaynakları olduğu belirlenmiştir. Mert, öğrenciyken sahip olduğunu düşündüğü dil öğrenme yeteneğinin kendisinde büyük haz yarattığını ve İngilizce derslerinde bu sayede başarılı olduğunu belirtmiştir. Öte yandan geçmişteki İngilizce öğretmenlerinin Mert üzerinde önemli bir etkisinin olduğu, Mert'in İngilizcenin nasıl iyi öğretilabileceği konusunda onlardan çok şey öğrendiği belirlenmiştir. Üniversitede aldığı eğitimden bahsederken, hem dersler hem de staj esnasında aldığı eğitimin teorik olarak iyi fakat pratik olarak tatmin edici olmadığını ve bu yüzden öğrendiklerini pratiğe dökme konusunda sıkıntılar yaşadığını üzerinde durmuştur. Özellikle mesleğinin ilk yıllarında bu durumdan dolayı büyük sıkıntılar yaşadığını söyleyen Mert gerçek sınıf atmosferinde ders

yapmanın tam bir gerçeklik şoku olduğunu belirtmiştir. Bu yıllarda yaşadığı olumlu olumsuz bütün tecrübeler Mert'i o kadar geliştirmiştir ki öğretmenlikle ilgili her şeyi yeniden öğreniyormuş gibi hissettiğini de eklemiştir. Kariyerinin ilerleyen yıllarında sahip olduğu mesleki tecrübelerin İngilizce öğretmeni bilişine ciddi katkılar sağladığını anlatan Mert, bu süreç sonunda kendine has dil öğrenme prensipleri oluşturduğunu söylemiştir. Mert'in sınıf uygulamaları ile ilgili ortaya çıkan sonuçlar Mert'in dil öğretme prensiplerinin ve öğrencilerin sınıf uygulamalarının merkezinde olduğunu ve bu iki faktör tarafından şekillendirildiğini göstermiştir. Mert'in öğrencilerin kendini iyi hissettiği bir sınıf ortamı yaratmak için büyük çaba harcadığı görülmüştür. Ayrıca, Mert derslerini işlerken, aktivitelerin organize ederken ve dikkatlerini çekmeye çalışırken öğrencilerin ihtiyaç ve ilgilerini sürekli ön planda tuttuğu görülmüştür. Diğer taraftan, Mert'in dil öğretimiyle ilgili çok katı prensiplerinin olduğu ve ısrarlı bir şekilde bu prensipleri sınıf uygulamalarında kullandığı gözlemlenmiştir. Bu uygulamaların etkinliğe çok inanan Mert başka metodolar kullanmaya sıcak bakmadığını belirtmiştir. Bu yüzden sınıf yönetiminden dil becerilerinin öğretimine kadar sınıf uygulamalarının her yönünde bu prensiplere rastlanmıştır. Son olarak Mert'in sınıf uygulamalarında çalıştığı kurumun kısmen ama önemli etkisi olduğu sonucuna varılmıştır. Kurumda var olan müfredat uygulamalarının Mert'i sınıf ortamında ne yaptığının bilinçli bir şekilde farkında olan, daha planlı ve disiplinli bir öğretmen yaptığı ve Mert'in bu durumdan oldukça memnun olduğu anlaşılmıştır. Öte yandan ise bu tür standart bir uygulamanın bazen kendisini zor doruma soktuğu, öğretmek istemediği bazı noktaları işlemek zorunda bıraktığı veya yapmak istemediği aktiviteleri yaptırdığı anlaşılmıştır. Bu yüzde Mert kendi tercihlerini uygulayabilmesi ve yaratıcılığını kullanabilmesi için bu uygulamanın öğretmenlere biraz daha serbestlik tanınması gerektiğini vurgulamıştır. Buna ek olarak Mert, çok pürüzsüz bir şekilde yönetilen ve çalışan herkesi işbirlikçi bir şekilde paylaşımda bulunmaya teşvik eden kurumdaki örgütsel atmosferden övgüyle bahsetmiştir. Mert bu atmosferin kendisine çok şey kattığını ve öğretmenlik gelişiminde önemli bir rol oynadığını belirtmiştir. Kurumdaki ölçme-değerlendirme sistemi üzerinde kısmen de olsa duran Mert, bu sistemden dolayı işlediği konular ve yaptığı aktivitelerde özel olarak değişiklikler yapmadığını ifade etmiş fakat yapılan

ders gözlemleri Mert'in bu ölçme sistemini sürekli aklının bir köşesinde tuttuğunu ve derslerinde bu sisteme uygun ufak değişiklikler yaptığını göstermiştir.

Çalışmanın son katılımcısı Zeynep ile ilgili toplanan veriler, Zeynep'in İngilizce öğretmeni bilişini geçmişteki öğrencilik tecrübelerinin, üniversitedeki hizmet öncesi öğretmenlik eğitiminin ve mesleğin ilk yıllarından başlayarak tüm öğretmenlik tecrübelerinin oluşturduğu sonucuna varılmıştır. Zeynep'in geçmişteki öğretmenlerinin sahip olduğu bakış açıları ve sınıf uygulamalarının, Zeynep'in mevcut öğretmenlik felsefesinde bile etkili olduğu anlaşılmıştır. Ayrıca Zeynep'in öğrencilik yıllarındaki dil öğrenme sürecinin kendisine büyük bir haz ve mutluluk verdiği, bu sayede bazı dil öğrenme alışkanlıkları edindiği ve dil öğretme alanında bir kariyere karar vermesinde etkili olduğu belirlenmiştir. Üniversite yıllarına büyük bir hayal kırıklığı ile başlamasına rağmen Zeynep'in son derece başarılı bir öğretmen adayı olduğu ve bölümdeki öğretmen eğitimcilerinin, yöntem derslerinin ve öğretmenlik stajının Zeynep'in İngilizce öğretmeni bilişine ciddi katkılar sağladığı tespit edilmiştir. Mesleğe başladığı zaman Zeynep'in o ana kadar edinmiş olduğu bilginin büyük bir kısmını öğretmenlik tecrübeleri sınıf gerçekleri ve öğrencilerin ihtiyaçları doğrultusunda revize edip yenilediği anlaşılmıştır. Bu ilk yılları denem yanılma ve yeniden kavramsallaştırma süreci olarak geçiren Zeynep, tecrübe kazandıkça öğretmenlik rutinleri oluşturmaya başlamıştır. Zeynep'in sınıf uygulamaları üzerine toplanan veriler de önemli sonuçlar ortaya koymuştur. Bu sonuçlara göre, Zeynep'in sınıf uygulamalarının çoğunlukla öğrenci profili, ders kitabı ve kısmen de Zeynep'in dil öğretmeni felsefesiyle şekillendiği belirlenmiştir. Zeynep, çoğu zaman düşük öğrenci profili yüzünden yaptığı öğretmenliğin kalitesini düşürmek ve yaptığı birçok şeyi basitleştirmek zorunda kaldığını ifade etmiştir. Bunu yanı sıra, Zeynep'in sınıf uygulamalarının çoğunun ders kitabına bağlı olduğu ve kitabın derste çok baskın bir rolü olduğu gözlemlenmiştir. Diğer taraftan Zeynep'in kendi felsefesini her fırsat bulduğunda sınıf ortamına yaptığı çeşitli uygulamalarla yansıtmaya çalıştığı görülmüş ve bu çabalarının kısmen pratiğe dönüştüğü gözlemlenmiştir. Çalışma sırasında Zeynep'in çalıştığı kurumda bazı ciddi problemlerin olduğu ve bu problemlerin Zeynep'in öz-algısını, motivasyonunu ve sınıf uygulamalarını olumsuz bir şekilde etkilediği sonucuna varılmıştır. Zeynep, okuldaki kurumsal atmosferin ve iş arkadaşlarıyla ilişkilerin son derece kötü

olduğunu ve bu durumun okulda son derece rahat ve disiplinsiz bir ortam yarattığını ifade etmiştir. Buna ek olarak, Zeynep'in anlatımları çalıştığı kurumda herhangi bir müfredat veya ölçme-değerlendirme politikasının olmadığını ve bu yüzden her şeyin sistemsiz bir şekilde ilerlediğinin üstünde durmuştur. Bu durum Zeynep'i dersleri tamamen kitaba bağlı olarak işleyen bir öğretmene dönüştürmüş ve kendisini kurumda oldukça mutsuz etmiştir. Bu yüzden kurumsal bağlamın genel olarak Zeynep üzerinde son derece olumsuz bir etkiye sahip olduğu sonucuna varılmıştır.

Çalışmanın tartışma bölümünde ise çapraz durum analizinden elde edilen sonuçlara yer verilmekte ve bu sonuçlar alan yazındaki diğer çalışmalar ışığında tartışılmaktadır. İngilizceyi yabancı dil olarak öğreten öğretmenlerin bilişine yönelik elde edilen sonuçlar bu bilginin çeşitli tecrübeleri içinde barındıran bir süreç sonucunda edinildiğini ortaya koymaktadır. Bu tecrübelerden birinci öğretmenlerin geçmişteki öğrencilik tecrübeleridir. Öğretmenlerin geçmiş yıllardaki öğretmenleriyle olan ilişkileri, onların tutum, davranış ve öğretim tekniklerini gözlemeleri, öğrenciyken oluşturdukları dil öğrenme ve ders çalışma alışkanlıkları ve son olarak dil öğrenemeye karşı yetenek ve tutumları öğretmenlerin bilişsel gelişimde ve hatta çoğu sınıf uygulamalarında etkili olmaktadır. Sonuçlar ayrıca öğretmenlerin üniversite yıllarında aldıkları hizmet-öncesi öğretmenlik eğitiminin öğretmen bilişlerinin merkezinde olduğunu ortaya koymaktadır. Bu eğitim esnasında aldıkları dersler, bölümdeki öğretmen eğitimcileri ve staj öğretmenlik, bu yıllarda öğretmenlerin pedagojik gelişimine ciddi katkılar sağlamaktadır. Buna ek olarak öğretmenlerin mesleğin ilk yıllarında yaşadığı tecrübeler İngilizce öğretmen bilişini oluşturan bir diğer faktör olarak ortaya çıkmaktadır. Öğretmenler bu yıllarda bir gerçeklik şoku yaşadıklarını, üniversite yıllarında öğrendikleri öğretmenlik bilgisini pratiğe dönüştürme konusunda ciddi problemlerle karşılaştıkları, bu yüzden öğretmenliklerinin genel anlamda bir deneme yanılma şeklinde geçtiğini ve bu süreçte mevcut öğretmenlik bilgilerinin bir kısmını sınıf ve öğrenci gerçekliklerine göre yeniden yapılandırdıklarını belirtmektedirler. Bu yıllarda öğretmenlerin çalıştıkları kurumlardaki ortamın ve daha tecrübeli iş arkadaşlarının da öğretmenlerin pedagojik gelişimine katkı sağladığı ortaya konmaktadır. Son olarak, öğretmenlerin tecrübe kazandıkça belirli bir dil öğretimi felsefesi ve prensipleri oluşturduğu, aynı zamanda öğretmenliklerinin giderek rutin bir aktiveye dönüştüğü ortaya çıkmaktadır.

Bahsedilen bu sürecin sonunda öğretmenlerin tamamen kişiye özel, bir daha yaşanma ihtimali yukarıda belirtilmiş süreç ve tecrübelerle oluşmuş, bu açıdan sabit fakat yeni tecrübelerle de kendisinin yenilediği için dinamik, birikmiş dil öğretim bilgisi oluşturdukları belirtilmektedir.

İngilizce öğretmenlerinin sınıf uygulamalarına ilişkin elde edilen sonuçlar bu birikmiş dil öğretim bilgisinin öğretmenlerin sınıf uygulamalarının temelini oluşturduğunu ortaya koymaktadır. Öğretmenler sınıf uygulamalarının büyük bir bölümünün sebebi ve mantığını açıklarken bu bilgi temelini ve onun alt unsurlarına işaret etmişlerdir. Sınıf uygulamalarının merkezinde ise öğrenciler olduğu ortaya konmaktadır. Öğretmenler sınıflarında yaptıkları uygulamalarının birçoğunu öğrencilerin yeterlilik seviyelerini, o anki motivasyonlarını, duygusal faktörleri, odak ve ilgi seviyelerini dikkate alarak uyguladıklarını veya revize ettiklerini ve hatta bazı uygulamaları sırf öğrenciler için yatıklarını belirtmektedirler. Öğretmenlerin sınıf uygulamalarının ayrıca ders kitabının içeriğini ve öğretmenlerin doğaçlama yetkileri uygulamalarla da şekillendiği görülmektedir. Öğretmenler ders kitabının içeriğinin bazen kendilerini zor duruma soktuğunu, o an öğretilmesinin doğru olmayacağını düşündükleri bazı noktaları öğretmeye zorladığını ve bazı aktiviteleri istemedikleri şekilde yaptırdığını ifade etmektedirler. Öğretmenlerin ders planından çıkarak yaptıkları bazı anlık uygulamaları ise ders akışını değiştirmek ve öğrencilerin dikkatini çekmek için yaptıkları belirtilmektedir. Son olarak, öğretmelerin çalıştığı kurum içerisindeki bazı faktörlerin de sınıf uygulamalarının şekillenmesinde önemli rol oynadığı görülmektedir. Bu faktörlerin başında kurumsal atmosfer gelmektedir. Öğretmenler kurumlarının yönetiliş biçiminin, sahip oldukları kurumsal disiplinin, diğer öğretmenlerinin tavırlarının ve onlarla olan ilişkilerin sınıf uygulamalarında dolaylı ama önemli bir etkiye sahip olduğunu ifade etmişlerdir. Bir diğer kurumsal faktörün ise müfredat uygulamaları olduğu tespit edilmiştir. Kurumlarda standardı sağlamak için uygulanan önceden belirlenmiş bir programın öğretmenlere rehberlik ettiği ve onları daha planlı davranmaya yönelttiği, fakat bazı durumlarda ise zorunlu kıldığı aktiviteler ve öğretim konuları yüzünden öğretmenlerin serbestliğini kısıtladığı görülmektedir. Bu açıdan öğretmenlerin uygulamalarını önemli ölçüde şekillendirmektedir. Öğretmenlerin sınıf uygulamalarını şekillenmesinde önemli rol oynayan son kurumsal faktörün ölçme-değerlendirme sistemi olduğu

belirtilmektedir. Öğretmenlerin sınıf uygulamalarını yerine getirirken bu sistemi sürekli göz önünde tuttıkları, öğrencilere çıkacak konular ve soru tarzlarıyla alakalı bilgilendirmeler yaptıkları ve sınavlara yönelik materyaller hazırlayıp öğrencilere yardımcı olmaya çalıştıkları görülmektedir. Son olarak, İngilizce öğretmenlerinin tüm bu faktörleri göz önüne alarak bir karar verme süreci yaşadıkları ve bu çok-faktörlü karar verme süreci sonunda sınıf uygulamalarını oluşturdukları ortaya konmaktadır.

İngilizceyi yabancı dil olarak öğreten öğretmenlerin pedagojik bilgi temellerini ve biliş sahibi oldukları belirlemeye ve nihayetinde kapsayıcı bir kuramsal çerçeve ortaya koymayı hedefleyen bu çalışma, elde edilen sonuçlara dayalı olarak dil öğretmeni biliş kümeleri modelini ortaya koymaktadır. Bu modelde İngilizce öğretmenlerinin pedagojik bilgilerinin hangi faktörlerin etkisiyle nasıl oluştuğu, sınıf uygulamalarının nasıl ve hangi etmenler tarafından şekillendiği, hangi kurumsal faktörlerin sınıf uygulamaları üzerinde etkili olduğu ve bahsedilen bu üç olgunun – pedagojik bilgi, sınıf uygulamaları ve kurumsal faktörler – birbiriyle nasıl bağlantılı olduğu şematize edilmektedir. Sunulan bu modelin sahip olduğu betimleyici, ayrıntılı ve kolay anlaşılır özellikleriyle dil öğretmeni bilişi alanına ciddi katkı sunacağı düşünülmektedir.

Çalışmanın sonuç bölümünde genel olarak bir özete yerilmekte, çalışmanın sınırlılıklarında bahsedilmekte ve önemlisi ortaya konan sonuçların öğretmen yetiştirme alanına ne gibi katkılar sunacağına değinilmektedir.

Öncelikli olarak bu çalışma tamamen İngilizceyi yabancı dil olarak öğretmen öğretmenlerin yaşantıları, uygulamaları ve tecrübeleriyle ilgili anlatımlarına dayalı olduğu için hem hizmet-öncesi hem de hizmet-içi öğretmen yetiştirme uygulamalarına bazı öneriler getirmektedir. İlk olarak, öğretmen adaylarının üniversitedeki programlarına yerleşmeden önce öğretmenlikle ilgili bazı kavramları oluşturmuş olarak geldikleri ve öğretmenlik kavramıyla ilgili bilgisiz olmadıkları belirlenmiştir. Bu yüzden hizmet-öncesi öğretmen yetiştirme programlarına öğretmen adaylarının bu mevcut bilgilerinden faydalanmalarını sağlayacak, kendi potansiyellerini keşfetmelerine yardımcı olacak ve adaptasyonlarını kolaylaştıracak oryantasyon programları eklenmelidir. Buna ek olarak, alan yazındaki çalışmaların

zıt yönde sonuçlar ortaya koymasına rağmen, hizmet-öncesi öğretmenlik eğitiminin öğretmenlerin öğretmeyi-öğrenme süreçlerinin merkezinde olduğu ve pedagojik bilgi gelişimlerine ciddi katkı sağladığı tespit edilmiştir. Bu yüzden, üniversite yıllarında verilen bu eğitim daha da iyileştirilmesi için bazı değişiklikler yapılmalıdır. İlk olarak Chiang (2008)'in de dediği gibi öğretmenlik becerisiyle alakalı olan metot dersleri sadece teorik olmaktan çıkarılmalı ve bazı pratik öğelerle desteklenmelidir. Böylelikle öğretmen adayları öğrendikleri bilgileri hemen pratiğe dökme fırsatı bulacaklardır. İkinci olarak, bu çalışma öğretmen eğitimcilerinin öğretmen adaylarının hayatında ne kadar önemli bir oynadığını ve gerek tutumları-davranışları gerekse de bilgi birikimleriyle öğretmen adaylarına ciddi katkı sağladıkları görülmüştür. Dolayısıyla hizmet öncesi programlarda öğretmen eğitimcisi eğitimi adı altında eğitimler gerçekleştirilmeli ve akademisyenlerin bu yöndeki becerileri artırılmalıdır. Son olarak, programın son yılında sunulan öğretmenlik stajında öğretmen adaylarının daha çok tecrübe kazanabilmeleri için anlattıkları ders miktarı ciddi oranda arttırılmalıdır.

Çalışmanın getirdiği diğer bir önderi ise mesleğin ilk yılı ile ilgilidir. Alan yazındaki çalışmalara paralel olarak, sonuçlar İngilizce öğretmenleri için mesleğin ilk yıllarının çok önemli olduğunu, bu süreçte teorik bilgileri pratiğe dökme, sınıf ve okul kültürüne ayak uydurma gibi durumlarda ciddi sıkıntılar yaşadıklarını ortaya koymuştur. Bu sebeplerden dolayı bu çalışma, bu zorlu sürecin sistemli bir şekilde bir staj veya oryantasyon yılı olarak danışmanlıkla birlikte yürütülmesi gerektiğini önermektedir. Bu şekilde İngilizce öğretmenlerinin bu zorlu süreci daha kolay atlatıp öğretmenlik mesleğine daha kolay adapte olacakları düşünülmektedir. Buna ek olarak, sınıf uygulamalarına ilişkin elde edilen sonuçlar sınıf-içi kararların bir çok faktör göz önüne alınarak verildiğini ve öğretmenler için zorlu bir süreç olduğunu ortaya koymaktadır. Öğretmenlere bu süreci başarılı bir şekilde yönetip en doğru kararları vermelerine yardımcı olacak hizmet-içi eğitimlerin düzenlenmesi onların karar verme becerilerine büyük katkı sağlayacaktır. Son olarak, dil öğretim kurumları ve uyguladıkları politikaların öğretmenlerin sınıf uygulamalarında büyük ölçüde etkili olduğu görülmektedir. Bu yüzden kurum içerisinde teşvik edici, işbirlikçi ve olumlu bir atmosferin oluşturulması, ölçme-değerlendirme ve müfredat politikalarının öğretmenlerin görüşlerini de içine alarak sistemli bir şekilde

uygulanması öğretmenlerin sınıf-içi performanslarına olumlu bir şekilde yansıtacağı düşünülmektedir.

Öğretmen yetiştirme programlarına getirdiği önerilerin yanı sıra, çalışmanın ortaya koyduğu biliş kümeleri modeli, dil öğretmeni bilişi alanına ilgi duyan araştırmacılar için de bir yol haritası çizmektedir. Öğretmenlerin biliş sahibi olduğu faktörleri detaylı bir şekilde sunan model, bu faktörlerin, bunları oluşturan sebeplerin, faktörler arasındaki ilişkilerin farkı eğitimsel, ulusal ve kültürel ortamlarda araştırılması için aynı zamanda rehberlik etmekte ve alandaki araştırmacılar için bir araştırma altyapısı sunmaktadır. Bu yüzden ortaya konan modelin alandaki araştırmacılara da büyük katkı sağlayacağı düşünülmektedir.

APPENDIX H
CURRICULUM VITAE

PERSONAL INFORMATION

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EDUCATION

Degree	Institution	Year of Graduation
MA	METU English Language Teaching	2012
BS	METU Foreign Language Education	2007
High School	Anadolu Teacher Training High School, Amasya	2003

WORK EXPERIENCE

Year	Place	Enrolment
2010- Present	Afyon Kocatepe Uni.	Instructor
2007-2010	Private Ceceli Schools, Ankara	English Teacher

FOREIGN LANGUAGES

Advanced English, Elementary German

PUBLICATIONS

Journal Papers

- 1 Öztürk, G. (2012). The effect of context in achievement vocabulary tests. *Journal of Educational and Instructional Studies in the World*, 2 (4), 126-134.
- 2 Öztürk, G. (2013). A negotiated syllabus: potential advantages and drawbacks in English preparatory programs at universities. *International Journal on New Trends in Education*, 4 (2), 35-40.
- 3 Öztürk, G. & Gürbüz, N. (2013). Motivational orientations of Turkish EFL students: The case at a state university. *Journal of Language and Literature Education*, 2 (8), 62-77.
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- 1 Öztürk, G. (2015). Sociocultural theory and language teaching. In B. Eröz-Tuğa (Ed.), *Theoretical considerations in language education: Implications for English Language Teaching*. Ankara: Nüans Yayıncılık. (ISBN: 978-605-5450-69-4)

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- 1 Öztürk, G. & Gürbüz, N. (2013). The impact of gender on foreign language speaking anxiety and motivation, *Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 70, 654-665.

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Appendix I: Tez Fotokopisi İzin Formu

TEZ FOTOKOPİSİ İZİN FORMU

ENSTİTÜ

Fen Bilimleri Enstitüsü	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Uygulamalı Matematik Enstitüsü	<input type="checkbox"/>
Enformatik Enstitüsü	<input type="checkbox"/>
Deniz Bilimleri Enstitüsü	<input type="checkbox"/>

YAZARIN

Soyadı : Öztürk
Adı : Gökhan
Bölümü : İngiliz Dili Öğretimi

TEZİN ADI (İngilizce) : LANGUAGE TEACHER COGNITION, CLASSROOM PRACTICES AND INSTITUTIONAL CONTEXT: A QUALITATIVE CASE STUDY ON THREE EFL TEACHERS

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 (1) yıl süreyle fotokopi alınamaz.

TEZİN KÜTÜPHANEYE TESLİM TARİHİ: