

Re-discovery of the Self through Personal Experience Methods: A Narrative Self-Study

Kişisel Deneyim Metotları ile Kendini Yeniden Keşfetme: Bir Öyküleyici Bireysel Araştırma

Bülent Alan*

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Abstract. Self-study as a qualitative research methodology has gained importance in the last three decades in the western countries. Although it is a relatively new research methodology employing a wide range of qualitative methods, it has formalized its rules and ethics and is now accepted as a respectful teacher education research methodology. Self-study has its roots in reflective teaching and action research movements. However, putting the researcher's "self" at the center of the research study in different contexts with rather new and creative methods separates it from other approaches. The teacher conducting self-study takes a dual role as the researcher and also the subject of the research being studied. In this study, the researcher also studied his "self" from the perspectives of his students and his colleagues. The study aimed at revealing the strengths and weaknesses of the researcher as a teacher and to document whether the researcher teaches the way he preaches along with the opinions of the students towards his teaching practices. To this end, the researcher conducted a narrative self-study employing personal experience methods at the School of Foreign Languages, at Anadolu University in 2017-2018 spring term. The data analysis revealed some expected and surprising results regarding the "self" and the "teaching practices" of the researcher.

Keywords: Self-study, reflective teaching, personal experience methods, teacher education.

Öz. Nitel bir araştırma yöntemi olarak bireysel araştırma (self-study) son yıllarda batı ülkelerinde önem kazanmıştır. Bireysel araştırma bir dizi nitel metodun uygulandığı nispeten yeni bir yöntem olmasına rağmen kendi kurallarını ve etik ilkelerini belirlemiş ve günümüzde saygın bir eğitim araştırması yöntemi olarak kabul görmüştür. Bireysel araştırma yansıtıcı öğretim eylem araştırması geleneğinden gelmektedir. Ancak, araştırmacının kendisini farklı bağlamlarda araştırmanın merkezinde konumlandırması ve bunu daha yenilikçi ve yaratıcı metotlarla yapması bireysel araştırmayı diğer yaklaşımlardan ayırmaktadır. Bireysel araştırma yürüten bir öğretmen hem araştırmacı hem de araştırılan konu olarak ikili bir rol üstlenir. Bu çalışmada da araştırmacı kendisini öğrencilerinin ve çalışma arkadaşlarının görüşlerine dayanarak incelemiştir. Çalışma, araştırmacının bir öğretmen olarak güçlü ve zayıf yanlarını belirlemek ve inandığı değerlerle öğretim uygulamalarının ne kadar tutarlı olduğunu öğrencilerinin görüşlerine dayanarak ortaya koymayı amaçlamıştır. Bu amaçla, araştırmacı kişisel deneyim metotlarına dayalı öyküleyici bir bireysel araştırma desenlemiştir. Çalışma Anadolu Üniversitesi Yabancı Diller Yüksekokulu'nda 2017-2018 Bahar döneminde araştırmacının kendi öğrencileriyle gerçekleştirilmiştir. Araştırma bulguları beklenen sonuçların yanında araştırmacının kendisi ve öğretmenlik uygulamaları hakkında bazı şaşırtıcı sonuçlar ortaya koymuştur.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Bireysel araştırma, yansıtıcı öğretim, kişisel deneyim metotları, öğretmen eğitimi.

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* Correspondence: Anadolu University, Turkey, e-mail: balan@anadolu.tr ORCID: 0000-0001-5057-0915

Introduction

Self-study as a qualitative research methodology has gained importance in teacher education in the last three decades (Bullock & Christou, 2016; Crowe, 2010; Loughran, 2004, Samaras & Freese, 2009). Being relatively a new research methodology, it has formalized its research rules and ethics (Connelly & Clandinin, 1990; LaBoskey, 2004; Samaras, 2011) and is now accepted as a respected research methodology (Garbett & Ovens, 2016). Self-study emerged as a methodology among teachers and teacher educators with the recognition of their teaching practices, contexts and selves as research problems. Prior to 1980's, teachers and teacher educators did not see their practices and their "selves" as research areas (Samaras & Freese, 2009). After late 1980's, teachers and teacher educators focused on trying to better understand their learning and teaching environments by closely and systematically examining their own practices in order to enhance both their teaching and students' learning (Loughran, 2004). Some researchers at that time began to question the common concepts and ideas on educational studies specifically about method, practice and source of information. This led them to ask questions about whether their own experiences can be a source of knowledge or whether the academicians who do not have such experiences are the only source of knowledge (Pinnegar & Hamilton, 2009). Self-study approach emerged at a time when a group of teacher educators and researchers combined the two worlds – "*the world of practice and the world of scientific research on education*" (Korthagen, 1995, cited in Loughran, 2004, p.8).

Beside the paradigm shift in educational studies during 1980s, another important factor affecting the development of self-study research methodology was reflective practice. In fact, the notion of reflection dates back to Dewey (1910, 1916). What he calls as reflection in teaching and reflective thinking evolved into reflective practitioner (Shön, 1987) over time. Teachers as reflective practitioners began to critically reflect on their practice and take the roles of teachers as researchers studying on their teaching (Glasswell & Ryan, 2017). According to Crowe & Dinkelman (2010) the confluence of self-study, reflective practice and reflective practitioner is not a coincidence since these three movements rely on some similar ideas such as effective teaching, teacher development and ways leading to enhanced teaching even though there are some differences between them. These researchers adapted some qualitative methods like personal histories and narrative inquiries to study their practices (Samaras & Freese, 2009) and they started to employ similar methods to systematize their data collection and analysis procedures, which contributed to establishing a foundation for the self-study methodology. Thus, self-study research methodology has its roots in qualitative research paradigm (Allender, 2004; Cole & Knowles, 2004; Graig, 2009; LaBoskey, 2004; Tidwell, Heston & Fitzgerald, 2009).

Self-study is defined in different terms by different researchers. Some (Pinnegar & Hamilton, 2009; Samaras & Freese, 2011) define self-study as the study of one's "self" by the researcher's himself or herself (teacher/teacher educator). Some also emphasize the systematic data collection procedures and tools (Brandenburg, 2008; Kaplan, 2002; Koster & Berg, 2014) in order to better understand the practices and gain insights regarding teaching and students' learning. Others (Loughran, 2005; Samaras, 2011; Zeichner, 2005a) on the other hand stress that self-study is a source of knowledge for educational studies informing teacher educators about learning and teaching. Samaras (2011) describes self-study as "*a personal, systematic inquiry situated within one's own teaching context that requires critical and collaborative reflection in order to generate knowledge*" (p. 10). But it is not a simple reflection on day-to-day practices. Self-study takes reflective practice further. As Dinkelman (2003) puts it self-study is

“intentional and systematic inquiry into one’s own practice” (p.8) and this definition differs self-study from reflection in terms of degree, structure and design, and discipline of inquiry (Crowe & Dinkelman, 2010). Researchers examine their own practices in order to confront their pedagogical implementations to improve their practices and teaching contexts. Crowe & Dinkelman (2010) suggest that self-study is a qualitative methodology for teachers and teacher educators to be informed about their teaching and as a result to transform into a better practitioner at their jobs. Researchers systematically questions-their practices for improvement, which is the result of ontological stance of the researcher. As Pinnegar & Hamilton (2009, p.v.) put it *“self-study is a stance toward understanding the world”*. This ontological stance of the researchers also manifests itself in the meaning-making processes of the lived experiences. In so doing, self-study researchers become aware of the impact of their personal beliefs and ideas on their daily practices and they study themselves to reveal those beliefs and ideas for the improvement of their practices.

Although the definitions of self-study vary, almost all researchers agree on some certain characteristics of self-study. First, self-study is a collaborative and interactive inquiry (Brandenburg, 2008; LaBoskey, 2004; Pinnegar & Hamilton, 2009; Russell, 2005; Samaras, 2011; Samaras & Freese, 2009). As opposed to the label suggests, self-study researchers interact and collaborate with others and this helps them to see things from different perspectives. With respect to this, “critical friends” (Costa & Kallick, 1993) are an important component of self-study. Critical friends are defined as those who are trusted colleagues criticizing the teaching practices of the researcher for improvement (Costa & Callick, 1993; Samaras, 2011). They ask provocative questions and therefore, provide the researcher with different perspectives. Self-study researchers collaborate with their trusted colleagues and their critical friends (Costa & Kallick, 1993) and also with their students as well. This is what LaBaskey (2004) defines as “reframing”, seeing things from different people’s eyes. Second, self-study research is personally situation-oriented and contextualized (Brandenburg, 2008; Pinnegar & Hamilton, 2009, Samaras, 2011; Zeichner, 2005a). By providing rich personal data about the contexts in which the research is conducted, readers can have a better understanding of the reasons of certain behaviors and situations occurring in teaching-learning environments. This also helps reveal the tacit practices and beliefs of teachers-researchers regarding education. Besides, self-study is improvement-oriented (LaBoskey, 2004; Samaras, 2011). Doing self-study research helps researchers improve their teaching and teaching contexts, which results in improved learning of students and improved institutions. Finally, self-study is a systematic qualitative research process (LaBoskey, 2004; Pinnegar & Hamilton, 2009; Samaras, 2011). Self-study requires a transparent explanation of research processes by employing diverse methods and providing rich and honest evidence.

Methodology

This inquiry draws on self-study research methodology. The methods employed in self-study methodology might differ from autoethnography, autobiography, dialogue, literary and artistic approach to personal experience methods (Coia & Taylor, 2008; Connelly & Clandinin, 1990; East, Fitzgerald & Heston, 2009; Griffiths, Malcolm & Williamson, 2009; Kitchen, 2008; Mitchell, Weber & Pithouse, 2009; Rosa & Chan, 2009; Pinnegar & Hamilton, 2009). All these methods also vary about the extent to which they focus whether more on examining personal and psychological self or on personal practice (Crowe & Dinkelman, 2010). However, as Bullough

& Pineegar (2001) and Crowe & Dinkelman, (2010) suggest that there should be a balance between the two, namely personal self and personal practice. I also took a position in between the two ends of the continuum in this self-study inquiry and therefore, my focus was equally both on my “self” and practice. Another significant component of self-study is that even if it employs a rich repertoire of qualitative methods (Craig, 2009; Coia, 2016; Crowe & Dinkelman, 2010; Pinnegar & Hamilton, 2009; Tidwell, Heston & Fitzgerald, 2009) “narration and dialog” usually sit at its core (Pinnegar & Hamilton, 2009; Craig, 2009) as I used in this narrative inquiry. So, regardless of the methods used, one way or the other there is one form of narration in self-study methodology. Besides, as in other qualitative methods, self-study calls for “*apparency, verisimilitude, and transferability as possible criteria*” (Connelly & Clandinin, 1990, p. 7). For this reason, instead of explanations, self-study employs meaning-making and interpretation. Trustworthiness is accepted as the basic rule rather than the validity and reliability in self-study research methodology (Graig, 2009; La Boskey, 2004).

However, self-study differs from other traditional methods since it uses similar qualitative methods in different contexts and also because of the interwoven roles of teachers, teacher educators and researchers. LaBoskey (2004) identified five principle characteristics of self-study and they serve as the reference point for the trustworthiness (Hawley, 2010). According to these distinguishing characteristics, self-study research 1) is self-initiated and self-focused, 2) is improvement-aimed, 3) is interactive and collaborative, 4) employs multiple, primarily qualitative methods, and 5) defines validity as a validation process based on trustworthiness. My research design also seems to meet the requirements of self-study methodology since I conducted it intentionally and I am the one who did the research and who was studied. My purpose was to improve my teaching and my teaching context with the collaboration and interaction with my students and colleagues. While doing this, I employed a variety of qualitative methods I explain below, which is also one of the strengths of self-study and LaBoskey (2004) states that this is the underlying characteristic of self-study methodology. As for the validation, the readers deem the validity and reliability of the self-study research by the exemplars that the researcher provides and they should be sufficient enough to depict the research context and be meaningful and trustworthy for the readers. Besides, those exemplars should show triangulation for what LaBoskey (2004) calls “*exemplar-based validation*”. I also present exemplars from a variety of sources which can be seen below to support the trustworthiness of my self-study research.

I conducted this self-study research at Anadolu University, School of Foreign Languages in the Spring Term of 2017-2018 academic year. The participants of the study were my own students studying English at the intensive English language preparatory program.

Research Questions

The research questions I posed for this self-study research are as follows:

- 1) a) How do my students perceive me as a teacher based on their first impressions?
b) Do the perceptions of my students towards me change over the course of semester?
- 2) What are my strengths and weaknesses as a teacher?
- 3) Do I teach the way I really preach?

Data Collection Tools and Process

I collected the data in this narrative self-study research through a variety of personal experience methods (Kitchen, 2008, 2017; Freese, 2005). Personal experience methods enable researchers to unveil the underlying reasons and practices through narrative inquiry and help see the rest of the iceberg rather than solely the tip of it. The personal experience methods of data gathering I deployed in my self-study inquiry are as follows:

- 1- Freewrites (Brandenburg, 2008),
- 2- Critical incidents as data gathering (Brandenburg, 2008; Brandenburg & McDonough, 2017),
- 3- Personal philosophy of education (Kitchen, 2008) and
- 4- Metaphors (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980; Saban, 2006; Sowder, Leavitt, Smith and Tanase, 2013).

Freewrites

“Freewrites” are a type of reflective writing to elicit feedback and response from students on an open-ended basis (Brandenburg, 2008). I employed two types of freewrites in this narrative self-study. The first one is what I call “*first impressions*”, which I requested my students to express their feelings and thoughts about me and my teaching based on their first impressions after the first week’s class. Apart from the first week impressions, I also asked my students to write their experiences about what it feels like being my student two times in that particular semester, one in the middle and one at the end of the semester. To this end, I followed the same procedure with almost the same prompt as Brandenburg (2008) employed. I requested my students to respond the prompt “*Please take ten minutes and write about your experiences (feelings / thoughts) you have had in my lessons so far.*”, which is a data gathering method in which I combined with “Personal Philosophy of Teaching”, another personal experience method I explain below.

Critical Incidents

Brandenburg defines critical incident as “...is that of an interaction, usually verbal, which is regarded by participants as critical and initiates a form of reflective practice (2008, p.36). As Brandenburg (2008), Martinez (2008), Murray & Male (2005) and Zeichner (2005b) suggest most of the work that teacher educators are engaged with is not seen by others and is not understood necessarily. So analyzing critical incidents might help researchers to reflect on and have deeper insights of the influential moments and actions forming and affecting their teaching practices and values. Reflecting on the practices and as Martinez (2008, p.42) puts it “*to articulate the tacit underpinnings of teaching*” is the foundation to comprehend teachers’ practices. For the analysis of the critical incidents occurred in my classes in order to better understand my teaching and be helpful my prospective students, I was inspired by Brandenburg’s (2008, p.37) “critical incidents questionnaire”, from which I used two questions that I adapted: “*What was the activity you enjoyed the most / or the activity you were involved the most? Why did you feel this way?*” and “*What were the activities or moments you moved away*

from the lesson most this week? Why did you feel this way?" since I created a different feedback and response form for my data collection purposes.

Personal Philosophy of Education

While thinking on how I could test whether I teach the way I think I preach, I came across with another personal experience method in my readings and I thought it might serve its best to answer my research question. According to Connelly and Clandinin (1988, p. 66) "*Personal philosophy is a way one thinks about oneself in teaching situations,*" Kitchen (2008) states while personal philosophies are shaped by our past experiences, they are "*situated within the present and social context of the classroom.*" (p.45). She also asserts that scrutinizing a teacher's beliefs and values through personal philosophy enables her to better understand and helps reconstruct the meaning in her teaching practices. By holding a personal philosophy and sharing it with my students as Kitchen (2008, p.47) puts it, "*I was holding myself accountable to the standards I set for myself*". So the first question in my weekly data collection tool I present below was "*What were the areas/points that you think contradict with your teacher's teaching philosophy?*".

Metaphors

After its first articulation by Lakoff & Johnson (1980), metaphors have been used in qualitative studies and self-studies as well (MacKinnon & Bullock, 2016; Saban, 2006; Sowder et. al., 2012). Metaphors are mental constructs which shape both our thoughts and actions (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980; Saban, 2006) and might help us turn the invisible into visible by reflecting on and examining our actions in practice with various lenses (East, Fitzgerald & Heston, 2009).

Metaphors can be used as for data collection for various purposes including but not limited to perceptions of students towards teachers and teacher practices, revealing inconsistencies between teachers' beliefs and practices and for reflective and transformative learning (Saban, 2006; Sowder et. al., 2012). As for data collection methodology, I also employed metaphors to find out how my students perceived me as a teacher in terms of my personality, teaching practices and performance and as part of my philosophy of education, to document whether I taught the way I preached. Thus, the last prompt on my data collection was "*How would you describe your teacher with a metaphor or caricature?*"

Analysis of the First Week Impressions

In the first week of the study, I asked my students to write down their first impressions about me and my teaching style. The reason for this was to be able to see if there would be any positive or negative changes in my students' first impressions and opinions and to analyze the reasons of these changes over time during the course of the semester. To this end, my first question specific to the first week's feedback form was "*What are your first impressions about my teaching performance and behaviors?*" Without any exceptions, all of my students expressed positive thoughts. The themes that emerged regarding the question mentioned above are as follows:

1-An Energetic Teacher: Almost all of my students emphasized this topic. They stated that I was always full of energy and active and I helped them continuously during the lesson. They also

added that I was as enthusiastic as the one who just started his/her career and it was a very productive and instructive lesson for them. Below are some of their responses on this theme:

“He is energetic and keeping the class alive.” (student 2)

“His energy is really high and positive...I believe I will benefit from his energy.”
(student 0625)

“He is someone who is putting great effort.” (student 11)

2- Good-Humored but Disciplined: The second mostly stated theme by my students was about my personality trait. They thought that despite my serious and strict appearance, I was a very cheerful and understanding teacher for my students. The following excerpts are related to this theme.

“He is cheerful ...is a teacher with certain rules.” (student 5)

“Friendly, warm, affectionate.” (student 6)

“I thought he was a strict teacher, but proved me to be wrong with ~~by~~ his mimes and speech.” (student 1856)

3- Knowledgeable / Well-Equipped: Some of my students evaluated me as a knowledgeable and well-equipped teacher based on their first impressions. Below are some responses regarding this theme.

“He has a good command of the subject, a teacher using his body language well and motivating.” (Student 02)

“I think he is a well-equipped teacher because of his elocution, the way he approaches to students and the way he teaches.” (Student 0625)

“To me, he is a great teacher. His teaching style and the way he cares students are very good.” (Student 1)

4- Others: Apart from three main themes aforementioned above, my students wrote that they liked me as a person and the way I delivered the lesson. They also stated that they were happy because I did not compel them to speak in the lesson unless they did not want to; I encouraged them not to be afraid of making mistakes; and I was respectful to all in the classroom.

Analysis of the Freewrites, Weekly Responses and Metaphors

I started the data analysis process by scrutinizing the freewrites. In the first freewrite, 16 students responded the prompt (“Please take ten minutes and write about your experiences (feelings / thoughts) you have had in my lessons so far.”), but in the second freewrite, 10 of these 16 students responded the same prompt at the end of the semester because some of them dropped the school due to absenteeism and/or academic failure. This seemed to be just the surface reason, but the deep reason I discovered was much more unsettling about which I explain in detail in the following sections.

I can firmly say that I performed a consistent teaching approach throughout the semester based on my students' responses. Both the "first week impressions" I got at the beginning of the semester and the "mid and end-term freewrites" greatly emphasized the similar subjects. As you may recall, the themes emerged from the first week impressions of the students were as 1) *an energetic*, 2) *good humored but disciplined*, and 3) *knowledgeable / well-equipped teacher*. My students' responses mainly rotated around these themes. The mid/end-term freewrites of the students also revealed nearly the same themes.

After I had collected all my data, I matched the first (mid-term) and (end-term) second freewrites of my students. My objective was to find out whether there was a change in the thoughts of a particular individual and as a consequence in the thoughts of whole class towards my teaching practices. The analysis of my students' first and second freewrites revealed four broad themes and I explain them below.

1- The first broad theme was "*dedication*". My students stated that I put great effort to teach them in the best way and I never gave up. They expressed that I always helped them both in and out of the class and they appreciated this. The following excerpts show my students' views about "dedication" theme.

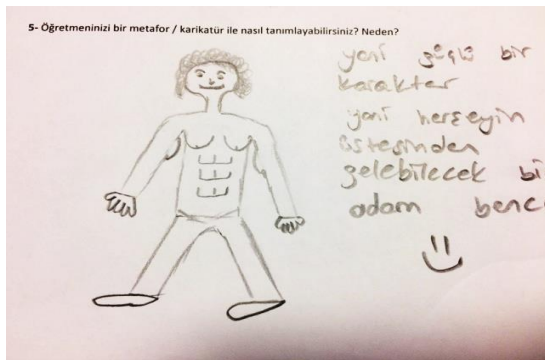
"I think you really do thoroughly... You sacrifice your breaks when we share our problems with you and I think this is great. You will be a teacher I will always remember with love and respect after my graduation." (student 277).

"You try to make the use and best of every moment in the lesson. Therefore, you are one of the scarce teachers doing this job." (Student 03).

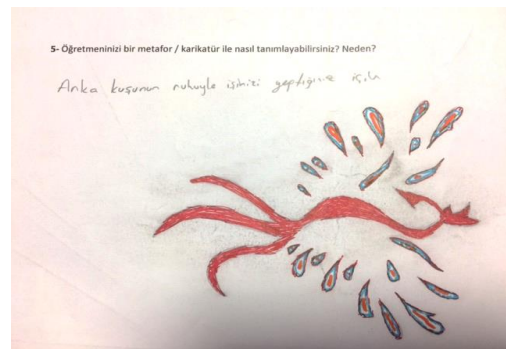
My students kept on giving metaphors such as "*energetic*" or "*full of energy*" in their weekly responses, as well. The following are some samples from their metaphors and caricatures throughout the semester in response to the question "*How would you describe your teacher with a metaphor or caricature?*"

"You are like a very energetic lion." (Student 05)

"Our teacher is such an energy bomb" (Student 557)



Student 01



Student 16

The first caricature with strong muscles on the left does not show my true appearance in deed and my students do not have chance to see me as they depicted in the caricature, but instead I believe this drawing represents my energy and effort that I put while delivering my lessons. The caption in the caricature also implies this. It says “*a strong character who can cope with anything*”. What is more, there are some other drawings and caricatures similar to the first one showing me with muscles or there are some drawings and representations that look like Superman logo. The second pictorial representation on the right hand side is the bird Phoenix. I had not figured out what it represented about me until I read the explanation over the representation. It says “*because you do your job with the soul of Phoenix bird*”. The only thing I knew about the bird Phoenix at that time was that it is a mythical bird that is reborn from its ashes and it therefore never dies. It was after I had explored the bird in detail that I could figure out what my student wanted to tell me with his pictorial representation. Although there are some differences about the story of the Phoenix in different cultures, they mostly share some features in common. In most cultures it represents the power to do good deeds for people and it always monitors the territory where it lives and protects the living creatures in it without getting or expecting any help. It also symbolizes the grace, virtue and power (mythicalrealm.com/creatures/phoenix.html, 26.09.18). I do now understand that my student wanted to express his gratitude to me with this representation. Along with the representation he writes “*because you do your job with the soul of the Phoenix*” probably implies that I tried to put all my power and soul into my teaching without expecting anything from my students and I always wish nothing but the best for my students. There is another interpretation that I can come up with now. I can vividly remember the first day I met with this class and this particular student said that this was his second university and he had to drop out his first university because of not academic failure but some personal problems. In a sort of way, this new life in his second university with the contribution of my lessons might have been his rebirth like Phoenix. Therefore, he might have associated me with the Phoenix bird. Of course, these are my interpretations based on some clues he provided; however, it is for sure that he was really content with my teaching performance as were the others.

2- The second theme that my students emphasized was the way I encouraged them to improve their “*speaking skills*” and this had a positive impact on them. As a matter of fact, I had not expected such a result as a person who do not like talking much outside the classroom in his daily life. It would be quite an irony for my wife who constantly complains about my silence. However, most of my students wrote that the way I delivered the lessons and the way I planned and implemented the learning activities guided them to use the language. Apart from the moments in which I shortly explained some grammatical points in their mother tongue just for clarification, I always spoke in English and this encouraged them to speak in English too, which also led them to gain high self-confidence. The following excerpts presented below reflect some of their views regarding high self-confidence and improvement in their speaking skills:

“I understood everything even if you usually spoke in English. This gained me self-confidence and helped me focus on the lesson.” (Student 06)

“I’m in the opinion that I have developed myself mostly in speaking and writing through your lessons and I feel more courageous in doing my assignments and in speaking.” (Student 0625).

“Your biggest contribution has been the speaking skill.” (Student 05)

My students' perceived development in their speaking skills reveals itself not only in their mid and end-term freewrites, but also in their weekly responses to the question "*What was the activity you enjoyed the most / or the activity you were involved the most? Why did you feel this way?*". Most of the responses given to this item in the weekly data collection tool were about how speaking activities helped them develop their speaking skills, how those activities helped them gain self-confidence and/or how much they liked participating in those activities. Below are some responses from different students in different weeks:

"Speaking because I really think they (speaking activities) serve the purpose... I wish you did the all the speaking parts." (Student 05) Week 02

"It was the speaking that stuck me to the lesson as usual." (Student 05) Week 03

"Speaking...I like it because it is improvised." (Student 21) Week 10

3- The third major theme emerged from the responses was "*being a classroom actor*". The way I used my body language, mimes and gestures while teaching was one of the subjects they expressed gladly. Appropriate use of mimes and gestures along with my tone of voice enabled them to understand the lesson better and at times this created an interest in listening to the lesson even if they did not want to or they did not feel well. This is also a good case to show how we as teachers change identities during the lesson. Just like an actor acting different roles on stage, we as teachers play different roles in the classroom and behave differently than we do in our daily lives. I can give myself as an example to this phenomenon as a person who does not like talking much and who is not known as funny and humorous. On the other hand, I am also a teacher figure who encourages his students to speak without hesitation and entertains them in lessons. The following excerpts below support my views:

"... you convey the meaning with your mimes very well." (Student 37)

"I have enjoyed participating in the lessons even at my most tired and unhappy moments. What I like most about you is your delivering lessons by enacting..." (Student 02)

"I sometimes find myself listening to and participating in the lesson even if I don't want to." (Student 03)

Besides the excerpts above, one of my students depicted me as an actor performing on the stage as can be seen below. Even if she did not write any explanations for this pictorial depiction, her previous response to the 3rd question "*What was the activity you enjoyed the most / or the activity you were involved the most? Why did you feel this way?*" can be a justification for this view as she liked speaking activities and the way I conveyed the meaning and delivered the lessons. She states;

"Speaking as usual. Speaking is hard but trying and achieving it feels good." (Student 01, Week 07)



Student 01

4- The final theme my students liked academically was the way I delivered the lesson, specifically “*grammar subjects*”. Short Turkish explanations I made at times, the connections I made between the two languages and the extra example sentences I prepared related to the subject seemed to help them learn the subjects better. In fact, foreign language literature has long supported the limited use of mother tongue in grammar teaching and therefore, I have taught in this fashion for a long time to ensure comprehension. Nevertheless, I was feeling uneasy and I felt as if I was betraying my students and my job because I am supposed to speak in English all the time and I need to be a model for my students as an English instructor and I am paid for this. This dichotomy whether to use native tongue or not had been hassling me. However, I felt reassured by their feedback and responses when I learned that they liked this kind of teaching. Some of the responses showing my students’ contentedness concerning teaching style are as follows:

“The way you teach lesson is just as it should be. You speak in English and Turkish accordingly.” (Student 318)

“You give examples to grammar subjects enabling us to grasp and I think this is great for a student.” (Student 11)

“Thanks to your teaching style during grammar subjects, we could easily understand even difficult subjects.” (Student 04)

With regard to teaching style, my students came up with interesting and creative metaphors, which made me quite happy. Below are some of them:

“snow globe: he is clothing me as if he is snowing his knowledge.” (Student 0625)

“candle: as it melts it gets sticky. Similarly, you teach with such a style that knowledge bases stick to my head and become permanent.” (Student 04)

My content teaching was not the only component that they benefited from my teaching. They were also happy with the world knowledge since I informed or gave them extra information about different subjects depending on the topic we were studying at that time. They stated that they benefited from my knowledge and experience on any topic during our studies or conversations about the lesson topics and they expressed their gratitude in different forms. In my opinion, a teacher not only should teach academic subjects effectively but also should inform his

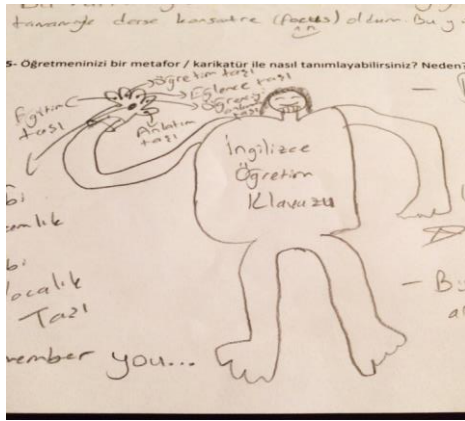
/ her students about the current world issues, should be a consultant or guide when needed and should be a model in every walk of life and it seems I have been helpful to my students in this sense to a certain extent. Below are some samples from their metaphors:

“knowledge machine” (Student 45)

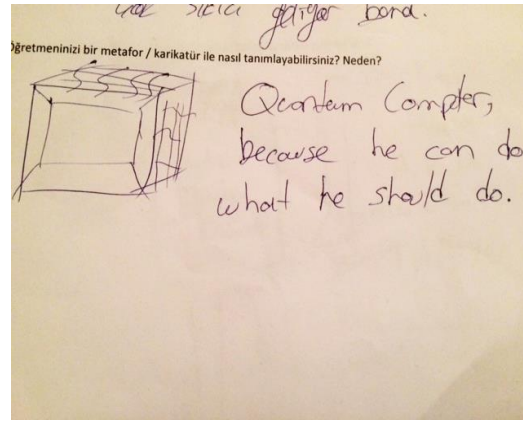
“Rainbow! He saves the lesson from boredom by talking about his own life and other things and by associating them with lesson topics.” (Student 0625)

“He is like Google because we are continuously learning new things.” (Student 33)

Besides their metaphors and weekly responses related to content teaching and world knowledge, my students expressed their views through pictorial representations, as well. Below are some of their drawings depicting me as a knowledgeable person in their views:



Student 06



Student 11

In the drawing on the left, my student defines me as “English Teaching Guide”. My right hand is in the air and each finger represents a different feature of my teaching. On each finger is there a spot which is probably a ring with a stone on it because each finger has a name with “stone”. From left to right they are “education stone, teaching stone, fun stone, understanding student stone, and expressing stone”. With this drawing my student wanted to express my teaching style and profile. In fact, it is such a simple representation, but it conveys many ideas about my teaching according to his views. The student drew this representation in the 12th weekly feedback form and it was her final view about my teaching, as was The Phoenix bird representation shown above, which also makes it more meaningful for me. Similarly, the computer drawing on the right above probably depicts my knowledge and abilities. My student’s English caption next to the drawing saying “because he can do what he should do” reflects both what he expects from a teacher and his personal opinion of me as a teacher. His written statement supported with a drawing shows that I met his expectations throughout the semester and depicting me as a powerful computer indicates that I did my job properly without causing any problems or difficulty for him just like a good computer can handle difficult jobs just with a click in seconds without posing any technical problems for the person using it.

As can be seen from the extracts given above, my students’ mid and end-term responses about my teaching and my personality traits they think I have are similar to their first impressions they

wrote at the beginning of the semester. Most of the responses are about being an *energetic teacher, being good at grammar teaching, being good at developing students' speaking skills and being an actor* in class. In a similar fashion, students' initial impressions and ideas were "*energetic, good-humored but disciplined, and knowledgeable and well-equipped*", which are in line with each other in essence. The only difference is "*being disciplined or prescriptive*" which was mentioned in the first week's responses and metaphors. It was probably because of my conscious efforts to impart a message in order to look professional with my appearance, word choice, and controlled behaviors and the classroom rules I want them to obey and my expectations from my students. Besides, I usually dress formally in my first lessons, behave consistently and stick to the classroom rules. As a matter of fact, I am well aware and experienced enough to know that teachers cannot earn their students' respect with their appearance or cannot establish authority by looking serious; however, it seems it is a long-standing habit of mine coming from my novice years. In the first years of my teaching career I was in my early twenties and I was not very older than my students who were generally young adults in those days. I also remember my school director who used to monitor especially young staff's turnout. But now, in my early forties, it is ridiculous to try to look professional by my outlook and gain my students love and respect with my appearance. I have already experienced and discovered that it has to do with many other factors including but not limited to human psychology, pedagogy, content knowledge and classroom management techniques. As long as you respect and value them as individuals with all their weaknesses and strengths, accept every single of them as a contributor to the classroom atmosphere with all their varying backgrounds, prepare properly for the lessons, spare time for their academic and non-academic problems as a knowledgeable, experienced and elder person and show interest to their ideas, you will most likely create a mutual respect and rapport rather than an artificial and constrained relationship.

Critical Friends' Views on My Students' Metaphors

In this study, as part of the collaborative characteristic of self-study as mentioned in the introduction, my critical friends were four of my colleagues I work closely. After I collected and analyzed the data I obtained from the "first impressions, mid and end-term feedbacks of students, and responses given to the weekly feedback form along with metaphors and drawings, I asked my critical friends to analyze the metaphors written by my students. To this end, I firstly asked them to scrutinize the metaphors individually and put them into categories. So, I put all the metaphors written weekly into a list and sent it to my four critical friends. At their convenience, those critical friends got together to share their emerging categories. For this meeting, I had already asked them to compare their categories and agree on the common ones as a group based on their individual categories. I also requested them to film this meeting for further analysis and evidence and they all agreed. The purpose of such a procedure as part of data analysis was to see whether my interpretations from the data were different from theirs and to get more objective results. This would also give me an opportunity to analyze the probable differences and their reasons. During the meeting, one of the critical friends took the meeting notes and brought me the results after the meeting. After comparing and discussing on the metaphors, my critical friends determined three main categories which are *subject-matter knowledge, personality traits, and teaching skills*. The first category is subject-matter knowledge because there are many metaphors representing the knowledge I have in terms of content and world knowledge. The second category is personality traits since most of the metaphors describe me as a strong, energetic, mild, humoristic person and also some are about my physical appearance and turnout.

The final category that my critical friends agreed on is my teaching skills. Because there are many metaphors implying the way I teach and my philosophy in teaching such as teacher as a “*guide, advisor, pathfinder or lighthouse*”, my critical friends decided to put them under “teaching skills” category, which can be called as pedagogical knowledge and skills. Pleasingly, the categories I found and the categories my friends determined are similar to each other, with only a slight difference. Mine (my dedication to teaching, my teaching style in grammar and speaking lessons and being a classroom actor) are more specific, but theirs are broader categories.

While collecting my data, I recognized that the number of metaphors my students wrote in their weekly feedback forms started to decrease. In some weeks, even though they continued to respond to the other items, some of them did not write anything for the metaphor item. Some of them frankly stated that “*Sorry teacher! I couldn't come up with a new metaphor this week*”. Some started to write similar metaphors. My critical friends noticed this, as well. In their discussion on my metaphors, they thought that I was consistent in my teaching, attitudes and in my other practices and that must have been the reason why the number of metaphors decreased or the students started to write or draw similar representations. Hearing this from my critical friends was a relief for me because I was a little bit uneasy about whether my students got bored with responding to my feedback form or whether they were not caring giving feedback anymore. I knew if it was so, they would not have responded to the other items, but I simply could not help thinking this way.

As a result, finding or interpreting nearly the same categories from the metaphors with my critical friends, finding similar views and being able to support and justify them from the mid and end-term feedbacks and from the responses given to the other items in the feedback forms show that I had been consistent in my teaching in that particular class throughout the semester. I can also say this from the responses of my students to the first question in the weekly feedback forms. The first question on my weekly feedback form was “*What were the areas/points that you think contradict with your teacher's teaching philosophy?*” and from the first impression responses I explain above. In my first lesson, after getting to know each other, I shared my teaching philosophy with them not only as part of this self-study research but also for other students who might not volunteer to participate in the study and told them to warn me without any hesitation if I would violate and contradict with my own teaching philosophy. To this end, I asked them to make a copy of my teaching philosophy from the slide I was reflecting on the board. As might be expected from the generation Z, they did not write it on their notebooks but instead took the slides' photo with their smart phones, which was fine for me as long as they would keep it.

My Teaching Philosophy

My teaching philosophy that I shared with my students is as follows:

- I will turn the classroom into a learning community.
- I will equally give importance to individual and group work learning activities.
- I will create an atmosphere of mutual love and respect and I will be a model for it.

- My students won't be afraid of making mistakes.
- As I expect from my students, I will also be successful and plan and implement the lessons in the most effective way.
- I will provide my students with instructive and guiding feedback.
- I will employ the classroom and school rules fairly for everybody.

Keeping the above philosophy in mind, my students answered the question “*What were the areas/points that you think contradict with your teacher’s teaching philosophy?*” every week. Gladly, most of my students did not mention any contradicting points concerning my teaching philosophy in my lessons throughout the semester. I could say that I taught as I preached. Regarding this, my students came up with interesting responses. Below are some excerpts:

“MY TEACHER, THERE ISN'T REALLY SUCH A POINT” (in capital letters!)
(Student 6, week 7)

“The only contradicting point is that he doesn't know he is the king.” (Student 6, week 12)

“There is no contradicting point, on the contrary, his teaching philosophy has almost been established in the classroom.” (Student 0625, week 5)

There were very few negative feedbacks about my teaching philosophy, and they are as follows:

“Speaking in native language in the classroom.” (Student 8, week 8)

“Some more writing and speaking activities would be better.” (Student 16, week 8)

“He just sometimes speak very fast and this makes it difficult to understand.” (Student 318, week 3)

I Can't Be That Good and I'm not Indeed

Conducting self-study is not “*narcissism*” (Richards, 2016, p.166), “*self-congratulatory*” (Wood, 2016, p.127) nor it is for boasting, but “*epistemological reflection; requires a certain amount of courage and a willingness to confront less heroic aspects of oneself*” (Richards, 2016, p.171). Since the beginning of my career, I have always asked my students to evaluate my teaching at the end of the semester in different ways. In the last lessons after I have graded all the assessment components, I mostly request them to give me verbal feedback about my teaching specifically focusing on my negative teaching practices or personality because in a democratic and transparent classroom I want everybody to express their ideas and also be aware of what their colleagues think about my teaching and how they evaluate me as a teacher. In most cases, I ask them to tell me just my negative sides as a teacher, but they know that telling negative comments will not do them any harm in terms of assessment. In some years, I have asked my students to write their opinions regarding my teaching on a piece of paper without writing their names, too. However, I have observed that in-class discussions with students after they hear each

other's comment individually reveal more reliable and sincere feedback from students. At first, if they are not accustomed to evaluate their teachers face to face, which is almost always the case, they hesitate to make any comments or they tend to make positive comments. However, I insist on asking for giving negative comments so that I can learn them not to repeat in future years. After a few minutes of surprise and hearing a few colleagues' comments, they start talking, but again mostly focusing on positive sides. In fact, another reason apart from getting genuine feedback from my students on my teaching is that I want them to internalize democracy by expressing their thoughts kindly but fearlessly and to establish a criticism culture if they are not content with anything in their very first year of university lives.

So, until I conducted this self-study research, I was not a teacher who had not collected any data about his teaching or not a teacher who did not have any ideas about his teaching from his students' perspectives. I used to have an idea about what my students usually thought about me and I thought I knew my strengths and weaknesses as a teacher. However, this was the first time I collected such systematic data through which I was able to confirm the results with different sources and I would not imagine how deep it would allow me to delve into my "self".

Frankly speaking, while analyzing the data, seeing all those positive comments and my students' lovely compliments along with their appreciation made me burst with pride. What else can please us as teachers so greatly than our students' success and their gratitude to you? Nevertheless, some of the positive pedagogical comments my students mentioned were not new for me. But as a teacher with 20 years of teaching experience, some of my students' feedback and what I discovered about my "self" were really astonishing and it would probably have been impossible for me to reveal them if I had not carried out this self-study research. In the previous part, I talk about mainly heartwarming and pleasing results about me based on my students' feedback, but it also allowed me to see the other side of the coin, which I explain in the following section providing some background knowledge in order to make it more clear.

As an English teacher, I have taught at different programs at my university including preparatory language school in which students learn English to be able to follow the lessons in their departments where the medium of instruction is English and also English language teaching department training prospective teachers. I have mostly taught reading and writing courses and I was also the reading course coordinator at my institution for seven years. Therefore, I usually feel most comfortable in teaching those courses due to both my experience in teaching them and my previous positive feedback I have got from my students in teaching writing and reading. They have always appreciated the way I have incorporated the reading materials with the learning strategies I have taught. They have also been contended with my writing tips and my detailed written feedbacks to their writing drafts. To my surprise however, this time there were very few responses regarding teaching writing and there was not any single response mentioning reading.

Now, I have been teaching English at preparatory school for a long time and I have been working as a deputy director, which could be another reason the way I look like a serious person to my students at first sight. In our institution, we used to teach the language skills discretely until ten years ago. Apart from a core course, the other courses used to be taught as separate courses. But now, the trend in language teaching is integrated instruction of the skills, through which teachers follow an integrated course book and students do not specifically focus on the skill they are studying but on the whole lesson. One might say that this might be the reason why my students did not mention any writing or reading teaching skills as opposed to my previous

students. However, as I have showed some sample responses above, almost without any exception, all my students referred to my teaching skills in speaking and grammar and in doing so, they came up with specific justifications. This suggests three conclusions about me as a teacher. First, the students I taught previously, -the ones I mainly taught reading and writing- might have provided me with positive feedbacks because these were the skills they had knowledge about my content and pedagogical knowledge and ability. Supposing that because I was an average teacher in delivering those courses and my students' expectations were mainly met, I did not get some sort of negative feedbacks that I needed to reflect on seriously for my professional development. Second assumption is that I have already had good teaching skills in teaching speaking and grammar, but I have refrained myself in teaching them partly because of my perceived assumptions about my strengths and weaknesses and partly due to my lack of positive feedback and praise from my students on these two specific courses. Finally, my strengths and weaknesses may have changed over years. Unconsciously, I might have focused on improving those skills and areas that I thought I was not competent enough. With the help of the new instruction system, I have had to teach all the skills at the same time at an almost equal rate. In my institution, I am also the head of Professional Development Unit. As a unit, we are responsible for the professional development of the staff, therefore; we always think of ways for improving teaching competencies of teachers, which will lead to quality in teaching. In our in-house discussions and seminars on different topics, we as Unit take the lead, find alternative and useful ways to take the quality of education further. Most of the time, we try to be model for other colleagues. In retrospect, I might have reaped the benefits of conducting and organizing all these professional development programs and activities. These might have worked well for my professional development in terms of the skills I do not prefer to teach if I am asked, but also I must have overestimated my teaching skills in reading and writing. I found the answers again among my students' responses to their weekly feedback forms. Below are some responses to the 4th question "What were the activities or moments you moved away from the lesson most this week? Why did you feel this way?" in the weekly feedback forms:

"Readings because they bore me a bit. I know I need to read...but my energy falls down."
Student 5

"To be honest, I hate studying reading, but reading is very important for me. I moved away from the lesson during reading." (Student 5)

"Reading. I get bored while reading." (Student 11)

"Opinion essay. I lost my concentration and didn't focus on the lesson." (Student ?)

"Writing essay. I need to study at home." (Student 318)

"Writing. I hate writing." (Student 1)

As can be seen above, the moments or activities my students moved away from the lessons mostly were related to reading and writing activities. Even if the above responses were not directly about my teaching practices or skills, they nevertheless imply that I was not as competent enough as I was in teaching grammar and speaking. In spite of the fact that there were not many negative comments regarding reading and writing, I got really surprised since I have always thought that those two are the skills or subjects that I have been the most competent in teaching. Or have I really been? While I was viewing the weekly responses after I collected them

at the end of each week, I was unable to see the whole and true picture. I was seeing a single tree each time I looked at them rather than the entire forest. Many a time, I said to myself “*There is nothing worth mentioning about the responses this week*”, and I began to worry whether this research study would yield meaningful results about my “*self*”. I understand now that it was how smart of me that I collected the research data patiently and systematically. Otherwise, it would not be possible for me again to see the whole forest about my teaching. Just as I became so happy and flattered with my students’ feedbacks, positive comments and appreciation, the opposite responses -no matter how implicit or tacit they were- dropped back me to the earth. Apparently, I have had some misconceptions about my strengths and weaknesses and I have to reflect on them to find ways to become a better teacher and to continue my never-ending professional development journey.

Another self-awakening for me thanks to this self-study research is rather regrettable and upsetting since I am not able to restore it, but it will be one of my primary concerns in the following years. I recognized it while matching up the mid and end-term feedback forms of my students. Some students did not write end-term feedbacks because they were absent in that particular lesson in which I collected the data collection forms towards the end of the semester. It was not because of ordinary absenteeism. Those students had already dropped out when they understood that they would not be able to take the final exam. Simply, they had already failed. What really annoys me now is that they were subconsciously calling for help, but I was not able to discern it.

One of the positive comments of my students with regard to my teaching performance was my endless energy and effort that I put into my lessons; however, it was not enough to notice some students who were about to get lost, but sadly I could not help them, which weighs on my conscience, now. When I looked at some of the responses of those students, I once again lamented over their failure. I could have helped some of those students by sparing some more time and care. Little touches in the right time might have kept them focused and motivated or I could have nudged them further. However, I was not careful enough to interpret the deeper messages they conveyed, but instead I was content with the surface meaning. Below are some responses of my students to the 4th question “*What were the activities or moments you moved away from the lesson most this week? Why did you feel this way?*” in different weeks:

“Having too many unknown words in listening activities caused me to get disconnected from the lesson.” (Student ?, week 2)

“Some subjects were studied so fast that I couldn’t understand” (Student 16, week 3)

“One of my colleagues couldn’t ask the question in his head. The reason was that he was abstain from the teacher supposing that he would get angry because of not understanding such a simple thing” (Student 16, week 5)

“You studied the subjects so fast.” (Student lion, week 8)

“Every moment!” (Student 3, week 10)

“I sometimes move away from the lesson if I don’t understand it” (Student 33, week 3)

After I had read the responses presented above, I once again scrutinized the metaphors, which mostly described and depicted me positively and I understood that they had been waiting for me

to see. Of course, I read them both just after the lesson I had collected them and after I finished data collection process and I started data analysis. However, I just deemed them as responses on trivial matters written by very few students and they were not falling into any theme category. Below are some metaphors similar to the aforementioned responses:

“(Me) Like one of “*Game of Thrones*” characters, *Hodor*, because I sometimes feel as if I’m listening to meaningless things.” (Student X, week 2)

“Light velocity” (Student, lion, week 8)

“You have skipped the vocabulary revision.” (Student 9, week 8)

“I’m away from the lesson because of my personal problems.” (Student 3, week 7)

“You are like (a smart phone brand): quality, speed, robustness, technique” (Student 3, week 10)

“(the lesson) was like water again as usual, because the lesson slipped by like running water.” (Student 6, week 3)

“Like google. We are constantly learning new things.” (Student 33, week 3)

When you look at the responses and the metaphors given in different weeks by different students, you can easily see that they share two points in common; *my fast lesson delivery* and *students who needed extra help and interest*. The last three metaphors can even be seen as positive comments from a teacher’s perspective at first sight, but they also imply how fast the lessons were studied in their opinion or according to their pace. I work for a language school with other 150 teachers at four different language proficiency levels, which necessitates it to move in coordination with other colleagues all the time. Otherwise, some classes fall behind in following the syllabus and it might cause problems in terms of assessment. Needless to say, individual differences are taken into account while preparing the curriculum and it has also the flexibility to a certain extent; however, it is presumably not enough for some students and therefore, they need extra help and guidance. We as teachers in my institution all have office hours for tutoring, but some students do not usually use these hours effectively unless it is just before the exam week, at a time which is too short to catch up with all the subjects studied. What’s worse, let alone visiting our offices, some students do not even ask questions in the classroom or do not tell that they do not understand, which might be difficult for a teacher working for an intensive program to notice them in a classroom with 20-25 students. No matter how much I encourage my students to ask questions in the classroom and to visit me for tutoring at our mutual convenience, some still hesitate to do so. The reason for this may have to do with cultural backgrounds and old habits of our students. As in their first year of university life, they are probably continuing to behave the way they have done until they become university students. It is my assumption, but also my experience I have had from my primary and secondary education life that students do not necessarily see their teachers out of the classroom to ask questions or to ask for guidance on any topic and they do so especially in their first year at university.

But, am I putting the blame on the program and on the students? Definitely no! I have had my pedagogical lessons thanks to this self-study research. I have also learned how I could instantly incorporate such weekly responses into my teaching without waiting the end of data collection process since it is too late for some students. Just as I could not see the entire forest (my

teaching) while I was focusing on single trees (responses), I sometimes could not see the single trees (students) that needed extra water and enriched soil (tutoring and guidance) while I was trying to see the whole forest (my students' overall responses). Nonetheless, it seems I have started reaping the benefits of this experience. In the exact week I was writing these lines, one of my colleagues visited my class for peer-observation within the scope of professional development activities in my institution. We used to co-teach the same classroom. During the post-conferencing session, we conducted after the observation, she said *"I explored something about my teaching thanks to this observation. For example, I hadn't recognized that Zeynep was falling behind during the lesson compared to her classmates, but you dealt with her situation very well."* (personal communication, October, 15, 2018) This is just one example and it does not show that I am competent enough in noticing those students, but at least it is an indication that I am more aware of this type of students. What's more, making a colleague of mine more conscious about this issue and this type of students are another source of satisfaction for me.

So, as a teacher dexterity, it is not only seeing the entire forest or seeing a single tree, but it is to be able to do both of them in the right time. In other words, you should be able to read the responses you have obtained from your students to have an overall idea about your performance and your students' achievements so that you can do some adaptations if necessary. You should also be able to distinguish those who might need extra guidance and assistance before it is too late for them. It takes more meaning for us as teachers when we distinguish the ones who are silent or who have been suppressed for various reasons and win them by gaining their heart, which costs nothing but requires just some more attentiveness.

Conclusions and Implications

This self-study research has allowed me to examine my teaching practices from different lenses deploying self-experience methods including freewrites, critical incidents, personal philosophy of education and metaphors. Delving into the depths of the data I obtained has also helped me see my strengths and weaknesses in an invaluable fashion, which could be very difficult to identify via any other research methodology. One of the most striking lessons I have learned from this self-study research is that your own perception of "self", "your studied self" and "your -self- perceived by others can vary greatly. Examining your "self" and letting your "self" to the criticism of others through systematic inquiry unveil your hidden and invisible characteristics. Narrative inquiry taking into account the situation in which we work and our past and present experiences enable us to notice and better understand the reasons behind our pedagogical practices. Confronting (Brandenburg, McDonough and Moran, 2016) those pedagogical practices with the collaboration of our colleagues and students and reflection on action (Schön, 1987), which requires more than reflection but transformation for improvement will support us in our professional development and it will eventually result in better learning for our students. This is the ontological stance rooted in self-study.

Conducting this self-study research has also given me new insights in interpreting the research data. Incorporating various personal experience methods as data collection tools has provided me with rich qualitative data. This has led me to see some important issues that may be invisible in one or two data collection tools and I have been able to validate my conclusions from different sources. I have also had a better understanding of how to approach the data collected

weekly and at longer intervals and how to take immediate actions based on the knowledge I obtain.

To sum, we as teachers, teacher educators and prospective teachers should be more aware of the self-study methodology and the methods that we can employ in our qualitative studies. Depending on the inquiry purposes, self-study research methodology presents a wide variety of data collection methods and tools, some of which I have deployed and mentioned above. Introducing candidate teachers with self-study methodology during their pre-service education will help train them with strong research abilities, which could enable them to conduct their own research studies. Finally, teacher educators should also be more courageous and creative in using and applying different research methods and should be models both for their students and colleagues. At the same time, they should be courageous enough to confront the unpleasing discoveries about themselves and their teaching practices to contribute to enhanced teaching-learning settings.

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Author

Bülent Alan is currently working for Anadolu University, School of Foreign Languages as deputy director. He earned his MA in English language teaching and is now a PhD. candidate in Curriculum and Teaching. His research interests are in the areas of curriculum design, professional development of teachers, competency-based education, and self-study as a research methodology.

Contact

Bülent Alan, School of Foreign Languages,
Anadolu University, Turkey
e-mail:balan@anadolu.edu.tr