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STAKEHOLDER PERCEPTIONS ON AN INSTITUTIONAL CLASSROOM
OBSERVATION SYSTEM IN AN ENGLISH LANGUAGE PREPARATORY
PROGRAM OF A FOUNDATION UNIVERSITY IN TURKEY

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February 2021

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ABSTRACT

Stakeholder Perceptions on an Institutional Classroom Observation System in an English Language Preparatory Program of a Foundation University in Turkey

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M.A. in Teaching English as a Foreign Language

Supervisor: Asst. Prof. Dr. Tijen Akşit

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This case study investigated the perceptions of the main stakeholders on an institutional classroom observation system in the English language preparatory program of a foundation university in Ankara. In this regard, it explored how the stakeholders perceive the relationship between the institutional classroom observation system and English as a foreign language teachers' professional development in terms of teaching quality and teacher reflectivity. To this end, 44 EFL instructors, eight classroom observers, and three administrators took part in the study. The data were derived through a questionnaire with open-ended questions, semi-structured interviews, and the document regarding the system was utilized as another data source. The results of the content analysis revealed that each stakeholder group has their own perception on the observation system, and its relation to teaching quality and teacher reflectivity.

Keywords: Classroom observation system, teacher reflectivity, professional development, teaching quality.

ÖZET

Türkiye’de bir Vakıf Üniversitesi İngilizce Hazırlık Programında Uygulanan
Kurumsal Sınıf Gözlem Sistemi Üzerine Paydaş Algıları

Zeynep Arslan

Yabancı Dil Olarak İngilizce Öğretimi Yüksek Lisans Programı
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Bu vaka çalışmasında, Ankara'daki bir vakıf üniversitesinin İngilizce hazırlık programında uygulanan kurumsal sınıf gözlem sistemine ilişkin paydaş algıları incelenmiştir. Bu bağlamda, paydaşların kurumsal sınıf gözlem sistemini, İngilizceyi yabancı dil olarak öğreten öğretmenlerin mesleki gelişiminin bir parçası olarak geliştirilmiş öğretim kalitesinin ve geliştirilmiş öğretmen yansıtıcı düşünmesinin gelişmesi açısından nasıl algıladıkları araştırılmıştır. Bu amaçla araştırmaya 44 İngilizceyi yabancı dil olarak öğreten öğretmen, sekiz sınıf gözlemcisi ve üç yönetici katılmıştır. Veriler, açık uçlu sorular içeren bir anket, yarı yapılandırılmış görüşmeler yoluyla elde edilmiştir ve sisteme ilişkin doküman diğer bir veri kaynağı olarak kullanılmıştır. İçerik analizinin sonuçları, her bir paydaş grubunun gözlem sisteminin geliştirilmiş öğretim kalitesi ve öğretmen yansıtıcı düşünmesi ile ilişkisi hakkında farklı algıları olduğunu ortaya koymuştur.

Anahtar kelimeler: Sınıf gözlem sistemi, öğretmen yansıtıcı düşünme, mesleki gelişim, öğretim kalitesi.

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

Introduction

It has been well-established that teachers who constitute an integral part of quality teaching are to synchronize with the changing nature of the information age (Torres et al., 2017). This requires them to be in touch with the growing complexity of the digital era. As a stipulation of an education culture longing for perpetual growth, educational institutions and societies have the burden of ensuring that teachers are geared up with necessary skills and knowledge that match with the ever-changing environment (Lindon, 2011). To be able to keep up with this ever-changing climate, teachers need to be provided with necessary teaching and learning atmosphere so that they can adapt or adopt their teaching skills smoothly for the main goal, which is a better ‘teaching quality’. To this end, teachers involve themselves with activities that foster enhancement in both their teaching skills and students’ achievement either individually or with the assistance of a group consisting of colleagues or specifically trained people. As a key point to improve educational institutions, equipping teaching staff with better teaching skills, and enhancing students’ performance, professional development has become an indispensable part of schools’ curriculum (Opfer & Pedder, 2011). It is due to the tenet that teachers’ philosophy of development is primarily arisen by other teachers (Holly, 1989). To this end, generally one-to-one relationship with another teacher is considered requisite for continuous professional development. In this regard, practices under the framework of professional development and classroom observation, which Robbins (1991) defines as a mutual learning process “through which two or more professional colleagues work together to reflect on current practices; expand, refine, and

build new skills; share ideas; teach one another”, have become prevalent (p. 9).

Classroom observation, which holds the most prominent label for this mutual support process (Robbins, 1991), has been found beneficial to the learning-teaching cycle by many scholars. It is due to the credence that this two-way cycle from which both the observer and the observee benefit has the aim of improving teaching skills. In line with this, Guiney (2001) emphasizes the benefits of peer observation by stating that several teachers obtain an opportunity to adopt or adapt new techniques and strategies which result in better student achievement under the close supervision of peers. This underlines the value of peer observation by noting that many teachers are offered an opportunity to implement or adjust different approaches and methods that contribute to greater student success. Vidmar (2005) affirms this notion by pointing out that the teachers “work a better understanding of their teaching practice” when they are assisted by a colleague (p. 140). This allows teachers, while supported by a friend, to conduct a greater appreciation of their teaching. As teachers explore and develop connections between the past and future experiences, gained thanks to peer collaboration, their understanding grows through those connections, which lead toward better learning and deeper comprehension (Zull, 2002). Other potential benefits include encouraging self-assessment, developing curriculum and pedagogy, enriching learner outcomes, and promoting better teaching skills (Bell, 2005; Clutterbuck & Ragins, 2002). By involving themselves with such professional development practices, teachers are likely to cultivate their expertise, empower student success, and better the existing curriculum. Under the name of professional development, schools adopt various practices intending to improve the quality of instruction such as peer observations, which are the opportunities for teachers to reflect upon their own techniques (Richard & Farrell, 2005). Through these

opportunities, teachers get the chance to reconceptualize their competence and performance in class. In this regard, classroom observations enable teachers to get feedback and mutual help from each other for the purpose of enhancing learners' quality of learning (Arslan & İlin, 2013).

In this formative process, teachers come together prior to the teaching, namely have the pre-observation conference in which they share goals, objectives and outline possible outcomes of the intended lesson (Vidmar, 2005). Teachers are to discuss each stage of the lesson one by one, exchange ideas, and make suggestions so that learning of the scheduled lesson would be guaranteed. On the other hand, the post-observation conference refers to the stage in which both the observer and observee assess the observed lesson by reflecting on it and exchanging ideas, experiences. Post-observation conferences provide teachers with the opportunities to share and analyze the data gathered during the observation (Costa & Garmston, 2006). During these conferences, what has been observed is reported and evaluated by both parties for future practices. In line with this, Santa Rita and Donanngelo (1996) regard post-observation conferences as favorable circumstances to use concrete data to examine for future teaching improvement. Hence, during both pre-observation and post-observation conferences, teachers are to collaboratively work with a peer in order to go over each stage of a lesson so that s/he can reflect upon his/her teaching.

In light of the abovementioned, this study's purpose is to investigate the perceptions of EFL teachers, ELTC administrators, and ELTC classroom observers on an institutional classroom observation system as a part of professional development at a foundation university in Turkey. In this regard, it is aimed at investigating how the aforementioned groups of participants perceive the relationship

between the institutional classroom observation system and English as a foreign language teachers' professional development in terms of teaching quality and teacher reflectivity. To this end, the study intends to discover the similarities and differences between the perceptions of the abovementioned participants. Moreover, it intends to examine how if any perceptions change due to years of teaching experience.

Background of the Study

Dating back to the middle of the 19th century in England (Grubb, 2000), classroom observation has been commonly associated with teacher education and teacher appraisal systems for assurance of quality (Lawson, 2011). Quality in education remains on the policy agendas but what defines the quality of teachers and their teaching as well as how that is accomplished is largely debated (O'Leary, 2014). Bearing these questions, classroom observation has become an essential component through which quality of teaching and learning is assessed and carried out. To the point that the structure for teaching is a research-based concept of good teaching adopted by a school or board, so ensuring that teachers may show expertise and skills defined in the system becomes a duty to achieve effective teaching, a better teaching quality (Danielson, 2007). In addressing these objectives, classroom observations through which good teaching can be observed by a supervisor are necessary to conduct. To this end, it has become a frequent practice included in in-service teacher training programs of schools, in O' Leary's (2014) words, "in an increasingly audit and inspection driven education system, classroom observation has become something of an omnipresent mechanism that permeates the working lives of teachers and lecturers throughout their careers" (p. 6). Due to this notion, the function of observation is not essential in itself but is also very useful to gather data about what actually is going on in the classes for the sort of knowledge enabling

better teaching (Walker & Adelman, 2005). Thus, it does not only serve for surveillance purposes but also for fostering teachers' professional development (O'Leary, 2014).

Classroom observation has become far more popular due to the advents in teacher appraisal and classes, and the greater focus put on strengthening the teaching skills of new trainees or enhancing those of senior teachers has contributed to further analysis about what really occurs in the classes (Wragg, 2002). Stemming from the results that the more data have been collected on the strengths and weaknesses of instruction and application, the more valid changes or amendments have started to be made, classroom observations have become an indispensable element of school programs for professional development.

As Danielson (2007) notes, classroom observations should be guided by conferences that must be held before and after the observation. As an integral part of the classroom observation, feedback that is given both during the pre-observation conference and post-observation conference sessions serves similar purposes. Wilkins et al. (2009) define feedback as a reciprocal process in which paired teachers share their existing knowledge with each other as they adopt new techniques or skills. The purpose of this process is to foster self-assessment, collaboration, and professional development of teachers. (Mc Tighe & Emberger, 2006).

Statement of the Problem

Acknowledged to all, the professions through which society's principal business carried out have been critical for the very existence of a community (Schön, 1983). In this vein, education is to be regarded as an essential component providing sustenance for each one of those businesses. Thus, as Schön (1983) puts forwards, principal formal educational institutions, namely schools, are one of the arenas where

the exercise of professional activity is intensely carried out. In order to meet changing needs of society and individuals, teachers are to involve themselves in some kinds of activities that aim to contribute to their professional development. However, teaching is complex in its nature since it requires the teacher to not only provide learners with relevant knowledge but also to evaluate their experience with them to be able to draw conclusions about their teaching skills. In Loughran's (1996) terms, this complex process necessitates "interrelated sets of thoughts and actions" (p. 3). Little (1993) defines professional development as any practice that aims to increase the performance of employees. Under these practices, reflective teaching has been of considerable significance and has gained great recognition in teacher education (Gayford, 2003; Griffiths, 2000; Jay & Johnson, 2002; Larrivee, 2000).

It's the long-standing role in pre-service teaching programs and continuous professional development programs that has made classroom observation a crucial tool for promoting core pedagogical skills and enabling teachers to reflect on their both teaching and learning (O'Leary, 2014). Therefore, it has been one of the methods, which is evidenced as beneficial to teachers' professional development in the literature, espoused by teacher education programs to foster teacher development (Lu, 2010). However, rather than constituting an integral part of teacher education, a classroom observation is mentioned as a process that requires mostly novice or pre-service teachers to take part in most studies. With respect to this, Copland (2010) posits that a vast majority of pre-service teachers are stipulated to collaborate with another teacher to have a deeper understanding of teaching. That is, to achieve a better grasp of instruction, pre-service teachers generally need the accompaniment of more experienced colleagues. Expectedly, most studies on teacher development target pre-service teachers (Ma et al., 2018). Thus, literature holds several studies

conducted on pre-service EFL teachers' attitudes on the classroom observation, however, there are fewer studies that address in-service EFL teachers' perceptions on classroom observation practice. Furthermore, any classroom observation program must consider the probability of differing points of view on observed lessons, so there can be three, at least, separate perspectives: the observee's, the learner's and of the observer (Allwright, 1996). Regarding this, the literature holds a few research studies that specifically focus on perceptions of practicing EFL teachers, in-service training program trainers and school administration on foreign language teachers' teaching quality and teacher reflectivity.

Research Questions

1. How do English as a foreign language (EFL) instructors perceive the relationship between the institutional classroom observation system and their professional development in terms of
 - a. teaching quality
 - b. teacher reflectivity?
2. How do English language teaching context (ELTC) administrators perceive the relationship between the institutional classroom observation system and English as a foreign language instructors' professional development in terms of
 - a. teaching quality
 - b. teacher reflectivity?
3. How do ELTC classroom observers perceive the relationship between the institutional classroom observation system and English as a foreign language instructors' professional development in terms of
 - a. teaching quality

- b. teacher reflectivity?
- 4. What are the similarities and differences among the perceptions of EFL instructors, ELTC administrators and ELTC observers on the institutional classroom observation system?

Significance of the Study

There have been research studies conducted on classroom observations under the concept of mentoring or coaching in the literature (Hagen et al., 2017; Hunt et al., 2013; Soisangwarn & Wongwanich, 2014). However, these studies have mainly focused on activities requiring teachers' assistance or help each other rather than focusing on observations' contribution to teacher reflectivity and teaching quality. Besides, there is limited research on the perceptions of ELTC administrators and ELTC classroom observers on the classroom observation activities in the literature. Thus, this study may contribute to the field by presenting the perceptions of three groups of participants (e.g. EFL teachers, ELTC administrators, and ELTC classroom observers) on an institutional classroom observation system and its contributions to teacher reflectivity and teaching quality. Additionally, the results may serve for pedagogical and local outcomes both for institutions that invest in teachers' professional development and for EFL teachers who are willing to increase their reflectivity. Those institutions might arrange their professional development activities and procedures to implement a useful classroom observation system aiming at improving teachers professionally and teaching quality of the overall school based on the findings of this study.

Definition of Key Terms

Teacher Professional Development: It is a never-ending process, which involves learning, adapting, applying, testing, and changing teaching practices. In Avalos's

(2011) terms, it is a dynamic process that “requires cognitive and emotional involvement of teachers individually and collectively, the capacity and willingness to examine where each one stands in terms of convictions and beliefs and the perusal and enactment of appropriate alternatives for improvement and change” (p. 10).

Teaching Quality: It is mostly assumed as a unified ground incorporating both philosophy and experience in which students, professional teachers, and teacher educators are collectively accountable for establishing scientific knowledge and the betterment of teaching (Erickson, 1988)

Teacher Reflective practice: It applies to teaching blended by gathering knowledge regarding one’s way of teaching as the basis for reflective thinking, through such self-development procedures as self-monitoring, classroom observations, and case studies (Richards & Farrell, 2005).

Classroom observation: It is a procedure involving supervisors who evaluate the success of a teacher in order to offer meaningful feedback both for teacher development and quality teaching (Swinglehurst et al., 2008). In classroom observation, novice or experienced teachers’ classes are observed by classroom observers who might be teacher trainers, heads, or mentors assigned by the administration (Wragg, 2002).

Pre-Observation conference: It is the meeting that is arranged before the actual classroom observation takes place. It holds a prominent place in which “the teacher is an equal partner with the supervisor in determining the focus and the extent of the supervisory process” (Tracy & MacNaughton, 1989, p. 247).

Post-Observation conference: It is generally held between the observer and the observee after the classroom observation with the aim of reflecting on the observed lesson. In this conference, the supervisor or more knowledgeable-other is supposed

to provide constructive feedback to the teacher with the aim of bringing some kind of development in their teaching practices (Bailey, 2006).



CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

This chapter discusses the review of the literature relevant to this study that aims at exploring perceptions of EFL instructors, ELTC classroom observers, and ELTC administrators on an institutional classroom observation system at a foundation university in Turkey. In this regard, this literature review would address reflective practice, critical reflective practice, professional development, related classroom observation and its impacts on teaching quality, and reflectivity along with relevant studies from around the world and Turkey.

Theoretical Framework

Reflective Practice

By its very nature, reflection refers to the act of assessing the justification of one's existing views (Dewey, 1933). In this regard, reflection, initiated by thinking, fosters a deliberate act of determining a new, reorienting metaphor for the perplexity and attentive planning of activities and objectives in mind with foresight (Dewey, 1933; Mezirow, 1991). Further to noticing the existing issue and exploring its nature, in the educational context, reflection enables teachers to make contextual analyses and to experiment in new ways by making judgments about the effectiveness and, to test hypotheses (Osterman & Kottkamp, 2004; Sparks-Langer & Colton, 1991). To put it differently, the study of Fook and Askeland (2006) define reflexivity, which refers to the ability to reflect, as follows:

Reflexivity can simply be defined as an ability to recognize our own influence and the influence of our social and cultural contexts on research, the type of knowledge we create, and the way we create it. In this sense, then, it is about factoring ourselves as players into the situations we practice in. (p. 45)

In Schön's (1983) terms, a practitioner who is not apt to reflect on his own grounds retains his "intuitive understandings tacit and is inattentive to the limits of his scope of reflection attention" (p. 282). In other words, teachers are to analyze their own experience and establish their own philosophies of teaching extracting from that experience. Larrivee (2000) corroborates this notion by positing that teachers who latch onto methods or techniques without evaluating, if the teaching practices are congruent with their ways and beliefs, are likely to run around in circles. On the other hand, discovering weaknesses of self and looking for ways to improve them is not a spontaneous act, with Brookfield's (1998) words, it is "puzzling" and "contradictory" (p. 197). Considering reflective practice does not always have to arise from a problem to be solved, becoming aware of assumptions gets even more challenging (Dewey, 1933). That is, what is challenging for a practitioner is realizing or becoming aware of the ongoing issues to be dealt with. Unless an issue to be addressed emerges, it is much more difficult for one to become conscious of what is wrong with the current practices of him/her.

Individuals are stymied by the fact that they view their practices by using interpretive sieves to notice their interpretive filters, akin to a dog trying to catch his own tail, in Brookfield's (1998) analogy. Put it differently, people are usually impeded by being stuck inside a system in which their understanding of the circumstances is somehow limited (Mezirow, 1981). Accordingly, reflective practice

enables individuals to emancipate from such restrictions they find themselves within and provides them with power (Thompson & Pascal, 2012). Unless they receive one's assistance, subjectivity may prevent individuals from evaluating their existing abilities objectively. In this sense, Brookfield (1998) conceives reflective practice by seeing it through four lenses that are the lens of one's own autobiography as a learner, the lens of students' eyes, the lens of colleagues' support, and the lens of the insight provided in the literature. Loughran (2012) contributes to the nature of the lens of colleagues' support by highlighting the value of observations for the reflective practice. Observation, which is an active practice, done with colleagues provides teachers with the inquiry of practical and theoretical knowledge, basically delving into an unfamiliar context (Brandenburg et al., 2017; Dewey, 1933).

Critically Reflective Practice

Loughran (1996) underlines the importance of reflection, which is a method that can be implemented in confusing contexts to help the learner understand better the knowledge at hand and encourage the teacher to facilitate and lead learning appropriately. To put it simply, reflection motivates one to reformulate his/her assumptions on teaching with the help of different perspectives provided by others. With the aim of taking more informed actions towards students' learning and developing one's current teaching skills, teachers engage themselves in practices building into their assumptions on their teaching. Within this, they revise their assumptions stemming from the professional and cultural atmosphere around them or their experience as a learner. In this regard, critical reflection basically refers to the continuous and deliberate method of defining and testing their individuals' assumptions for consistency and credibility (Brookfield, 2017). In Schön's (1987) terms, critical reflection is a task that aims at enacting observable change in one's

perceptions on their teaching acts. On the other hand, it can also be seen as a task involving the social interaction of colleagues so that insights into weaknesses or gaps can be gained (Brookfield, 1995; Mezirow, 1991). Accordingly, it is crucial for teachers to become more self-aware of themselves as adult learners and examine their assumptions through the help of the four lenses of students, colleagues, theory, and autobiography to better their way of teaching (Brookfield, 1998).

In order to scrutinize and uncover their teaching assumptions, teachers benefit from these four lenses. The main goal is to obtain perceptions of a different group of people (namely, students and colleagues) and information from various sources (namely, theoretical literature and autobiography both as a teacher and a learner) so that any areas that are incomplete or need to be examined can be unearthed. Correspondingly, Cornish and Jenkins's (2012) study corroborates the usefulness of those critical lenses in scaffolding to shape teachers' professional growth.

According to the first lens, the lens of students' eyes, teachers can elicit evaluation from their students about the way they interpret their teacher's assumptions on teaching skills. In this way, teachers get the opportunity to reorganize their decisions to leverage student learning in a way that succeeds. Angelo (1998) supports this notion by stating that knowledge learned from students regarding the learning progress at their own pace can help teachers construct their practices on a deeper view of the nature of a given classroom. Once a teacher considers the various ways students interpret the existing teaching practice, it will provide them with useful perspectives (Brookfield, 2017). Another benefit of seeing what is really happening through students' eyes is that teachers become more aware of individual differences their students hold such as different social backgrounds,

readiness for learning, and special abilities, etc. Consequently, what kind of differences lead to in a dynamic classroom environment is presented through the lens of students, which enables teachers to adapt their teaching practices and better their assessment (McMunn et al., 2004).

The second lens is seeing through the personal experience, namely the autobiography of teachers both as a learner and teacher. Reflective teachers are expected to involve themselves with investigating, researching, understanding and acknowledging their own learning throughout their lives. Smyth (1992) defines reflective teachers as “active learners” who question and advocate both their own learning and teaching in the system through which they consider themselves (p. 32). Within this aim, reflective teachers also draw perspectives and implications from their own learning experiences, which have a deep and long-lasting effect on their teaching practices (Brookfield, 2002). In other words, teachers seem to cultivate their pedagogical methods that are stemming from their experiences as learners (Day et al., 1990). To this end, revising autobiographical experiences plays a great role in explaining the reasons why they have adopted certain practices in their teaching.

As for the theoretical literature lens, it allows teachers to name their adopted or improved teaching skills in the literature, which provides numerous insights on various situations observed in classroom environments. While making the practice of evaluating the status quo and conventional acts of teaching, they discover their own reality and keep being responsive to exploring the theories behind the discipline in teaching (Larrivee, 2000). Brookfield (1998) describes the benefits of theoretical literature lens as follows;

Studying theory can help us realize what we thought were signs of our personal failings as practitioners can actually be interpreted as

the inevitable consequence of certain economic, social, and political processes. This stops us falling victim to the belief that we are responsible for everything that happens in our classrooms.

(p. 200)

Clark (1992) draws attention to another benefit of theoretical literature by pointing out that theoretical literature is favorable because “asking for help makes us feel vulnerable – vulnerable to being discovered as imposters who do not know as much as we pretend to know” (p. 82). As an essential act of critical reflection, perusing a theoretical analysis of educational literature aids teachers to adapt their idiosyncratic behaviors to ongoing issues in the class environment (Britzman, 1991).

The lens of colleagues’ perspective serves as a critical mirror that reflects one’s images of acts back (Brookfield, 1998). In this sense, the contribution that a colleague can make to one’s reflective practices is invaluable. It stems from the fact that school policy and educational methods are integrated both historically and socially, modifying facets of human behavior frequently involve a collective work (Larrivee, 2000). The importance of teachers’ examining their perceptions on their effective practice against the observations obtained from colleagues has been studied by many scholars (Day et al., 1990; Ndebele, 2014; Thompson & Pascal, 2012).

Bai (2014), to illustrate, noted from his study on improving writing instructions of primary in-service teachers that colleagues do a great job at working well as their mirrors to reflect problematic areas to be considered in teaching since they share common situations as well as students and teaching environment. Lakshmi (2014) also asserted the usefulness of seeing through the lens of colleagues by pointing out that in-service TESOL teachers felt more empowered as they could strengthen their self-image as a teacher, which added a sense of purpose and meaning

to their classroom practices with the assistance of advice provided by their colleagues.

Once one gets the chance of benefitting from another's assistance throughout the improvement of their teaching practices, reframing the existing assumptions goes more smoothly than it does when alone. To this end, colleagues make a great contribution by alerting what one might be missing consciously or unconsciously (Plank, 2011). Furthermore, teachers can address the emerging dilemmas in the class by inviting a critical colleague to watch and report what is actually happening along with possible suggestions (Frase & Conley, 1994).

Reflectivity

Teaching, dynamic in its nature, stands in need of continuous development of teachers in response to the ever-changing needs of the current era in which we live. Within this, teachers are to be conscious of their existing teaching skills, namely be constantly reflective of ongoing issues in the classroom and the ways of overcoming them (Eby et al., 2002). Regarding this, Dewey (1933) postulates that reflection or reflective practice is an "active, persistent, and careful consideration of a belief or supposed form of knowledge, of the grounds that support that knowledge, and the further conclusions to which that knowledge leads." (p. 9). Vidmar (2005) validates this by referring to reflection as an act of developing insights and exploring solutions to arising issues in the class. In line with this, Van Manen (1977; 1991) underlines that to educators, it is vital to behave more thoroughly and reflectively and to understand the nuances and nature of reflective experiences and the types of information that they are using. Bearing this, the practical importance of reflective practice has led to a research body that decodes reflective practice and refines ways of encouraging it (Brandenburg et al., 2017).

A primary reason to promote reflective practice in education is to make a conscious effort of each teacher to cultivate a range of viewpoints for empowering understanding of existing teaching skills and methods (Brandenburg et al., 2017). Shulman (1987) specifies the nature of reflection by referring to it as a process in which a teacher “reconstructs, reenacts, and/or recaptures the events, the emotions, and the accomplishments” (p. 9). In parallel with this, Hatton and Smith (1995) perceive reflectivity as “an active and deliberative cognitive process, involving sequences of interconnected ideas which take account of underlying beliefs and knowledge (p. 34). Affirming this phenomenon, Dervent (2015) concluded in his study with the pre-service teachers that the reflective thinking framework enabled teachers to concentrate on their application of knowledge better by generating a conscious awareness of their professional development. Similarly, Larrivee (2000) points out that once teachers become reflective practitioners, they step beyond a knowledge base of distinct skills to a stage in which they adapt and adjust skills into specific contexts, and finally to a point where the skills are fully embraced, allowing them to invent new techniques, which results in gaining a sense of self-efficacy required for developing specific practical solutions to arising issues in a class.

Professional Development

Professional development, being one of the most debated themes of teaching, is generally acknowledged as an invaluable vein in improving the standard of education. In Richards and Farrell’s (2005) terms, it refers to any activity that “serves a longer-term goal and seeks to facilitate the growth of teachers’ understanding of teaching and themselves as teachers” (p. 4). This growth might refer to the betterment of teaching and becoming more aware of as an active teacher in what current teaching practices are successful in terms of addressing learners’

needs. Through professional development activities, aiming at shaping teachers' short-term and long-term objectives, teachers are able to connect to the trends in curricula and keep up with the advancements in technology. These might be individual activities such as "teaching portfolios, journal writing, action research" or one-to-one activities such as "critical friendship, peer coaching, peer observation" (Richards & Farrell, 2005, p. 14). More extensively, Day (1999) summarizes the nature of activities that can be gathered under the roof of professional development:

Professional development consists of all natural learning experiences and those conscious and planned activities, which are intended to be of direct or indirect benefit to the individual, group or school, which contribute, through these, to the quality of education in the classroom. It is the process by which, alone and with others, teachers review, renew and extend their commitment as change agents to the moral purpose of teaching; and by which they acquire and develop critically the knowledge, skills and emotional intelligence essential to good professional thinking, planning and practice with children, young people and colleagues throughout each phase of their teaching lives. (p. 4)

Regarding his research of literature on how to develop schooling outcomes both for students and teachers, Rueda (1998) draws the conclusion that effective educational environments are based on well-trained, successful teachers who are sufficiently assisted with regard to professional development. To this end, the contribution of the aforementioned professional development activities to teachers' development can be maximized with the assistance of a supervisor or more knowledgeable others who have the responsibility of providing the necessary

assistance with the aim of contributing to the overall betterment of the school. In doing so, supervisors aim at encouraging the growth of expertise by exchanging information, providing resources, and scheduling classroom observations for teachers (Bailey, 2006). Another crucial task of the supervisor, who might also be called the teacher trainer, is to raise teachers' awareness of their teaching practices, namely reflecting on their own skills. It is due to the notion that any professional development acts enabling teachers collect data about their own teaching have a very powerful effect (Bailey et al., 1998).

The overall aim of professional development activities is to enhance the content knowledge and classroom practices of the teacher, which is also regarded as the most referred indicator of an effective one (Guskey, 2003). To this end, classroom observations are generally referred as the most effective procedures for the professional development of teachers as they are conducted by collaboration and collegiality (Montgomery, 2002; Wei et al., 2009).

Regarding professional development practices and their impacts in the English Language Teaching field, Borg's (2018) article specifically focused on the professional development interventions' (PDIs) potential impacts on organizations or systems, teachers, and students. The article mainly argued the importance of evaluating the impacts of PDIs and how those impacts can be assessed. In the article, Borg refers to classroom observations as one of the most essential interventions that directly target change in teachers' classroom practices, and he suggests that multiple and regular observations are more likely to provide more reliable results of what classroom observations can change in teachers' classroom practices. Therefore, integrating technology-assisted observations or teaching portfolios might give better results than one-on-one classroom observations but provided that resources (e.g.,

time, expertise) are available. In brief, the article concluded that there are various strategies for evaluating the impact of PDIs, however, it should be noted that “choices about these are compatible with the kinds of impact being targeted” (p. 211).

Owing to the reason that classroom observations provide teachers with opportunities to exchange ideas about what works better in the classroom, they are cited as a pivotal element of professional development activities. Through engaging in such professional development practices, the number of incidents enabling teacher collaboration for feedback and reflection is increased, which results in better student learning (Little & McLaughlin, 1993).

In the framework of the abovementioned concepts and elements, classroom observation, one of the most contributing practices for the professional development of teachers, is reviewed through the literature, and procedures regarding classroom observation are presented in the next section.

Classroom Observation

As an indispensable component of the reflective thinking framework, classroom observations play a significant role in promoting teacher reflectivity. That is, teachers can benefit from the reflective nature of classroom observations so as to facilitate their teaching skills. In terms of assuring the quality of educators and betterment of education, classroom observations have been used as an effective tool throughout the world (Berk et al., 2004). To illustrate, based on his study on the reflection of pre-service teachers, Kayapinar (2016) determined that teachers' reflective abilities can be aroused and flourished by means of classroom observations, which enable them to gain a more critical perspective about their teaching. Similarly, Pultorak, and Barnes (2009) pointed out that as the number of

teacher reflective practices increases, teacher performance increases correspondingly. Although more experienced teachers' performance improvement can be associated with classroom observations, especially novice teachers may benefit from them extensively.

Moreover, classroom observations increase the number of opportunities to reflect on current practices. When teachers look for alternative perspectives or different ways of approaching a problem, they uncover meaning that they could without classroom observation miss (Jay & Johnson, 2002). In their investigation into in-service TESOL teachers' perceptions on classroom observations, Lasagabaster and Sierra (2011) recorded that most teachers found classroom observations important as they improve understanding of teaching and help teachers compare ideas about the ways of lesson planning and actual classroom activities, which can lead to a greater knowledge of various types of instruction. In doing so, with the help of classroom observations, teachers can have the opportunity to be equipped with new instructional strategies.

Similarly, Soisangwarn and Wongwanich (2014) carried out a study on the promotion of the reflective teacher through classroom observations through peer coaching activities with secondary school teachers in Thailand. It was concluded that classroom observations enriched teachers' reflections on their current practices and assisted them to find out how to refine their practices through peer suggestions and fostered the team spirit of teachers who have the same professional intentions. Thus, the chance of benefitting from someone more experienced or knowledgeable is given to teachers thanks to classroom observations.

Although a lot of attention has been paid to the classroom observation process in general, few studies attempt to highlight how observers perceive the

observation process. In accordance with this purpose, Torres et al. (2017) focused on observers' perceptions and attitudes towards peer observation in a multidisciplinary program and concluded that observing classes brings insights to teachers' practices and allows better interactions among the teacher and the students.

A classroom observation basically requires some procedures to be completed successfully. Dividing it into stages might ease flaws that are potential to arise in this collaborative act, which involves both the observer and the observee to take some responsibilities and roles; before, during, and after the scheduled observation. Within this, Farrell (2018) postulates that there are four stages to be followed; "pre-observation conference, observation, post-observation conference, and peer observation report" (p. 118). In doing so, both parties (namely, the observer and the observee) become more reflective and be inclined to change the problematic teaching acts (Day, 2013).

Including the abovementioned stages in the classroom observation system might enhance teachers' reflective practices to the utmost respect. To illustrate, Day's (2013) study with graduate students' perceptions on classroom observation and reflective teaching asserts that pre- and post-observation conferences play a significant role in examining teachers' beliefs on their practices as they provide teachers with the chance of specifying objectives of the lesson and later discuss their effectiveness. Particularly in post-observation conferences, the assumption is for more knowledgeable-others' assisting the teacher to bring some kind of development in their teaching practices (Bailey, 2006). That is, post-conferences are invaluable regarding their opening the way for those discussions on the observed lesson, specifying what enables or disables pre-planned objectives to reach their goals in detail.

Vossoughi (2000) draws attention to the importance of those stages by propounding that conducting classroom observations through stages enables teachers to obtain data that is recorded in an appropriate way with the aim of clearing understandings both for the observer and the observee. In this sense, the following stages provide a ground for informing both the observer and the observee about the scheduled lesson not only orally but also through written forms or documents.

Feedback, which has been viewed as an indispensable component of the classroom observation process, also serves for reflective teaching since feedback obtained from classroom observation makes teachers notice the quality of their teaching skills (Blackmore, 2005). To validate this, Wilkins et al. (2009) examined the impacts of peer feedback practices on elementary education candidate teachers' performance. Their study concluded that peer feedback conducted after classroom observations enriched teacher reflection and incorporated teacher collaboration.

Teaching Quality

With the main law, No Child Left Behind in the United States (NCLB), the concept of teaching quality gained more importance and started to take place in teacher education programs and schools' curricula. This law mandated states to ensure that schools provide teachers with opportunities to promote high-quality professional development so that student achievement could be enriched (Borko, 2004). Based on this reform, activities contributing to teacher development with the objective of increasing teacher quality, classroom observations, which are constructive instruments through which both teaching and learning quality is boosted came into prominence (Cosh, 1998; Fletcher & Orsmond, 2004). An increasing number of studies indicates that teaching quality is probably the most significant schooling element that determines student achievement (Ferguson, 1998; Goldhaber,

2002; Hanushek, 1997). Since then, promoting teacher quality by means of reciprocal observations has become a key factor in enhancing students' success in the United States, making it increasingly critical for administrators to have a "highly qualified teacher" in almost every classroom (Harris & Sass, 2011).

Promoting teaching quality by means of class observations has been in the scope of educational institutions and stakeholders with the expectation of higher student achievement. Based on this, Bozak (2018) carried out a study on the points of school managers on classroom observation, which is accepted as a new tool for professional development and supervision. The results indicated that school directors were in favor of peer observation since it, as an alternative teacher development model, increased cooperation, collaboration, self-awareness, and motivation among teachers.

It has been documented in the literature that as teachers develop themselves in their profession, students' achievement boosts evenly. A correlation can be assumed between the enhancement of student learning and ideally better practice of teachers (Bennett & Santy, 2009). With the aim of certifying this phenomenon, Jackson and Bruegmann (2009) conducted a longitudinal study and found out that teachers performed better when there was an improvement in the quality of their peers. Correspondingly, students got larger test score gains when there was an observable improvement in teachers' teaching skills.

Relevant Studies from around the World

As a research topic, perceptions of stakeholders on classroom observation have attracted the attention of the scientific world. Thus, the concept has been investigated both qualitatively and quantitatively in various contexts. For instance, the quantitative study carried out by Lam (2001) focused on the perceptions of

teachers, section heads, and principals on the classroom observation system as a means of staff development and appraisal. The data of the study were driven from a questionnaire conducted with 2400 educators in Hong Kong. The educators came from primary, secondary, and special schools. More than half of the educators participating in the study indicated that classroom observations were conducted in their schools (53.4 %). Among these schools, secondary schools were the ones that conducted the most observations with 86.7 percent. On the other hand, only 29.6 % of the primary school educators indicated classroom observations were observed in their schools. The results revealed that the main aim of the classroom observations was to evaluate educators rather than developing their teaching skills. The primary school educators who observed the smallest number of observations were less willing to welcome observers to their classes. There was also a consensus among the participating teachers who considered classroom observations as a means of an appraisal. However, all the participants indicated that they needed a model which particularly focused on professional development rather than evaluation. More specifically, the participants expressed their wish for a model that was composed of coaching and peer observation.

Another study conducted by Ford-Brocato (2004) explored the perceptions of teachers and administrators in two different schools on two different performance evaluation systems. The data of the study were collected by means of a 16-item survey and subsequent open-ended questions. The responses to the survey were analyzed through t-tests and two-way ANOVA. On the other hand, the data gathered from the open-ended questions were categorized in accordance with the frequency of similar responses. The results revealed that while the administrators from two schools had similar perceptions on the systems, the teachers in one of the schools

indicated that they had questions about the system. The questions regarding the systems included the time-consuming paperwork that was required by the observations and the objectivity of the system. Additionally, the brevity and insufficiency of the system due to the subjectivity or lack of content knowledge of observers were also vocalized by the participants. In general, the results showed that the systems had to be restructured to become more efficient and objective.

As for teacher reflectivity, Amobi (2005) conducted a qualitative study focusing on teacher education professors' perceptions on reflective teaching, namely the way they defined it, the methods they made use of reflective teaching, and the effect of their own reflective teaching practices on the way of novice teachers' showing reflective teaching. In the light of the data gathered from 26 participants through a semi-structured interview, it was concluded that the way the participants defined reflective practices were consistent with the methods they used to assess their novice teacher students. However, it was also noted that the reflective practice resources offered by participants and their opinions of the factors that encouraged or hindered the capacity of students to reflect emerged. The hindering factors were listed as fear, age, the educational and social background of the teacher education professor or novice teachers.

Lasagabaster and Sierra (2011) explored the attitudes of a variety of teachers toward the role of observation in the language classroom under three attitudinal concepts: the cognitive, the affective, and the conative. The quantitative data of the study were collected through a questionnaire from 185 teachers working in a wide range of schools: infant, junior, secondary, university, and private schools. The qualitative data were gathered with open-ended questions and interpreted and examined by the researchers intensively. The results revealed that the majority of the

participants were involved in in-service training related to their fields. In terms of the effectiveness of the classroom observation, an overwhelming majority of the teachers stated that the classroom observations had a positive effect on their teaching skills. They stated that the classroom observations helped them increase student-to-student interactions in their classes, as well as enabling them to prepare more effective lesson plans. As for the affective concepts, the participants' reactions were mostly about *being watched by others* and *not being able to teach naturally*. They also emphasized the importance of a good rapport that must be built between the observer and the observee. In terms of the conative aspect, the participants indicated that they did not have enough time to participate in professional development activities such as classroom observation. Nevertheless, they expressed that these activities could increase teaching quality greatly.

The concept of classroom observation has also attracted the attention of researchers in the African context. For example, in the Zimbabwean context, Tshabalala (2013) conducted a qualitative case study in which he explored the perceptions of purposively selected 48 qualified teachers of classroom observation. The researcher gathered the qualitative data with the use of in-depth semi-structured interviews each of which lasted approximately 45 minutes. Subsequently, the transcribed interviews were then analyzed in detail to uncover the underlying themes of the teachers' statements. The findings indicated that in general, the participants had a positive attitude towards classroom observations stating that they can foster the learning process and develop teaching skills. Their attitude towards the frequency of the observations was also positive. Most of the participants expressed their wished to be an observer at least once or twice a year. Considering almost half of the participants had no training in teaching, it is interesting that they were aware of the

importance of professional development and their lack of training. However, the participants also indicated that how their schools conducted classroom observations was far from satisfactory. Their main concern was about being observed by unqualified personnel. Therefore, they preferred to be observed by school heads or principals. In addition to this, the participants expressed their wish to be notified about the classroom observations before the observation took place so that they could be prepared for the observation.

Different from the studies that have been carried out on pre-service teachers and their reflective practices, Farrell and Ives (2015) focused on the relationship between stated perspectives and observed classroom acts with one participant who was a second language teacher, specifically teaching reading courses. Through interviews, journal writings, and classroom observations, this qualitative case study revealed that the participant had some difficulties with how to teach reading, which was also observed during the classroom observations. However, the research showed that the teacher became more conscious of his beliefs about his teaching and their impacts on his way of teaching reading as he started to reflecting his teaching.

Another study that focused on exploring EFL teachers' perception of being observed was conducted by Moradi et al. (2014) in the Iranian context with 34 EFL teachers. After a thorough analysis of the quantitative and qualitative data, the researchers concluded that the EFL teachers had the inclination of satisfying the observers because they were deeply concerned about having the 'unfulfilling' rating or score from the observer, which could even lead to losing their jobs. In their further analysis of the qualitative data, the researchers concluded that the EFL teachers did not feel challenged and benefit from the post-observation feedback, so they found it 'superficial'. Moreover, they assumed that many observers almost instinctively

searched for something to criticize and these bad experiences made them feel demotivated for further reflective practices.

Another study by Winslow (2015) investigated the perceptions of teachers and administrations on administrative feedback provided after classroom observations. In his mixed-methods study, the researcher gathered the data through interviews and an online survey. The results of the qualitative and quantitative data indicated that although both teachers and administrators had certain concerns about the system, they perceived it as a formative process, which enhanced student-centered activities related to higher-order thinking skills. However, the process of the observations (paperwork) made them feel the whole system had summative results about their performance. In addition to this, the teachers stated that both written and oral feedback they received following the classroom observations encouraged them to reflect on their teaching. However, it was also found out that a considerable amount of administrative time was necessary to put the system into action.

In their quantitative study, Mette et al. (2015) examined whether principals in eight high-functioning elementary schools in the United States provided effective teacher supervision and evaluation that fostered student achievement. To this end, the researchers collected the data through an online questionnaire from 74 teachers. Through the questionnaire, the researchers aimed to unravel the perceptions of the teachers on their administrators' supervision through pre-observation and post-observation conferences. The results revealed that while pre-observation sessions had a statistically significant effect on the ways to keep students engaged in the lessons, post-observation conferences were mostly focused on the betterment of the teachers' instruction skills. In general, the results stressed the importance of teachers and administrators working together to foster the teaching quality of the instructors.

In their diverse mixed-methods study, Martinez et al. (2016) examined the purposively selected 16 classroom observation systems in Singapore, Japan, Chile, Australia, Germany, and the United States. Singapore and Japan stood out as countries that had the top-performing education systems in the sample. The researchers collected the data from multiple sources. The first step of the data collection was gathering general information about the systems from documents that were available to the public. Secondly, the researchers contacted an administrative staff from each school to receive materials such as technical reports, internal research documents, and rubrics used in the schools. Finally, interviews through telephone and in-person were conducted with personnel in charge of the system or an expert that was knowledgeable about the system. The results showed that all of the systems were in consensus in terms of the general purposes of the classroom observation systems in their schools. To illustrate, the aim of every school's system was to improve high-quality instruction. However, the systems in Singapore and Japan focused on more affective variables such as *nurturing the whole child*, *winning hearts and minds*, and *pupil trust*. On the other hand, the systems in the United States considered technical and procedural aspects, which included *questioning skills*, *classroom management*, and *determining the progress of subgroups*, more important. Most of the schools in the study emphasized the formative aspect of classroom observations; however, they differed in terms of utilizing the results of the observations. For instance, while some of the schools (Chilean) used the results for further funding processes, some others (Japan) tended to benefit from the reports to address and determine teachers' individual needs and plans. Finally, while the teachers in Chile and some schools in the United States were observed depending on their experience (novice teachers were observed more frequently), all the teachers in

Japan and Singapore were observed on a yearly basis. In terms of observer background and expertise, the study concluded that most of the systems used administrators as observers while some of them relied on external observers.

In a more recent qualitative study, Alshehri (2019) interviewed nine EFL teachers and seven EFL classroom observers in order to investigate their perceptions on the classroom observation system and post-observation feedback. The qualitative data gathered from all participants were thematically analyzed. In order to avoid researcher bias, the emerged themes were also investigated by an experienced researcher working at the same institution where the study was conducted. The analysis of the emerged themes revealed that the participants regarded classroom observation and post-observation feedback as a key to professional development. The participants indicated that the classroom observation system was used to improve their teaching quality, which also increased student achievement. However, the participants also expressed the stress they experienced due to classroom observations and the unrealistic teaching practices that took place during the observations.

Relevant Studies in the Turkish Context

There have not been any studies conducted on EFL teachers, teacher trainers, and administration's perceptions on a classroom observation system in Turkey setting, yet some similar studies investigating teachers or/and supervisors' beliefs on classroom observations for professional development purposes are presented below.

Teacher Appraisal Scheme, which dates back to the 1970s, has also been widely used for English language teachers' professional development to promote the opportunity of discovering weaknesses and focusing on the better. To this end, Vanci-Osam and Akşit (2000) investigated the perceptions of English language

teachers on the use of the Teacher Appraisal Scheme (TAS) for developmental purposes in an English language teaching context in Turkey. During the data collection process, the TAS and its aims first were introduced to the teachers, and they were required to decide on a target area that they would like to develop in their teaching through classroom observations with their colleagues, group leaders or teacher trainers, etc. or observation tools (video recordings, logs, checklists). At the end of the academic year, the appraisal meetings in which the whole TAS process and issues related to its effectiveness on the teachers' development were evaluated with the appraisee. The data were gathered from the English language teachers and the appraisers (group leaders) through an initial questionnaire and structured-interviews twice: before and after the use of the TAS. At the end of a thorough analysis, the study concluded that the experienced and novice EFL teachers' perceptions on the TAS differed. Whereas more qualified EFL teachers' perceptions changed from positive to negative after the exposure to it due to time constraints and heavy teaching workload, the teachers with less than three years of teaching experience found it useful to their professional development. In addition, the appraisers also noted the dissatisfaction of the more experienced and qualified teachers' attitudes towards the system, which concluded that the appraisers were aware of the teachers' positive and negative perceptions on the appraisal scheme.

As for teacher reflectivity, Şanal-Erginel (2006) examined the reflection of pre-service teachers and their improvement in reflective thinking by means of journal entries, interviews consisted of tape-recorded interactions of participants along with classroom observations and questionnaires. 30 pre-service teachers from English Language Teaching program took part in this qualitative case study, which was conducted as action research. In the light of the aforementioned instruments, it was

concluded that collaboration was the prominent factor contributing to their reflective practices as they valued guidance, which motivated them through the reflective teaching process. Besides, the positive effect of reflective practice on raising self-awareness of teachers promoting the professional identity improvement as language teachers was concluded. Thus, the study found out that the reflective process resulted in a developmental process in which theoretical and contextual factors were merged, limited to the participants' ages, the way they learned, and their language proficiency.

In their mixed-methods study, Hişmanoğlu and Hişmanoğlu (2010) investigated the perceptions of English language teachers on educational supervision in the Northern Cyprus context. The data of the study were collected from 42 non-natives (Turkish and Cypriot) and eight native speakers of English teachers working at three universities in North Cyprus. As data collection instruments, a questionnaire and in-depth semi-structured interviews were used. The results of the analyzed data indicated that English teachers had a positive perception on professional development stating that with the help of professional development activities, they were able to keep up with the changes in the field, develop reflective practice, and finding out new classroom experiences. However, the participants also expressed their concerns about the allocated time and funding for professional development activities. Particularly, it was discovered that the time constraints prevented effective professional development activities. Additionally, financial issues were also an impediment to conduct activities that would promote professional development.

Professional development activities are commonly included in many universities' in-service teaching programs with the aim of improving teaching quality. To this end, Yurtsever (2013) aimed at exploring characteristics and attitudes

towards in-service training programs for the professional development of English language instructors working at different universities in Turkey. A questionnaire was utilized to investigate EFL teachers' perceptions through a four model of professional development, which was basically "training, mentoring, peer coaching, self-directed" (p. 666). The study drew the conclusion that programs aimed at developing teachers professionally should not be made compulsory to attend so that instructors could feel free to decide what they are lacking in their teaching. In addition, teachers could benefit from the four-model professional development to the utmost level if they were given the chance of choosing their supervisor with whom they are going to reflect on their teaching skills collaboratively.

In a recent study, Kuru-Gönen (2016) conducted a study on perceptions of pre-service teachers working collaboratively with their trainer peers in a reciprocal observation and mentoring program. It was intended to explore if taking part in such a program led to any changes in their reflectivity. Regarding this, forms and checklists were developed to have well-structured observations, enabling participants to make the best of the classroom observations and reflect back with the help of constructive feedback provided by their supervisor giving the field experience course. In this mixed-design study, 12 pre-service English Language Teaching program teachers were involved from a university in Turkey. The findings showed that pre-service teachers benefitted from the reflective teacher mentoring program, stimulating reflectivity in their teaching and contributing to their professional development largely.

As for reflective practices of teachers from a university context, Fakazli and Kuru-Gönen (2017) explored English as a Foreign Language university instructors' perceptions on reflective practices. Upon a training procedure, the data were

collected from eight instructors by means of reflective peer conferences, teacher diaries, videotaped lesson analysis, and a questionnaire before taking part in the semi-structured interviews investigating their perceptions on reflective practices. In the light of obtained data, it was noted that participants were able to raise their awareness of their teaching and self-assessment, stating it was an effective way for teacher professional development. However, some negative perceptions regarding time and high effort reflective practices require were put forward by the participants. Hence, the study made the implication that reflective practices could lead to effective results in teachers' development if a systematic system could be established so as to overcome time and effort issues.

CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY

Introduction

This qualitative design study is aimed at investigating the perceptions of EFL teachers, ELTC administrators and ELTC classroom observers on the classroom observation system in general and its contribution to the improvement of the teaching quality, and teacher reflectivity. For these purposes, the following research questions were explored:

1. How do English as a foreign language (EFL) instructors perceive the relationship between the institutional classroom observation system and their professional development in terms of
 - a. teaching quality
 - b. teacher reflectivity?
2. How do English language teaching context (ELTC) administrators perceive the relationship between the institutional classroom observation system and English as a foreign language instructors' professional development in terms of
 - a. teaching quality
 - b. teacher reflectivity?
3. How do ELTC classroom observers perceive the relationship between the institutional classroom observation system and English as a foreign language instructors' professional development in terms of
 - a. teaching quality
 - b. teacher reflectivity

4. What are the similarities and differences among the perceptions of EFL instructors, ELTC administrators and ELTC observers on the institutional classroom observation system?

This study was designed in line with the principles of the case study. As a sophisticated research method that lays emphasis on focusing on “a program, event, or activity involving individuals rather than a group per se” (Creswell, 2012, p. 465), case design studies generally describe a phenomenon. In the current study, a group consisting of EFL teachers, classroom observers, and administration personnel who have worked together for a considerable amount of time and have common values and beliefs was involved to “focus on an in-depth exploration of the actual case” (Creswell, 2012, p. 465; Yin, 2014).

In case design studies, researchers seek ways to obtain multiple forms of data in order to present an in-depth picture of the explored case. Regarding this, case studies often include triangulation of data as they are to describe a complex phenomenon. In broader terms, triangulation in educational sciences refers to relying on more than one data collection method to gather data about a topic (Cohen et al., 2018). In this respect, triangulation is considered a powerful method of evidencing that accounts for “concurrent validity” (Cohen et al., 2018, p. 265). To establish concurrent validity, the current study triangulated the data by collecting it through a questionnaire that consisted of open-ended and close-ended questions as well as semi-structured face-to-face interviews with the participants. Additionally, a document as the data source was analyzed through the content analysis of the chapter pertaining to the classroom observation system in the Instructor Handbook obtained from the administration of the institution. The relevant chapter is comprised of

information about the aims of the classroom observations and the responsibilities that are expected from the classroom observers and the EFL instructors.

The current study employed a qualitative case study design (Creswell, 2012). In Yin's (2014) terms, a case study is best to espouse when the intended study contributes to the understanding of a social phenomenon and related individuals in that case. With regard to this, in order to gather the data, the current study gathered qualitative data from forty-four EFL teachers, eight classroom observers, and three administrative personnel working at a foundation university in Ankara. A questionnaire (see Appendix A, B, and C), which consisted of both open-ended and closed-ended questions, was utilized to gather the data. While gathering qualitative data from participants, employing both open-ended and close-ended questions are considered an indispensable part of data collection. To illustrate, whereas open-ended questions play a significant role in providing quotations that are useful in retaining the real perceptions, feelings, and attitudes of the participants, closed-ended questions, on the other hand, are useful contributors to the reliability of research as they do not leave any space for rater subjectivity (Dörnyei & Taguchi, 2010). In addition to the questionnaire, to expand the qualitative data, semi-structured interviews (see Appendix D), which allow the researcher to make use of lists of questions as a guide and can digress for more perspectives or information, were carried out with seven EFL teachers, four classroom observers who actively observe the teachers' classes and provide them with feedback before and after the observations, and three individuals from the administration (Mackey & Gass, 2005).

Setting

This study was conducted at the Department of Basic English of a foundation university in Ankara, where the medium of instruction is English. The school offers

general and academic English to its students who are mainly comprised of Turkish EFL learners. In this regard, the academic curriculum is designed in a comprehensive way to prepare the students to pursue their education in their departments. Therefore, the teachers are to follow a course book specific to the level. The level heads are responsible for designing a syllabus for each term based on the course book and the teachers are supposed to follow and conduct the same activities specified by the syllabus. This means the teachers cannot add or omit the pages to be covered given in the syllabus, but they are free to adapt their lessons in the way they prefer to teach as long as they are in the same line with the syllabus.

Some of the instructors (the classroom observers) have been assigned to the professional development unit in which they carry out classroom observations with the teachers and arrange conferences and workshops for in-service training purposes. Although the administration has not given any information about the criteria these classroom observers were chosen by, the number of years they have been teaching at the school is the only common ground. Their teaching experience ranges between 10 to 13 years. Upon their selection to the professional development unit, the administration provided them with a teacher training course, which took two weeks during the summer. During the course, the classroom observers were given both theoretical knowledge and practice, which involved the observers' classroom observations with the teachers in the presence of the course's trainer in the pre-observation conference-during observation-post-observation conference. The classroom observers have been observing the teachers at the school for about five years. Furthermore, in this institution, the school administration expects the EFL instructors to be involved in classroom observations throughout the academic year. To this end, at the beginning of each academic year, the teachers are assigned

randomly to the classroom observers with whom they are going to conduct the classroom observations at least twice. However, the novice teachers are expected to be observed at least four times throughout an academic year unless their observers decide they need more classroom observations to better themselves in their teaching. Once the date of the observation and the class to be observed are agreed upon by both parties, the teachers are supposed to complete a pre-observation form in which they state the objectives of the lesson, materials to be used, and the issues that are likely to be encountered along with possible ways to overcome them. The next step is to have the one-to-one pre-observation conference session with the trainer prior to the observation to exchange ideas on the planned lesson and briefly talk about the class profile. A typical pre-observation conference session lasts approximately 20 minutes depending on the professional development aims of the teachers. After the observation, the teacher is expected to complete the post-observation form that requires them to respond to self-evaluation questions. These questions encourage the teachers to reflect on the lesson considering its strengths and areas to be further improved. Furthermore, the teacher is supposed to answer questions addressing the areas the teacher and the students are particularly happy with and to the involvement of the students in the lesson. Within 10 days following the observation, the classroom observer and the teacher come together to have a one-to-one post-observation conference. Once the observations are completed at least twice (might be more than two depending on the observer's decision on the observee's performance), the classroom observer gives a score out of 15 as a grade to the observee's teaching and improvement. Thus, classroom observations with the classroom observers are a part of the teacher evaluation system at the school.

The same classroom observation procedures are carried out with the reciprocal classroom observations with different colleagues at least four times throughout an academic year. The teachers decide on an area that they think they need to improve and visit a colleague's class to be able to self-reflect. Having completed the whole process, the teacher uploads the pre-observation and post-observation forms of the observed lessons on Moodle where they are collected and then kept by the head of the professional development unit.

Participants

The current study used convenience sampling method as a non-random sampling. Convenience sampling allows a researcher to collect data from "a group of individuals who (conveniently) are available for study" (Fraenkel et al., 2012, p. 99). In this respect, in accordance with the procedures of the departments, 44 EFL teachers whose teaching experience ranged from three to 26 years from the Department of Basic English took part in the study. The educational background of the participants also varied. That is, they were the graduates of the departments related to the English Language, which are Linguistics, English Language Teaching, and English Language Literature. Five out of 44 EFL teachers held an MA degree in English Language Literature and Teaching. Besides, 18 % of them had certain international teaching certificates such as CELTA, DELTA, and ICALT. All participants were Turkish except for five non-Turkish EFL teachers.

In addition to the EFL teachers, eight teachers who were assigned as classroom observers in the institution participated in the study, too. Their teaching experience ranged from six to 25 years. Three of them had an English Language Teaching background, two were graduates of English Language Literature, two from Linguistics, and one from Translation and Interpretation departments. Besides, all of

them had certain teaching certificates as well as the trainings they attended on teacher training. They were all of Turkish nationality.

Lastly, three Turkish participants (one professor, two coordinators) from the administration of the institution took part in the interview. Their ages ranged from 43 to 57 and their teaching experience was between 20 and 35 years. Two of the participants were graduates of the department of English Language Teaching and one from English Language and Literature. One of them held both MA and doctoral diplomas. Table 1 presents detailed demographic information of the participants.

Table 1
Demographic Information of the Participants

Variable	Category	n	%
Gender	Female	43	78.18
	Male	12	21.82
Nationality	Turkish	50	90.90
	Other	5	9.10
Position	Administrator	3	5.45
	Observer	8	14.55
	Teacher	44	80.00
Experience	0-5	7	12.72
	6-10	13	23.63
	11-15	18	32.72
	16-20	11	20.00
	21-25	4	7.27
	26 +	2	3.63
Major in BA	ELT	24	43.63
	ACL	4	7.27
	ELL	23	41.81
	Linguistics	5	9.09
MA		11	20.00
Ph.D.		3	5.45
Teaching Certificates		15	27.27

Instrumentation

As a data collection tool, a questionnaire (see Appendix A, B, and C), which was adapted from a study concentrated on a teacher appraisal scheme (Vanci-Osam & Aksit, 2000), was utilized in the current study. The language of the questionnaire was English. As the participants were English language teachers, it was not necessary to translate it into Turkish. However, before conducting the main study, piloting of the questionnaire was carried out in order to determine any possible confusing parts for the participants.

Several adaptations were also made to the original questionnaire. To illustrate, while the original questionnaire focused on targets set by teachers for the teacher appraisal scheme, the current questionnaire did not include this part. In addition to this, the instructor appraisal term was replaced with the classroom observation system. Further adaptations were made in terms of the appraiser and meeting concepts. Instead of the appraiser, the term classroom observer was used. The meeting concept was divided into two categories as pre-observation conference and post-observation conference.

The adapted questionnaire consisted of three parts each focusing on a different aspect of the study. The first part of the questionnaire included one question that required the participants to tick the relevant boxes about the type of observation they had been involved in previously. In the second part of the questionnaire, there were eight open-ended questions that aimed to unravel the perceptions of the participants on the current classroom observation system in the institution (e.g., *What do you think about the aims of the classroom observation system in your institution? How do you think the results of the classroom observation system is beneficial for the management?*). Finally, in the last part of the questionnaire, the participants were

asked to provide their demographic information as well as information about their academic background and work experience. More specifically, these questions were devised to ascertain whether the participants held MA or Ph.D. degrees or any relevant teaching certifications.

Pilot Study

Dörnyei and Taguchi (2010) assert that borrowed questionnaires need to have been through “extensive piloting” before the implementation (p. 40). That is, prior to the main study, necessary adjustments must be made in the data collection instrument based on the feedback from a small group of participants or individuals who assess the tool (Creswell, 2012). Based on this, the questionnaire was piloted by seven colleagues (seven EFL teachers) in order to ensure the intelligibility and the completeness of the questions so that any mistakes that needed correction could be identified. However, due to the limited number of teacher trainers, none of them were included in the piloting.

The pilot testing of the questionnaire took place on the 6th of March 2020. During the piloting of the questionnaire, the questionnaire completion time was investigated so that the participants could be informed about the approximate time needed to respond to the questions. It was calculated that the questionnaire could be completed by the participants within 10 minutes. The results of the piloting revealed that the wording of the 4th question leads to confusion (*What do you think about your degree of commitment to the classroom observation system up to now?*). Specifically, it was found out that the phrase *degree of commitment* was confusing to the participants, as they had difficulty indicating their degree. Therefore, the question was rephrased by removing the word *degree*. Apart from this, no further alterations were made to the questionnaire.

Data Collection Procedure

The questionnaire and the interview questions along with the detailed explanation of the design of the study were first sent to Bilkent University Ethics Committee for permission to conduct the study. The necessary documents regarding the research permission were also sent to the institution where the study was carried out. Once the permissions were granted from both of the institutions, the preparations for the data collection process were initiated by the researcher. After the preparations, the data were collected from the participants during the 2019-2020 spring semester. Initially, the questionnaire was intended to be given to all instructors (96) in the institution by hand. And, the interviews were planned to be carried out one-on-one with the ELTC classroom observers, ELTC administrators, and those teachers who volunteered by checking the relevant box on the questionnaire. However, due to restrictions imposed by the Covid-19 pandemic, the final version was converted into an online version using the Qualtrics website and emailed to the participants on the 11th of May 2020. The one-on-one interviews, on the other hand, were conducted through an online video conferencing software (Zoom) in English. The EFL teachers (seven participants) who had already completed the questionnaire were not sent the e-mail as they had already seen the questions in piloting. Therefore, the e-mails were delivered to 89 participants.

The participants were granted one week to complete the questionnaire and following three days after emailing the questionnaire, the researcher sent a reminder email to the participants. The response rate was 61 %. This response rate result was calculated by excluding the participants who already completed the questionnaire for piloting. According to (Baruch & Holtom, 2008), the response rate is an essential factor that determines the value of the research findings. The current study, in this

respect, had a high response rate although the questionnaire was distributed through email under extraordinary conditions. Upon the completion of the questionnaire, the answered questionnaires were downloaded and stored for the data analysis procedure.

The participants' responses also revealed that 28 % of them were willing to conduct an online interview through Zoom. Accordingly, each participant who indicated to volunteer for the interview was contacted by the researcher to arrange an appropriate interview date and time. The interviews with the participants took approximately 45 minutes. All the interviews were voice and video-recorded and were transcribed by the researcher for data analysis. For the sake of accuracy and reliability of the data, as a validation technique, member checking was carried out by the researcher (Creswell, 2012). To this end, the transcriptions of the interviews were emailed back to each participant so that they could check the accuracy of the account they had provided.

Data Analysis

The data collected for the current study involved qualitative data gathered through open and close-ended questions and semi-structured interview questions as well as some documents presenting procedures of the classroom observation system as the data source. Prior to the analysis, the data were firstly organized on a computer. For each participant, a different folder was created and audio recording files for the interviews and the Qualtrics output in Office Word format for questionnaire data were stored in the folder. Subsequently, the interviews were transcribed through Google Speech-to-Text. For the transcription process, the audio recordings were played and the Speech-to-Text application was utilized to convert the audio recordings to text. The speech recognition had to be stopped and started

several times due to the inaudible and incomprehensible words or phrases in the recordings and listened for several times so as to find out unnoticed phrases and features (Atkinson & Heritage, 1984). Finally, when the transcription of the data was completed, the document was checked by the researcher to ensure accuracy.

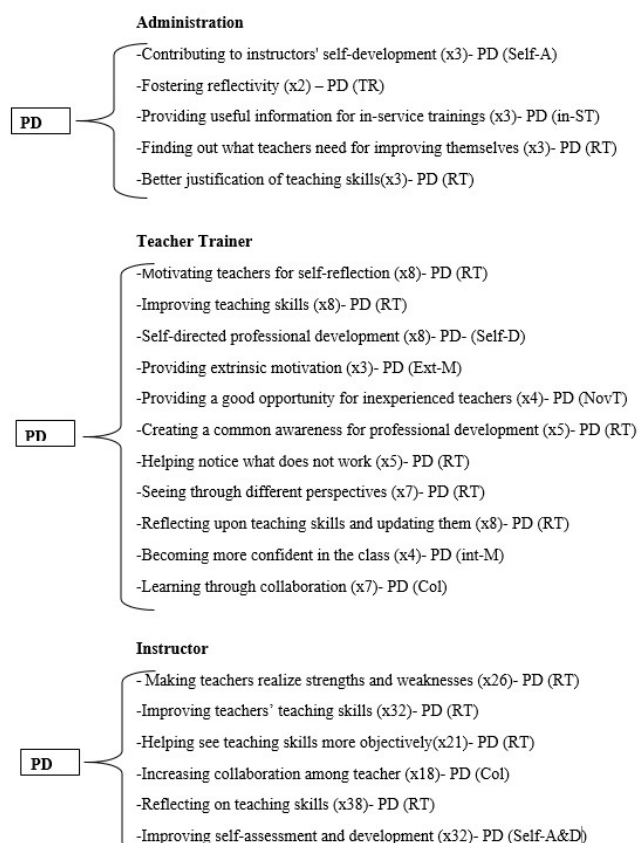
In order to jot down notes during data analysis, 2-inch margins were set on both sides of the Word document. In addition to this, other actions that happened during the interviews were also noted to be able to analyze the data extensively and uncover the meanings behind the words. To illustrate, the words and phrases such as [laughter], [long pause], [hmm], and [sarcastic], etc. were included in the transcription (Creswell, 2012).

In qualitative studies, the researcher seeks ways to obtain succinctly the main conclusions captured in the participants' responses with the help of codes to assign meaning to pieces of data (Fraenkel et al., 2012). In Dey's (2005) terms, analysis refers to "breaking data down into bits and then beating the bits together" (p. 31). In this sense, Fraenkel et al. (2012) suggest that "qualitative codes can be descriptive or interpretive and are usually generated a priori (selective coding) or emerge inductively (open coding) from data" (p. 436). According to the deductive approach, the categories and codes are predetermined and employed as a lens to have a better understanding of the data. On the other hand, the inductive approach suggests reading the whole data and put them into categories or labels. Each time the category or label emerges, its frequency counts, too. Regarding that, this study employed both inductive and deductive approaches to analyze the data collected through different instruments: an open-ended questionnaire, and semi-structured interviews. Additionally, the document presenting the procedure of the classroom observation system was used as the data source.

Since qualitative studies have the characteristics of often being process-oriented with potential categories that emerge, the analysis of open-ended questions is to follow “an inductive path that begins with few perceived notions, followed by a gradual fine-tuning and narrowing of focus” (Mackey & Gass, 2005, p. 163). Thus, as for the data obtained from the open-ended questionnaire, the content analysis technique was employed as this technique enables researchers to comprehend how the data are in line with the questions in the open-ended questionnaire (Dörnyei & Taguchi, 2010; Fraenkel & Wallen, 2009). Figure 1 shows how the data gathered via the open-ended questionnaire were coded and matched to the parent, sub-parent category. The numbers in parentheses show how frequently the codes emerged in the data.

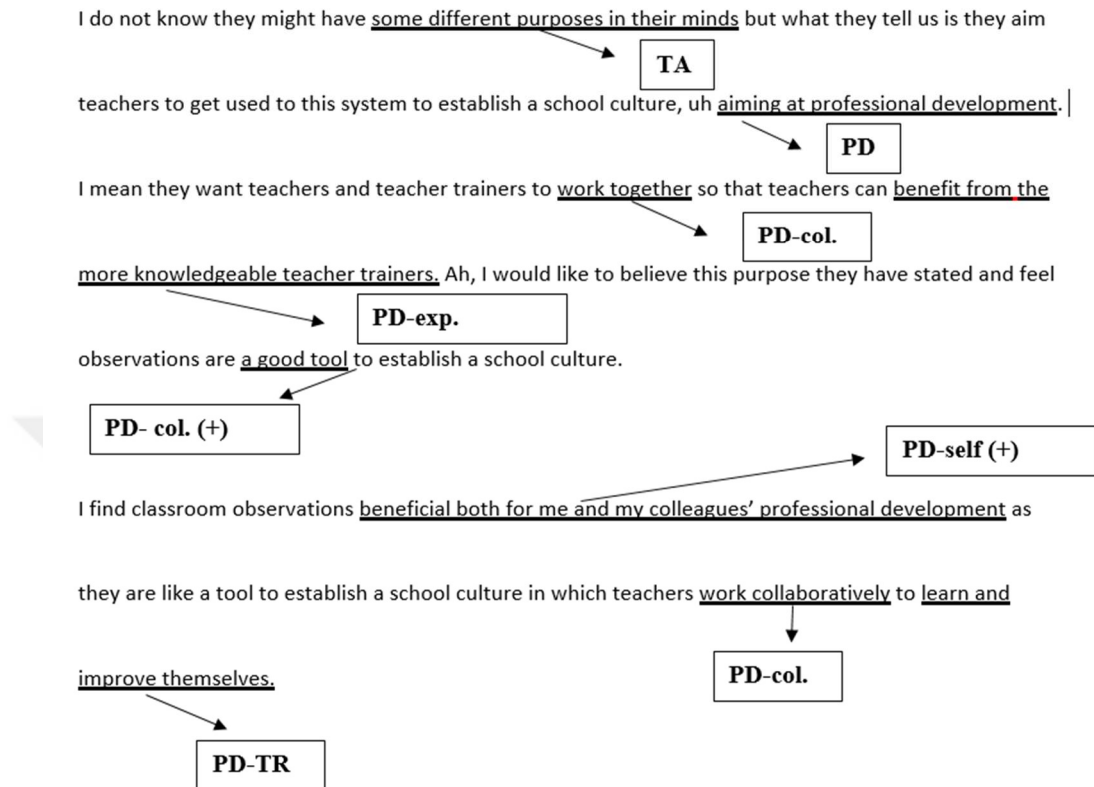
Figure 1

Sample Analysis of Open-ended Data

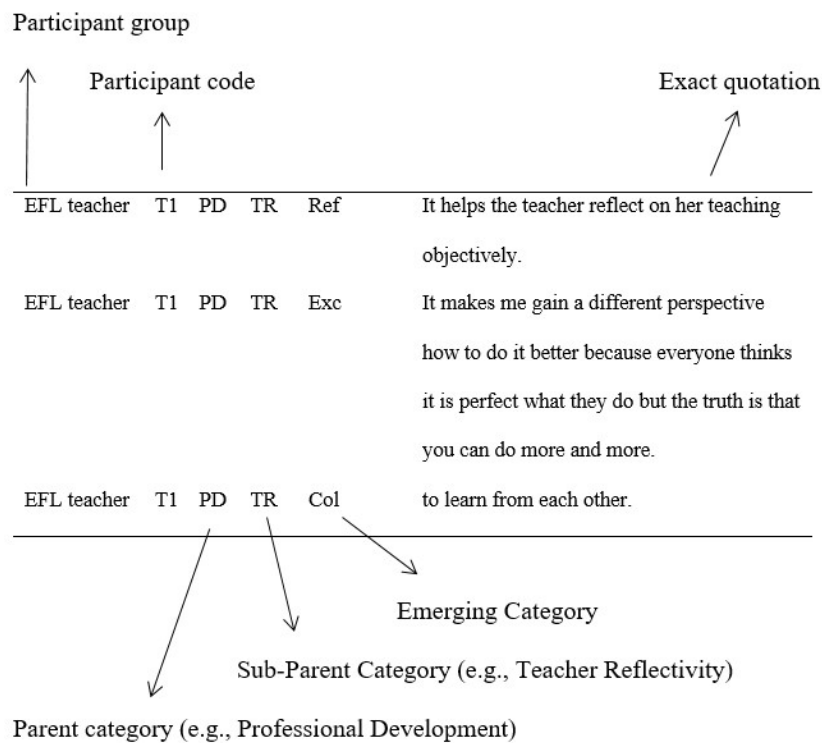


After implementing the open-ended questionnaire, the researcher contacted the participants who volunteered in the questionnaire for the interviews. When the first interview was completed, as also suggested by Silverman and Marvasti (2008), the researcher started analyzing and writing the data promptly because “we should never collect data without substantial analysis going on simultaneously” (Coffey & Atkinson, 1996, p. 2). As the first step to analyze qualitative data obtained from interviews, as Emerson et al. (1995) suggested, the researcher listened to the recorded interviews and read the notes taken to develop tentative ideas about emerging categories and the relationships among those to see the whole picture. As the interview questions were prepared according to the conceptual framework, much of the data already fitted to some categories suggested in the framework (Maxwell, 2013). However, as some more perceptions emerged, new codes were developed or added to the relevant categories so as not to allow initial interpretations to bias the results (Patton, 1987).

The data obtained from the interviews were analyzed by doing deductive content analysis (Fraenkel et al., 2012). To that end, a priori coding list was created, which consisted of parent and sub-parent codes derived from the conceptual framework of the study (Miles et al., 2014). Then, by reading the transcriptions of the interviews and listening to the recordings, the exact words or phrases of the participants were caught to be added to the starting list (Maxwell, 2013). Figure 2 shows how the transcriptions of the interviews were analyzed to add the data falling into the relevant categories in the starting list.

Figure 2*Interview Analysis Sample*

The priori coding list along with the emerging categories from the data were transferred to the Microsoft Excel Spreadsheet creating a spreadsheet for each set of data (Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2005, p. 246). In each spreadsheet, there are five columns stating the group of the participant, the parent and sub-parent category the data fit based on the conceptual framework, and the sub-sub parent category for the questions and the participant's exact quotation to which parent, sub-parent category, and the sub-sub parent category were related. Figure 3 below presents the analysis procedure in detail.

Figure 3*Sample Analysis of the Interviews*

As the data were further analyzed, some more categories and sub-categories were added to the relevant category in the priori list (see Appendix E). The categories that emerged later were given in bold so that the researcher could differentiate those while coding the data. Table 2 showing the list of priori coding parent and sub-parent categories as they are presented in the adapted conceptual framework along with the codes and what they stand for is given below.

Table 2*Sample Coding Categories*

Parent-Category	Sub-Parent Category	Code	Stands for
PD	TR	Rea	Making the teachers realize their strengths and weaknesses

Note. PD=Professional Development, TR=Teacher Reflectivity

Table 2 (cont'd)*Sample Coding Categories*

Parent-Category	Sub-Parent Category	Code	Stands for
PD	TR	Obj	Making the teachers see themselves more objectively
PD	TR	Self A	Assessing your teaching skills
PD	TR	Ref	Reflecting on the teaching skills critically
PD	TR	Disc	Discovering the missing details in teaching
PD	TR	Exc	Exchanging ideas on teaching
PD	TR	Col	Increasing collaboration among the teachers
PD	TR	NovT	Better reflection for novice teachers
PD	TR	ExpT	Better reflection for experienced teachers
PD	TR	Commt	Increasing commitment to the system & the school

Note. PD=Professional Development, TR=Teacher Reflectivity

Dey (2005) suggests that although it might change depending on the length and the breadth of the data that are to be analyzed, adding categories to the data set comes in useful for making the categories extensive enough to make further analyses and draw more reliable conclusions. Based on this, the researcher went over the data once again and added one more category, which was labeled as the *sub-sub parent category* to refer to the questions in the interview and the open-ended questionnaire. For example, the question asking about the aims of the classroom observation system in the institution was labeled as *aim* in the sub-sub parent category. In this way, the categories were organized in a way that presents both the questions and the answers of the participants along with the categories and codes. Table 3 below shows a sample of the second-level coding categories.

Table 3*Sample Second-level Coding Categories*

Parent Category	Sub-Parent Category	Sub-sub Parent Category	Code	Stands for
PD	TR	Aim	Rea	Making the teachers realize their strengths and weaknesses
PD	TR	Aim	Obj	Making the teachers see themselves more objectively
PD	TR	Aim	Self-A	Assessing your teaching skills
PD	TR	Aim	Ref	Reflecting on the teaching skills critically
PD	TR	Aim	Disc	Discovering the missing details in teaching
PD	TR	Aim	Exc	Exchanging ideas on teaching
PD	TR	Aim	Col	Increasing collaboration among the teachers
PD	TR	Adv-f-PD	NovT	Better reflection for novice teachers
PD	TR	Adv-f-PD	ExpT	Better reflection for experienced teachers
PD	TR	Adv-f-PD	Commt	Increasing commitment to the system & the school

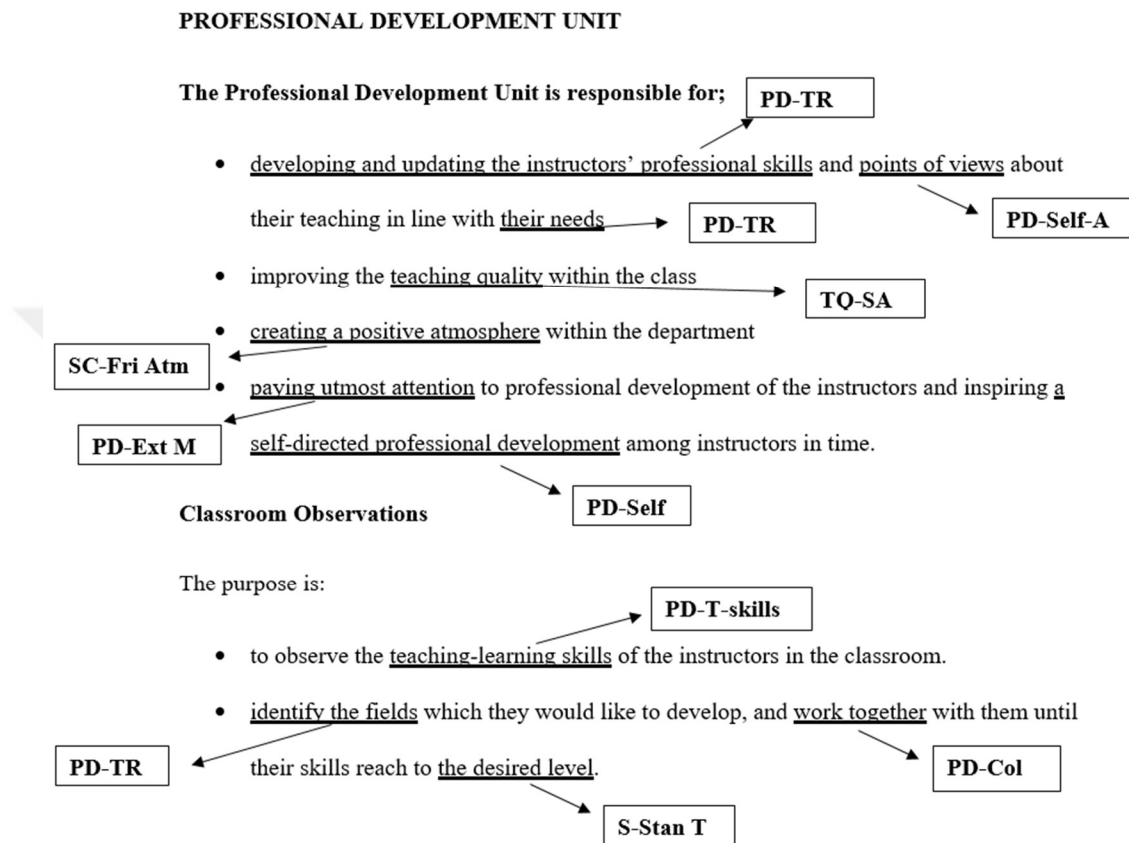
Note. PD=Professional Development, TR=Teacher Reflectivity

As qualitative research is conducted through “processes” rather than “instruments”, accessing the documents explaining processes is of utmost importance in order to obtain “triangulation of information and interpretation” that does not ideally have the researcher’s bias (Mackey & Gass, 2005, p. 165). Regarding this, the relevant part, explaining the classroom observations, was extracted from the Instructor Handbook that is given to novice teachers as a guidebook at the beginning of each academic year. This two-page long document included the aims of the classroom observation system and its contributions to the teachers’ professional development and their reflective teaching as well as the names of the classroom observers. Additionally, the document included the expected responsibilities from the teachers and the classroom observers regarding the classroom observation system and its procedures, namely the steps to be taken before and after the observations. As for the analysis of this document, the categories that fell into the abovementioned parent and sub-parent categories were underlined and labeled with the codes. The

researcher did not come across any new categories that did not appear before. Figure 4 shows a sample analysis of the document.

Figure 4

Sample Analysis of the Document



The data collection process and data analyses were conducted simultaneously, which contributed both to the consistency of the gathered data and the reliability of the analyses so that the researcher could minimize the risk of distorting subsequent data collection by initial interpretations (Patton, 1987). When the data seemed to become repetitive and no new categories emerged, the researcher stopped conducting interviews with the participants as the data had reached the *saturation point* (Glaser & Strauss, 1967).

Issues Related to Validity

Onwuegbuzie and Leech (2006) put forward many criteria that qualitative researchers need to abide so as to evaluate the accuracy of the results based on the data. In this sense, this study took some steps to ensure the validity of the findings.

Credibility

In order to refer to both validity and reliability, the term credibility is often used in qualitative studies (Fraenkel et al., 2012). Due to the nature of qualitative studies, ensuring trustworthiness and credibility of data is of utmost importance so that the findings can be free of subjective interpretation or any distortion and the way the participants perceive the social constructs can be depicted as naturally as possible (Strauss & Corbin, 1998). Credibility is determined through many strategies that vary in number. Therefore, the researcher followed the strategies mentioned below to ensure the credibility and trustworthiness of the qualitative data.

Triangulation

As a powerful method to ensure concurrent validity, triangulation refers to making use of multiple methods or samples to draw a conclusion from the study. If the researcher employs a variety of instruments aiming at obtaining different sources of information, the validity is, ideally, enhanced, too (Fraenkel et al., 2012). Therefore, this study obtained the qualitative data through multiple instruments; an open-ended questionnaire, in-depth semi-structured interviews. Additionally, the data coming from the documents explaining the social phenomenon were used as another source of data. On the other hand, triangulation does not only refer to using multiple instruments, it can also refer to gathering data from different samples or sub-samples (Cohen et al., 2018). Thus, three different samples were included in the study to be

able to address the research questions through different points of view: ELTC administrators, ELTC classroom observers, and EFL teachers.

Member Checking

Lincoln and Guba (1985) recommend that in order to establish trustworthiness, member checking needs to be done in qualitative research. Member checking is one of the inherent characteristics of qualitative research and it allows the researcher to ensure the accuracy of the data collected from participants (Creswell, 2012). In member checking, the researcher simply requests the participants to analyze and confirm the research findings to enhance the credibility of the research (Byrne, 2001). Correspondingly, member checking was conducted for the current study so as to enhance rigor. In order to do member checking, each interviewed participant was invited for another interview during which the transcribed data were reviewed by the researcher and the interviewee together (Birt et al., 2016). During the second interview, the participants were also asked some clarification questions that allowed the researcher to better comprehend what they meant.

Peer Debriefing

Another strategy to carry out credible qualitative research is peer debriefing. Peer briefing is a process whereby a disinterested person is integrated into the data analysis (Creswell, 2012). It is essential that the peer debriefer be a person who is not involved in the research study but knowledgeable enough about the method and the content of the study to be able to comment on the assumptions of the researcher (Byrne, 2001). In the current study, the researcher had extended discussions with an experienced colleague who is not knowledgeable about the context and the content of

the study. In the light of the discussions and the thought-provoking questions of the debriefer, the researcher was able to maintain objectivity and avoid researcher bias.

Transferability

As a pillar of qualitative studies, transferability refers to the applicability and fittingness of the findings and the design of the study (Byrne, 2001). In other words, it is the judgment of the extent to which findings can be transferred to other contexts with the same or similar design. That is to say, a study that has high transferability can be conducted in several other settings, as it directs researchers by means of a detailed explanation of the research setting and employed methods. In order to achieve transferability, the current study included thick descriptions, which described the employed method, context, participants, constructs of the study, and the classroom observation system in detail. With the help of the thick description of the phenomenon, the design of the study can be transferred to other contexts with different respondents.

Confirmability

Confirmability of the current study was achieved through the examination of the data and early data analysis (e.g., codes) by an independent examiner who was a Ph.D. student in English language teaching. The codes and interview transcripts were reviewed by this examiner and an extended discussion took place between the researcher and the examiner afterward.

Conclusion

In the methodology chapter, the research design of the study was presented thoroughly with reference to the research questions. The chapter included detailed information of the setting, participants of the study, instruments used, the pilot study, data collection procedures, and data analysis process. The data analysis part presents

a thorough description of how the data coming from different sources were analyzed along with the sample figures and tables so as to give a better picture of the data analyses. The following chapter explains in-depth data analysis procedures and displays the results of the data analysis in relation to the research questions.



CHAPTER 4: RESULTS

Introduction

This chapter intends to present the findings of the study that come from the analysis of data coming from three different groups of participants: ELTC administrators, ELTC classroom observers, and EFL teachers. The detailed results based on the main themes (*teacher appraisal, professional development, teaching quality, lesson planning, constructive feedback, standardization, school culture, and suggestions for improvement*) that come from the conceptual framework are given individually along with their phrases referring to the sub-themes (*gathering data, surveillance, lesson objectives, attentive eye, standardized teaching, collaboration, teacher reflectivity, student achievement, frequency, reciprocity, voluntariness, quality of the observers, flexibility, nonjudgmental*) in the table. Besides, the aforementioned themes and the phrases referring to the sub-themes are presented under the sub-sub themes (*aims, dis/advantages for professional development, dis/advantages for teaching quality, dis/advantages for the management, and suggestions*) extracted from the data collection instruments' questions. Following these, each area explored in the instruments is visited one by one by presenting the corresponding data coming from each group of participants. Finally, the similarities and differences among the perceptions of the participants, with regard to the classroom observation system, are presented within a table, which summarizes the whole result.

Perceptions on the Characteristics of the Classroom Observation System

Below how the ELTC administration, ELTC classroom observers, and the EFL teachers perceive the *aim* of the classroom observation system in the institution is represented under the following main themes: *professional development, teaching quality, teacher appraisal, school culture, and standardization*.

Perceptions on the Aims of the Classroom Observation System

The most frequent themes that emerged referring to the aim of the classroom observation system were *teacher appraisal, professional development, teaching quality, standardization, and school culture*. The table was prepared by placing the sub-sub themes under the relevant main themes. For example, the response “the system is aiming at making the teachers realize their strengths and weaknesses” given to the question asking the *aims* of the classroom observation system was found to be referring to the *professional development* main theme. The number of the participants giving similar responses was also provided with percentages in the table so that the whole picture drawing the perceptions of the participants on the *aims* of the classroom observation system could be presented. Table 4 shows the perceived *aims* of the classroom observation system under the main themes, the phrases referring to the sub-themes and sub-sub themes in detail.

Table 4

Most Frequent Themes Referring to the Aims

Main	Aims	A	Tot	O	Tot	T	Tot	Tot	Tot
Theme		N=3	%	N=8	%	N=44	%	N=55	%
PD	Making the teachers realize their strengths and weaknesses	2	66.7	3	37.5	8	18.1	13	23,6

Note. A=Administration, O=Observers, T=Teachers, Tot=Total, PD=Professional Development,

TQ=Teacher Quality, TA=Teacher Appraisal, SD=Standardization, SC=School Culture

Table 4 (cont'd)*Most Frequent Themes Referring to the Aims*

Main Theme	Aims	A N=3	Tot %	O N=8	Tot %	T N=44	Tot %	Tot N=55	Tot %
PD	Making the teachers see themselves more objectively	2	66.7	5	62.5	3	6.8	10	18.1
	Making the teachers assess their teaching skills	3	100	6	75.00	16	36.3	25	45.4
	Reflecting on the teaching skills critically	3	100	8	100	14	31.8	25	45.4
	Discovering the missing details in teaching	3	100	7	87.5	10	22.7	20	36.3
	Exchanging ideas on teaching	2	66.7	7	87.5	8	18.1	17	30.9
SD	Keeping teaching quality at a certain level	1	33.3	-	0	10	22.7	11	20.00
	Creating a friendly learning atmosphere	2	66.7	4	50.00	8	18.1	14	25.4
SC	Raising awareness on mutual learning	3	100	3	37.5	7	15.9	13	23.6
	Making the teachers acknowledge the culture	2	66.7	2	25.00	5	11.3	9	16.3

Note. A=Administration, O=Observers, T=Teachers, Tot=Total, PD=Professional Development,

TQ=Teacher Quality, TA=Teacher Appraisal, SD=Standardization, SC=School Culture

ELTC Administration Perceptions. All three members of the school administration stated that the main aim under the classroom observation system was to make the teachers involve themselves with the practices aiming at *teacher reflectivity* under *professional development*. That is, making the teachers “discover the missing details” in their teaching to be able to “reflect on the teaching skills critically” to teach better as this aim was also found in the document that was shared with the teachers and the classroom observers. It is stated in the document that “identify the fields which they would like to develop, and work together with them until their skills reach to the desired level.” two of the administration expressed that through classroom observation, it is aimed at “making the teachers see themselves

more objectively” so that the school administration could provide the chance of “becoming more aware of their strengths and weaknesses” as one of the participants said, “The aim is to make the teachers become more aware of their teaching skills and evaluate their performance with one's assistance.” Besides, two of the administration expressed “exchanging ideas on teaching” was another *aim* of the system that the school wants to achieve as one of the participants stated that through the classroom observations, the school intends to “increase collaboration” among the teachers.

Apart from the *teacher reflectivity*, the participants stated that increasing *student achievement* under the *teaching quality* is another underlying *aim* of the classroom observation system. While two of the participants expressed that the school administration’s other *aim* is to “increase student success”, one of the participants stated it also aims at “easing understanding students’ needs” for the teachers and eventually “contributing to their achievement.”

As for *standardized teaching* under *standardization*, only one of the participants stated that via the classroom observations, it becomes more possible to “keeping teaching quality at a certain level” in which all the teachers endeavor to increase the quality of teaching at the institution. It is also stated in the document that “The system is aiming at working together with them until their skills reach to the desired level.” When it comes to creating a *school culture* collaboratively, all of the participants expressed that the classroom observation system also *aims* at creating a school culture that is for “raising awareness on mutual learning” among the teaching staff. In the document, it is given that “The system is aiming at working together”. Besides, two of the participants expressed that “making the teachers acknowledge the

system” is another *aim* of the classroom observation system so that they will get used to be observed for their professional development.

ELTC Observers Perceptions. The most frequent main theme that emerged was *teacher reflectivity* under *professional development* in the ELTC classroom observers’ responses. All of the participants stated that the classroom observation system’s *aim* is to make the teachers “reflect on the teaching skills critically”. Besides, a great majority of the participants stated that the classroom observation system’s *aims* are “exchanging ideas on teaching” and making the teachers “discover the missing details in their teaching”. Relatedly, more than half of the participants stated that the *aim* is to “make the teachers assess their teaching skills”. Almost half of the observers believed that the classroom observation system has the *aim* of “making the teachers see themselves more objectively” as one of the participants said, “Teacher reflectivity and classroom observations go hand in hand. Classroom observations encourage teachers to reflect on their teaching and keep them aware of their skills.” There were three participants who believed the *aim* of the classroom observation system’s aim is to “make the teachers realize their strengths and weaknesses” as one said, “Observations *aim* to make the teacher notice what s/he is missing to teach better.” Another one said, “What the system is aiming I believe is that making the teachers become aware of their weaknesses and improve them.” Few classroom observers thought that the system is also aiming at “increasing collaboration among the teachers” as one said, “As we observe the classes, we are given the chance of getting to know each other both professionally and personally, which is one of the *aims* of the system.”

As for *student achievement* under *teaching quality*, only some of the participants believed the system is aiming at “improving student success” as one

participant said, “The system *aims* to augment the teaching quality in the class by creating a learning and sharing atmosphere.” There were two classroom observers who thought that the system is for “easing understanding students’ needs” and “contributing to students’ achievement”.

Lastly, some of the participants believed that the *aim* is to promote *collaboration* under *school culture*. Half of them stated that it is for “creating a friendly learning atmosphere” as one said, “We observe the teachers in order for learning from each other in a friendly atmosphere that allows giving and receiving feedback professionally.” A few of them stated that it is for “raising awareness on mutual learning”, which contributes to collaboration among the teaching staff. Two classroom observers thought that the system is for “making the teachers acknowledge the culture” so that they can feel relaxed while being observed.

EFL Teachers Perceptions. *Teacher reflectivity* under *professional development* was found to be the most frequent main theme in the EFL teachers’ responses. One-third of the participants believed that the classroom observation system is aiming at “making the teachers assess their teaching skills” and “reflecting on the teaching skills critically”. Regarding this, one of them said, “Ultimately we are striving to help our students achieve a certain level of proficiency in English and become autonomous learners; and the observation system is to assist us to be better teachers.” Another one said, “They *aim* to improve their teachers' abilities in any way by making reflections on their teaching.” One fourth of the participants believed the system is for making the teachers “discover the missing details in teaching” with the help of the classroom observers as one of them said, “In our institution, the observation system is used to improve our teaching skills by getting suggesting new ideas from teacher trainers and our colleagues, so the *aim* of the system is positive.”

eight participants thought that the classroom observation system is existing to “make the teachers realize their strengths and weaknesses” in their teaching and “exchange ideas on teaching” as one said, “Their *aim* is to reinforce the strengths and to improve the weaknesses of the instructors.” Besides, four participants believed the *aim* is to “increase collaboration among the teachers” whereas three participants thought the classroom observation system is aiming at “making the teachers see themselves more objectively”.

As for *student achievement* under *teaching quality*, one-fourth of the participants believed that the classroom observation system *aims* to “contribute to students’ achievement” whereas eight participants thought it is for “improving student success”. Additionally, there were five participants who believed the system intends to ease understanding students’ needs. One of them made the following comment about the *aim* of the classroom observation system: “Thinking about the ultimate goal, I think the *aim* is to equip the teachers with better teaching skills so that they will be able to understand what the students need and how to address those needs.”

Other frequent main themes that were found in the EFL teachers’ responses were *gathering data* and *surveillance* under *teacher appraisal*. One-fourth of the participants believed that the school has the classroom observation system “to evaluate the teachers’ performance”. One of the participants made the following comment in the interview: “The *aim* is to observe the quality of teaching practice and to evaluate the teacher to be able to score her by defining the weaknesses and strengths.” There were 10 EFL teachers who thought the *aim* is “to monitor the teachers”. One of the EFL teachers said, “Through the observation system, they can see that everything goes in a smooth way and everyone obeys the rules.” There were

also eight EFL teachers who believed the *aim* of the classroom observation is to “inspect the teachers” in their classes and seven EFL teachers who thought the school has the classroom observation system “to spy the teachers”. Furthermore, six EFL teachers believed it is to decide “to employ or not” the teachers based on their performance. There a few teachers who thought the system is a tool “to record the teachers’ performance” and “to control what the teachers do” in their classes as one said, “I think the school uses this system to control the teachers in an indirect way. It is a way to check who is doing and who is not doing his job right.” Finally, there were three EFL teachers who thought the *aim* is “to check how the teachers teach” and “to document the teachers’ weaknesses”.

When it comes to *standardized teaching* under *standardization*, one-fourth of the participants thought the *aim* is “to keep teaching quality at a certain level” as one said, “Observations are like tools that the administration uses to standardize the teaching quality at the ideal level. In doing so, both the teachers with weaknesses and the school administration benefit from the system.”

As for *collaboration* under *school culture*, there were some EFL teachers who thought the *aim* is “to create a friendly learning atmosphere” and “to raise awareness on mutual learning”. Additionally, five of the participants believed the system *aims* “to make the teachers acknowledge the system”.

Perceptions on the Dis/advantages for Professional Development of the Classroom Observation System

Professional development, *teacher appraisal*, and *school culture* were the most frequent themes that emerged in the participants’ responses on the classroom observation system’s *dis/advantages for professional development*. Table 5 presents the results: numbers of the responses along with the percentages.

Table 5

Most Frequent Themes Referring to the Dis/Advantages for Professional Development

Main Theme	Dis/Advantages for Professional Development	A N=3	Tot %	O N=8	Tot %	T N=44	Tot %	Tot N=55	Tot %
PD	Better reflection for novice teachers	3	100	6	75.00	15	34.00	24	43.6
	Better reflection for experienced teachers	2	66.7	2	25.00	4	9.00	8	14.5
	Disadvantageous for experienced teachers	-	0	-	0	11	25.00	11	20.00
	Gaining different perspectives	3	100	7	87.5	24	54.5	34	61.8
	Discovering strengths and weaknesses	3	100	5	62.5	23	52.7	31	56.3
	Updating content knowledge	3	100	6	75.00	7	15.9	16	29.9
	Feeling more confident	2	66.7	4	50.00	10	22.7	16	29.9
TA	Providing a chance to get scores to improve professionally	1	33.3	-	0	-	0	1	1.82
SC	Demotivating the teachers	-	0	-	0	11	25.00	11	20.00
	Motivating for learning from each other	2	66.7	3	37.5	6	13.6	11	20.00

Note. A=Administration, O=Observers, T=Teachers, Tot=Total, PD=Professional Development,

TA=Teacher Appraisal, SC=School Culture

ELTC Administration Perceptions. The most frequent theme referring to the classroom observation system's *dis/advantages for professional development* was found to be *teacher reflectivity* under *professional development*. All three members of the administration believed that the classroom observation system is especially advantageous for the teachers who do not have much teaching experience as it fosters "better reflection for novice teachers" as one said, "I believe almost everyone benefits from the system to some extent but it is especially beneficial for the teachers who have just started teaching." All participants thought it helps the teachers "gain different perspectives" in teaching. Besides, all participants believed the classroom observation system is beneficial since it helps the teachers "discover strengths and weaknesses", and "update content knowledge" as one of the participants said, "Observations help teachers notice the areas they might not have thought about

before. This would help them self-reflect and improve themselves professionally.” In the document, the potential *advantages of the classroom observation system* are stated as “developing and updating the instructors’ professional skills and points of views about their teaching in line with their needs”. In addition to this, “inspiring a self-directed professional development among instructors in time” is stated as another *advantage of the classroom observation system* in the document.

Additionally, there were two participants who thought the classroom observation system provides “better reflection for experienced teachers” and contributes to “feeling more confident” in the class while teaching. However, there was one participant who said, “What I have observed is that some senior teachers are dissatisfied with the system as they might be thinking they are good enough and they do not need to improve themselves.”

As for the *teacher appraisal*, there was only one participant who thought the classroom observation system is *advantageous for the teachers’ professional development* as it “provides a chance to get scores to improve professionally”, which would be added to their teaching performance, which is one of the criteria in the teacher appraisal system of the school.

When it comes to *collaboration under school culture*, two participants thought the classroom observation system is *beneficial for the professional development of the teachers* because it “motivates for learning from each other” as one of the participants said, “This system enables the management to create a school culture in which the teachers collaborate to develop themselves.” In the document, the advantage is stated as “creating a positive atmosphere within the department”.

ELTC Observers Perceptions. The main theme that emerged in the ELTC classroom observers’ responses was *teacher reflectivity under professional*

development. The majority of the participants stated the classroom observation system is useful for professional development because it helps both the teachers and the observers “gain different perspectives” in teaching as one said, “It helps me to see different settings and different perspectives. Although sometimes we think alike with most of the teachers, there is still diversity in teachers' beliefs and cognition.” Similarly, the majority believed it provides “better reflection novice teachers” as one of them said, “It is also good for new teachers. They can get used to teaching and make a practice of the things they learned at university.” Another one said, “I can say that the system is most beneficial to the teachers who have a few years of experience, they have the chance of getting feedback and improving themselves professionally.” Another *advantage of the classroom observation for professional development* that was found by the majority of the participants is “updating content knowledge” as one said, “I try to reflect myself and my own teaching after each and every observation and try to update myself.” More than half of the participants believed the classroom observation system is useful for their professional development in terms of “discovering strengths and weaknesses” in teaching. One said, “Sometimes there might be things that I forgot or do not know (related to the field of ELT). With the help of the peer, I can notice those and act accordingly.” Another one said, “Classroom observations can help a teacher see his or her strengths so it can intrinsically motivate the teacher to perform better.” Half of the participants thought it also contributes to “feeling more confident” in the classroom as one said, “I really learn a lot in a limited time and become more aware and confident in the classroom.” There were a few participants who thought the classroom observation system provides “better reflection for experienced teachers” as one said, “Some experienced

teachers try to change their old habits and adapt themselves to modern teaching styles.”

As for *collaboration under school culture*, one-third of the participants believed the classroom observation system is *advantageous* because it “motivates for learning from each other” as one said, “I have always believed that teachers learn a lot from each other and each other's experiences. Therefore, I benefit a lot from being observed and observing.”

EFL Teachers Perceptions. *Teacher reflectivity under professional development* was found to be the most frequent theme in the EFL teachers' responses. More than half of the participants believed that “gaining different perspectives” is the *advantage of the classroom observation system* as one said, “It makes me gain a different perspective about how to do it better because everyone thinks what they do is perfect but the truth is that you can always do better.” Another one said, “They can help us look at our teaching style from a fresh perspective.”

Another one made the following comment:

Actually, I learn a lot of things through classroom observations. Sometimes as an observee, it motivates me to find a better way to teach and have fun at the same time. It makes me put a huge effort to prove myself 'I can do it if I want to', do research on various activities and give these activities a go.

Although I try different activities in some of my classes, I keep sticking to them if it goes well in one class, but through observations, I sometimes add different activities to this activity pool in my mind.

Furthermore, almost half of the participants believed the classroom observation system helps them “discover strengths and weaknesses” in their teaching skills as one said, “They revealed some weaknesses that I have, but what is more

important for me personally, the observers pointed at some strengths that I didn't know about.” Another one said, “I think that they can be helpful in developing us as teachers in multiple ways. The observer can see and feel our weak points, hence would make the most suitable suggestions.” Another teacher said:

I think I have learned lots of things from my teacher trainers so far. I have developed myself in many areas such as TTT (teacher talking time), correcting the mistakes of the students, giving instruction, etc. However, learning is not a process that you can predict the end. As long as my teaching career lasts, my learning and development will go on. Therefore, the system has developed me so far and it will do in the future.

Another teacher made the following comment:

I haven't had any teacher training (formation) education, so I learn a lot because I sometimes do activities that are not very easy to be understood by the students so when I am criticized by an external professional, I become aware of what does not work and try to be better next time.

Nearly one-third of the participants thought the classroom observation system is useful because it provides “better reflection for novice teachers” as one of the teachers said:

Classroom observations are extremely beneficial for novice teachers who do not know the system in the school. They help them get used to the system of the school and student profile as well as providing suggestions from an experienced peer.

Another teacher said, “I should say yes to this because sharing our personal experiences with our colleagues and actively seeking feedback are important steps to develop ourselves professionally especially in our first years in teaching.”

On the other hand, one-fourth of the participants thought the classroom observation system is “disadvantageous for experienced teachers” as one said, “As a senior teacher who has been teaching for 16 years, I have not learned anything new and useful from the observations that were made by my institution. They only waste time.” Another experienced teacher said, “I am not sure if the observations have contributed to my professional development as I haven’t learned anything new, I only get observed only because the administration says so.” There was one teacher who thought it is *not useful for professional development* due to the incompetency of the classroom observers. The participant said, “The professionalism, objectivity, and expertise of the PDU members are questionable. Thus, I don’t believe they are beneficial for my own professional development.”

There were some teachers who believed the classroom observation system is useful because it helps the teachers “feel more confident” in their classes as one of the participants said, “I feel more confident because I can be sure about my abilities and I have the opportunity to improve my weaknesses thanks to the observations.” Another one said, “I can see the possible benefits or disadvantages of a technique before I start teaching in that class, which makes me feel more confident.”

Another *advantage of the classroom observation system* that emerged in some teachers’ responses was “updating content knowledge” as one of the teachers said, “Observations can sometimes refresh my prior ELT knowledge, which is good for me.” Another teacher said, “To put it simply, the observations help me remember the things that I learned at the university years ago, so it is good for my professional self-improvement.” Besides, there were a few teachers who believed the classroom observation system provides “better reflection for experienced teachers” as one

teacher said, “As a senior teacher, I believe outsiders’ views can portray our teaching as a wholesome picture, which is an advantage for reflection”.

Surveillance under *teacher appraisal* was found to be the second most frequent main theme in the participants’ responses. One-fourth of the participants believed the classroom observation system *does not contribute to their professional development* because it “demotivates the teachers” as one of the teachers said, “I think they are aiming at controlling the teachers not helping develop the teachers professionally. Observations can only be useful when they are administered in an unthreatening manner and are not forced upon the instructor.” Another teacher made the following comment:

A piece of good advice can always help me to refresh myself. But when we consider the numerical result, the point, the mark (whatever it is) given by the PDU, they don’t say much about my teaching performance, don’t help much. I think getting numerical points upon your performance might demotivate teachers, I mean it does demotivate me.

Lastly, *collaboration* under *school culture* was another theme that emerged in the participants’ responses. There were a few teachers who believed the classroom observation system is *advantageous for professional development* because it “motivates for learning from each other” as one of the teachers said, “I learned a lot from the observations thanks to my PDU. She was understanding and willing to explain how I should better myself. I actually enjoyed working with her for my professional development.” Another teacher said, “I get motivated due to the positive constructive feedbacks of my observers, so I am encouraged to improve myself by collaborating with the observers.”

Perceptions on the Dis/advantages for Teaching Quality of the Classroom

Observation System

Teaching quality, teacher appraisal, standardization, and school culture were the most frequent themes that emerged in the participants' responses on the classroom observation system's *dis/advantages for teaching quality*. Table 6 presents the numbers of the responses along with the percentages.

Table 6

Most Frequent Themes Referring to the Dis/Advantages for Teaching Quality

Main Theme	Dis/Advantages for Teaching Quality	A N=3	Tot %	O N=8	Tot %	T N=44	Tot %	Tot N=55	Tot %
TQ	Better teaching quality in the institution	3	100	6	75.00	10	22.7	19	34.5
	Better teaching quality for novice teachers	2	66.7	3	37.5	4	9.00	9	16.3
	Not advantageous	-	0	-	0	13	29.5	13	23.6
TA	Threatening due to the performance score	-	0	-	0	7	15.9	7	12.7
	Creating fear and job insecurity	-	0	-	0	5	11.3	5	9.00
SD	Maintaining a standardized teaching	2	66.7	3	37.5	6	13.6	11	19.9
SC	Motivating for learning from each other	3	100	5	62.5	7	15.9	15	27.2

Note. A=Administration, O=Observers, T=Teachers, Tot=Total, TQ=Teacher Quality, TA=Teacher

Appraisal, SD=Standardization, SC=School Culture

ELTC Administration Perceptions. The most frequent theme that emerged in the ELTC administration responses was *teaching quality*. All three participants believed the classroom observation system is *advantageous* for “better teaching quality in the institution” as one of the participants said, “Of course it improves *teacher quality* in the school and it brings better student achievement at the end.” Another participant said, “The students also benefit from the system in the long run as they are taught via better teaching skills and methods.” Another one said, “As it keeps the instructors alert, they learn more about teaching from the trainers and their peers, which is good for teaching quality.” Another one made the following comment:

I believe if the teacher is enthusiastic about improving him/herself, they can reflect their enthusiasm to their students. If both parties are motivated, learning can take place. If you feel that you are empowered with strategies, skills, and techniques well enough, you can give better lessons and in this way, you can feel satisfied. So, you can work harder to do your best each time. That's why I think it contributes to teaching quality.

Similarly, it is stated in the document that the classroom observation system is *advantageous for teaching quality* because it “improves the teaching quality within the class”. There were two participants who believed the classroom observation system is *advantageous for teaching quality* because it provides “better teaching quality for novice teachers” as one said:

Through the observations, the school provides opportunities for increasing teaching quality. This is especially advantageous for the teachers who don't have much teaching experience because they get the chance of being observed, getting feedback from a more experienced teacher, and have better teaching quality in the end.

The second most frequent theme that emerged in the participants' responses was *collaboration under school culture*. All three participants believed that it is *advantageous for teaching quality* because it “motivates for learning from each other” as one of the participants said, “The observers and the teachers collaborate for a common aim, which is increasing teaching quality of the school. The observations play a great role in promoting this notion.” Another one said, “The teachers and the observers work together to help improve professionally and get better in teaching. Of course, the result would contribute to the teaching quality of the school.”

Lastly, *standardized teaching* under *standardization* emerged in the participants' responses. There were two members of the administration who believed the classroom observation system helps to enable "maintain a standardized teaching" in the school as one of them said, "They help keep the quality up at a certain standard in the school."

ELTC Observers Perceptions. The most frequent theme that was found in the participants' responses was *teaching quality*. The majority of the participants believed the classroom observation system ensures "better teaching quality in the institution" as one participant said, "All teachers are quite aware of the importance of the classroom observation and its contribution to teaching quality contrary to the state school instructors. Ours are fully acquainted. This improves lesson planning and delivery skills in the school." Another one said, "Qualified teachers increase the quality of education."

There were three classroom observers who believed the classroom observation system provides "better teaching quality for novice teachers" as one of them said, "For the instructors who take the received feedback into account in their teaching (mostly the novice teachers), it is very beneficial. On the other side, for the ones who are resistant, (mostly the senior teachers), it is useless." Another one said, "The awareness of the benefit of the observations should be higher. Only then it would affect the quality. What I have observed is only the teachers who are new at teaching are enthusiastic about the classroom observations."

The second most frequent theme that emerged in the participants' responses was *collaboration* under *school culture*. More than half of the participants thought the classroom observation system is advantageous for teaching quality because it "motivates for learning from each other" as one of the participants said, "They create

and encourage common awareness on professional development and help to create a school culture striving for increasing teaching quality.” Another classroom observer said:

The Observations provide a good opportunity for colleagues to share their experiences with each other so they can make use of them whether they are experienced or inexperienced. In doing so, the teaching quality at the school increases as time passes.

Lastly, *standardization* was found in the responses of the participants. There were three classroom observers who thought the classroom observation system provides the advantage of “maintaining a standardized teaching” as one participant said, “I believe it has been advantageous for teaching quality so far, however, if all the teachers are involved wholeheartedly in the system, the teaching quality of the school will be increased and standardized.”

EFL Teachers Perceptions. The most frequent theme that emerged in the participants’ answers was *teaching quality*. Nearly one-third of the participants thought the classroom observation system is “not advantageous” for teaching quality as one of the participants said, “I do not think most of the instructors take it seriously. As a result, the *teaching quality* is not affected by any of the observations and the results of it.” Another teacher said, “I don't think it is beneficial as teachers do not teach as they always do during the observations.” Another participant made the following comment:

I don't think it has a huge impact on the overall teaching quality. Teaching quality can be affected by mood, content, students, technology, environment, lack of knowledge, and so on. Especially, if it is seen as an obligation that

you need to fulfill, it is not beneficial at all. I always believe that it is just a tiny detail in the big picture.

There was one participant who thought the classroom observations do not show the real performance of the observed teacher. The participant said, “Normally, the system should be contributing to the overall teaching quality. However, the observations are merely preset classroom practices that do not reflect the reality of the observed teacher.” Another participant made a similar comment saying that “I don't believe that it will be beneficial for the quality of the school. But of course, there are teachers who take their jobs seriously so they come prepared to all of their classes, not just the classes which they will be observed.” Another participant thought the classroom observation system does not work because of the observers. The participant made the following comment:

Quite frankly the success of classroom observations depends largely on the observer. We need to consider the acceptability factor, otherwise, it would not be a useful practice. What I mean is assigning a less qualified person to observe a class of a senior and highly qualified teacher might entail unsatisfactory results which would even create tension.

Another participant made a similar comment: “If it was implemented in the correct way, I mean if the observers were proficient enough to provide constructive criticism to develop our teaching skills, it would also add up to the teaching quality in the school.”

On the other hand, nearly one-fourth of the participants thought *the classroom observation system is useful* in terms of providing “better teaching quality in the school” as one of the teachers said that “It makes teachers extra careful in their lessons and more successful.” Another teacher shared a similar opinion stating that

“Through the observations, the teachers learn a lot from each other and they improve the teaching quality in the school.” Another teacher talked about its indirect effect on teaching quality stating that “I guess it might have an indirect impact in the long run in the case that the instructors all complete their observation tasks and really reflect on their teaching habits.”

There were a few teachers who thought the classroom observations provide “better teaching quality to novice teachers” as one of the teachers said, “It is somehow useful especially for the new teachers to understand the system of the school. However, not for the senior teachers. I mean it doesn’t contribute to the teaching skills of the seniors, unfortunately.” Another teacher made the following comment:

For the freshman, it can be beneficial but for the seniors it depends. It is not so satisfactory as it sometimes loses its functionality but as it gives some standards and introduces some procedures and processes, it can contribute to the teachings of some instructors who don't have an ELT background or new in teaching.

The second most frequent theme that emerged was *teacher appraisal*. There were some teachers who believed the classroom observations are not useful for teaching quality in the school because they are “threatening due to the performance score” as one of the teachers made the following comment:

As long as everyone takes the observations and feedback into consideration and really tries to improve themselves and their teaching, the overall teaching quality will also increase. However, it can only happen when there is no fear. If the instructors are threatened in some ways, they will only put on a show during the observations and this can lead to no development for the

instructors or the education provided. This is exactly what is happening in this school.

Another teacher shared this notion in the following way: “If it is done by the ideal way, instructors may really learn from each other. most instructors are really resourceful people. but being observed lest you won’t get a warning yellow envelope from the administration will never benefit anyone.” Besides, there were some teachers who believe the classroom observation system is *not useful for teaching quality* as it “creates fear and job insecurity” as one of the teachers said that “it only helps create an atmosphere of fear and job insecurity among the teachers, nothing else.” Another said, “The observations keep me alert by making me keep an eye on alternative jobs.”

Collaboration under school culture emerged in the participants’ responses. Some teachers thought *the classroom observation system is useful for teaching quality* in the school as it “motivates for learning from each other” as one teacher said, “The observations enable learning a lot from each other and increasing the overall teaching quality.” Another teacher said, “Provided we share our classroom experience with each other, the observation system enhances our teaching abilities and teaching quality inevitably.” Another teacher made the following comment: It affects the teaching quality in a positive way as the instructors can learn from their colleagues to think in different ways and do their job better and more practical.”

Lastly, *standardization* was found in the teachers’ responses for the classroom observation system’s *advantages and disadvantages on teaching quality*. Some teachers believed the classroom observation system helps “maintain a standardized teaching” as one of the participants said, “The instructors can catch up with their colleagues in some teaching skills that they do not know about or haven’t

tried before, so it provides the standardization in instruction in the school.” Another teacher stated “Actually, by being observed, you have a kind of standard in teaching. Instructors can see their weaknesses and strengths and they can improve themselves in that way.” Another teacher stated, “I believe observations are necessary for standardization in teaching quality as they help ensure efficiency.”

Perceptions on the Dis/advantages for the Management of the Classroom

Observation System

Professional development, teaching quality, teacher appraisal, standardization, and school culture were the most frequent themes that emerged in the participants’ responses on the classroom observation system’s *dis/advantages for the management*. Table 7 presents the numbers of the responses along with the percentages.

Table 7

Most Frequent Themes Referring to the Dis/Advantages for the Management

Main Theme	Dis/Advantages for the Management	A N=3	Tot %	O N=8	Tot %	T N=44	Tot %	Tot N=55	Tot %
PD	Arranging in-service trainings	2	66.7	3	37.5	8	18.1	13	23.6
	Improving the teachers professionally	3	100	5	62.5	12	27.2	18	32.7
TQ	Better teaching quality	3	100	5	62.5	4	9.00	12	21.5
TA	Evaluating the teachers’ performance	-	0	-	0	15	34.00	15	27.2
SD	Ensuring a standardization in teaching quality	3	100	4	50.00	16	36.3	23	41.8
SC	Having a motivating environment	3	100	2	25.00	-	0	5	9.00
	No idea	-	0	1	12.5	5	11.3	6	10.9

Note. A=Administration, O=Observers, T=Teachers, Tot=Total, PD=Professional Development,

TQ=Teaching Quality, TA=Teacher Appraisal, SD=Standardization, SC=School Culture

ELTC Administration Perceptions. One of the most frequent themes that emerged in the participants’ responses was *teacher reflectivity* under *professional development*. All three members of the administration thought the classroom

observation system is beneficial as it “improves the teachers professionally” as one of the participants made the following comment:

The management would like to have good teachers. In the job interview, it may not be possible to understand quite well if the teacher is good or not since the interviews go well for the ones who are good at marketing. With the help of observations, it becomes possible to detect the ones who need improvement, and support them so that they can boost up their skills.

This also emerged in the document as “inspiring a self-directed professional development among instructors in time”. Besides, there were two participants who believed *the observations are beneficial* as they enable the management to “arrange in-service trainings” based on the observed weaknesses of the teachers as one of the participants said, “It helps management to prepare in-service trainings based on the outcomes of the observations, seeing what weaknesses need to be improved.”

Another most frequent theme that was found was *teaching quality*. All three members from the administration believed the classroom observation system is *beneficial for the management* as it ensures “better teaching quality” as one of them said, “As the teachers better themselves in their teaching, the teaching quality gets better correspondingly.” Another participant said, “Of course the management benefits from the system because it provides a chance to find out what the teachers need so that they will be able to teach better, which at the end increases teaching quality.”

Standardization was found to be another most frequent theme in the responses of the participants from the administration. All three members believed “ensuring a standardization in the teaching quality” is an *advantage of the classroom*

observation system for the management as one stated, “It allows to keep a standardization in teaching among the teaching staff.”

Lastly, another most frequent theme was found to be *school culture*. “Having a motivating environment” emerged in the answers of all three members of the administration as a benefit of the classroom observation system for the management. This is also stated in the document as “creating a positive atmosphere within the department”.

ELTC Observers Perceptions. The most frequent theme that emerged in the classroom observers’ responses was *professional development*. The majority of the classroom observers thought the classroom observation system is *beneficial for management* because it “improves the teachers professionally” as one of the participants said, “Better techniques, better teaching leads to a smooth process of work in general, which makes the job easier for the management.” Besides, there were some classroom observers who believed it is *beneficial for the management* as it allows the management to “arrange in-service trainings” for the teachers for further development. For example, one said, “The management can have a general idea of the teachers’ needs through observations and organize sessions focusing on those.”

The second most frequent theme that emerged was *teaching quality*. The majority of the classroom observers believed the classroom observations lead to “better teaching quality”, which is *beneficial for the management*. One made the following comment on this: “I think it makes their jobs easy and as there is a well-functioning system they do not have to worry about the quality of teaching.” Another comment was: “They can see that everything goes in a smooth way and there is no problem with the teaching quality.”

Another theme that emerged in the classroom observers' responses was *standardization*. Half of the classroom observers believed "ensuring a standardization in teaching quality" is a *benefit of the classroom observation system for the management* as one of the participants said, "It helps the management create a standard in the instruction."

Lastly, *school culture* was found to be another theme. There were two classroom observers who believed "having a motivating environment" is the *advantage of the classroom observation system for the management*. Regarding this, one classroom observer said, "They could be observing the culture in the school. It gives feedback if the culture is created well or not among the teachers." Another said, "It might give an idea about the school culture that aims at establishing willingness to grow professionally." Furthermore, there was one participant who had no idea about the benefits of the classroom observation system for the management.

EFL Teachers Perceptions. *Teacher reflectivity under professional development* was found to be the most frequent theme in the EFL teachers' responses. More than one-fourth of the teachers thought the classroom observation system is *beneficial for the management* in terms of "improving the teachers professionally". Regarding this, one teacher said, "They have more qualified instructors, who know what to do in class." Another one made the following comment:

The observations are invaluable to the management as the instructors are developing themselves thanks to the system. All members of the management can see the benefits of the system. If you let your instructors develop themselves by using such a system, you don't need to seek a better instructor every year. This is the biggest benefit for the management.

Another teacher said, “As for the management, they can spot the instructors that can have different ideas or practices that are good for students and share them with everyone else for developmental reasons.” There was another participant who thought *the administration benefits from the system* by detecting the ones who need further development, not for appraisal but for teacher development. The participant said, “After getting the results of each instructor, the management could decide on who needs to be observed more and those who don’t need it.” Furthermore, there were some EFL teachers who believed the observations are *beneficial for the management* as they enable to “arrange in-service trainings” for the teaching staff as one teacher said, “For the management, they might arrange some in-service trainings accordingly. They might have an idea about the teachers' motivation, strengths, and weaknesses and they might learn about students' motivation and reactions to some specific activities.”

The second most frequent theme that emerged was *standardization*. More than one-third of the participants believed the classroom observation system is *useful for the management* because it “ensures a standardization in teaching quality” as one of them said, “The observations provide a standardization, creating a sense of discipline and unity among teachers.” Another teacher made the following comment:

An educational institution needs to make sure that all its teachers have some kind of a standard in terms of professional dedication and teaching skills.

Thinking this, the system seems to be beneficial for the management to make sure of this standard.

Another theme that emerged in the teachers’ responses was *teacher appraisal*. Nearly one-third of the participants thought the system is *beneficial for the management* because it enables to “evaluating the teachers’ performance” as one

of them said, “it's used (the scores are given) as the eye of the management and a powerful tool to be used for the management's interests in controversial situations.” Another teacher said, “Beneficial to them in that they use the results to fire teachers.” “They have some papers to help them justify why they fire someone.” was said by another participant. There was one teacher who believed the management learns about the teachers’ performances through the observations. The teacher said, “People from management don't have time to observe us one by one. In this way, they have an idea about our teaching skills.” Similarly, another said, “They are informed of good and bad practices of their employees.”

Teaching quality also emerged in the participants’ responses as another *advantage of the classroom observation system for the management*. A few participants believed the observations are useful for the management in terms of providing “better teaching quality”. With regard to this, one of the teachers said, “The teachers develop themselves professionally thanks to the system and it affects the quality of the education directly, which is a valuable benefit for the management.”

Lastly, there were five teachers who “had no idea” about the *benefits of the classroom observation system for the management*. One teacher said, “I have no idea because they haven't explained anything about the benefits or disadvantages of the system to the teachers or the management so far.”

Perceptions on the Pre and Post-Observation Conferences with the Observer and the Observee

Lesson planning and *constructive feedback* emerged under *professional development* as the most frequent themes regarding the perceptions on *the pre and post-observation conferences*.

ELTC Administration Perceptions. All three members of the administration believed the pre and post-observation conferences are *useful for professional development*. As for the pre-observation conference, they all thought it enables the teachers to “exchange ideas with a colleague” and “contributes to better lesson staging” as one of the participants said, “For pre- sessions, it is good to share your ideas with the observer about how you have planned your lesson. In this way, the observer can better understand your staging and give you some useful ideas.” As for the post-observation conference, they all believed it is very *beneficial for professional development* as it promotes “reflecting on the lesson” and “discovering strengths and weaknesses” in teaching as one of them said, “I especially find the post meetings effective. They enable instructors to reflect on their teaching.” Another said, “For post sessions, it is good to discuss the best practices and things to consider next time critically.” There was one member of the administration who thought the pre-and post-observation conferences “increase collaboration among the teachers”. The participant said, “The teachers come together for a common goal, which is growing professionally. This, I mean sharing their experience and knowledge, of course, unites them and contributes to their work environment positively.”

Lastly, there was no information given about *the pre-and post-observation conferences* in the document explaining the classroom observation procedure.

ELTC Observers Perceptions. The most frequent theme that emerged was *teacher reflectivity under professional development*. As for *the pre-observation conferences*, the great majority of the participants believed they “contribute to better lesson staging” as one of the classroom observers said, “Pre-conferences are for getting information about the class, lesson, its stages, and the aims of the lesson.

Knowing those helps the observer to give better feedback on the staging and planning of the lesson.” Another said:

It gives a kind of chance to share what is known and planned between both parties. The observer can suggest something that would be more useful than planned. It promotes concentrating better on the stages of the lesson, so I find it very effective.

Almost half of the classroom observers believed *the pre-observation conference* is useful in terms of enabling “exchanging ideas with the colleague” as one classroom observer said, “I think pre-conferences are as important as the observations because they can be used to share experiences and they give chance to the observer to guide the observee before it is too late to change the order of the lesson.” On the other hand, there was one classroom observer who believed *the pre-observation conferences* are “not useful” neither to the observer nor to the observee.

When it comes to *the post-observation conferences*, the great majority of the classroom observers believed they are very useful in terms of “reflecting on the lesson” as one classroom observer said, “Post-sessions are for self-reflection and feedback on the strengths and the weaknesses.” Another classroom observer said, “After the observation post-conference creates opportunities for self-reflection and the observer can share the points which were unseen because of subjectivity and sensitivity of the situation.” On the other hand, there was one classroom observer who believed *the post-observation conferences* are useful but could be improved.

EFL Teachers Perceptions. As for *the pre-observation conferences*, the most frequent theme that emerged in the teachers’ responses was *professional development*. Almost half of the teachers believed the pre-observation conferences are *useful for professional development* in terms of “contributing to lesson staging”

as one teacher said, “We need it to exchange some ideas about the lesson to be observed beforehand and it helps the observee to know about the stages clearly and suggest better ways.” Another teacher made the following comment:

I think pre-conferences are quite beneficial in terms of motivating teachers to plan or to foresee the possible reactions. As teachers, we don't have much time to plan every single lesson and it also encourages us to see our own potential which, personally, satisfies me most of the time because sometimes I feel like I am a bad teacher, just because I couldn't see the expected results, but pre-sessions forced me to plan, organize and try to anticipate what might be a problem, what might be conveyed better.

Another teacher talked about the positive effect of *the pre-observation conferences* on stress. The teacher said:

Although all of us are professionals in our jobs who have been teaching for years, being watched is somehow stressful. The pre-sessions are beneficial for the preparation period because as an observee it is relaxing to talk about your lesson plan and share your ideas.

One teacher talked about the benefit of *the pre-observation conferences* as follows:

I think it is very beneficial because in the pre-sessions we can set a topic together and discuss what can be done before the observing hour, so we both will be prepared for what is going to be taught and done in the lesson, which eases the whole procedure.

On the other hand, almost half of the teachers believed *the pre-observation conferences* are not useful for their professional development. One-fourth of the teachers thought *the pre-observation conferences* “disregard differences in teaching”.

One of the teachers put it in this way: “We generally have pre-meetings to just go over the criteria. These meetings are generally short, and not useful because the observee is generally limited with the methods s/he has planned by the observer, unfortunately.” There were some teachers who believed *the pre-observation conferences* do not contribute to their self-reflection because they are not appropriately conducted as one of them said, “The pre-observation meetings are a bit useless, to be honest since the observer usually does not interfere with the observee's lesson plan and lets them do whatever they have on their minds.” Another said, “I’ve never had a proper one before.” There were some other teachers who found *the pre-observation conferences* unnecessary to be done face-to-face. One said, “I don’t believe the pre-meetings are necessary as the necessary communication can be easily done through emails.” Regarding this, another teacher said, “Pre should be done on a paper so that we can anticipate the problems better.”

When it comes to *the post-observation conferences*, almost half of the teachers thought they are useful for their professional development by helping them “reflect on the lesson” as one teacher said, “Especially in the post sessions I learned a lot from different people and I discovered myself again and again.” Another teacher made the following comment:

Post-sessions give us a chance to catch the details that we don't notice in the class. Unfortunately, we are not able to see everything and ourselves from the outside. Teacher trainers can catch more details than we do, they share these unnoticed details in post-sessions.

There were some teachers who thought *the post-observation conferences* are more effective than *the pre-observation conferences*. One teacher explained, “The post sessions are the feedback sessions where they talk about what happened, what

worked and what didn't, and why they worked or didn't. This is the most important session because it is reflecting on the lesson.”

Furthermore, there were some teachers who thought *the post-observation conferences* are not effective due to “the incompetency of the observer” as one said, “I think everybody tries to do their best but sometimes some of the observers may not be qualified in giving feedback in terms of their wording, therefore, not being able to provide constructive criticism.” Another teacher said:

The post-sessions may not be fruitful enough from time to time as the efficiency of the feedback really depends on the observer's capability as a teacher trainer and unfortunately, they can lack these skills, experiences, and knowledge to 'train' at times.

Another teacher stated that s/he finds *the post-observation conferences* necessary in general but ineffective. The teacher made the following comment:

I do not believe some of the observers with a title are really qualified.

However, some tend to behave very entitled. The criticisms are always like taken from a booklet. Same sentences and insincerity, I'm sorry but this is what's happening in the school.

Perceptions on the Commitment to the Classroom Observation System

When the participants were asked what they think about their *commitment to the system*, all the members of the administration and the classroom observers said they were all very committed to the classroom observation system. As for the teachers, almost half of them thought they are *committed to it* as they found it useful to their professional development. On the other hand, one-third of the teachers stated they are *not committed to the classroom observation system* as they find it ineffective; they only do it because it is an obligation at the school. One said, “I don't

believe that it brings any opportunities in this kind of system. It should be held and implemented by professional people.” Another said, “I do because I have to, I don’t benefit from the system at all.” Another teacher made the following comment: “I don’t think I am committed to the system at all. As I said before, the system is used as a tool to observe the instructors in a controlling manner.” Furthermore, there were some teachers who stated they do not mind doing it even though they do not like being observed. One said, “I have no problems with it although I would prefer not to be observed as it is a little stressful.”

Perceptions on an Ideal EFL Teachers’ Classroom Observation System

The most frequent themes that emerged in the participants’ responses were *frequency, reciprocity, voluntariness, quality of the observers, nonjudgmental, and flexibility under improvement*.

ELTC Administration Perceptions. All three members of the administration had different ideas on *an ideal EFL teachers’ classroom observation system*. Referring to *frequency*, one of them thought the classroom observation system can be more useful for the teachers’ professional development if they were observed more often. The participant said, “I think the teachers would benefit more from the system if the number of the observations were more frequent as this would provide them with more chance to reflect on their teaching and better themselves in teaching.” Another participant thought the *frequency* of the observations should be flexible. The participant said, “The number of the observations might be more or less depending on the mutual agreement of the observer and the observee. For example, a novice teacher might need to be observed more.” Another participant thought the quality of the observers is an important factor affecting the system. The participant said, “Of course we all need to develop ourselves to perform better, however,

especially the observers should pay attention to what the teachers might expect from them.”

ELTC Observers Perceptions. The majority of the classroom observers thought an ideal EFL teachers’ classroom observation system should be *nonjudgmental* and should not be in the teacher appraisal system as one said, “It should focus on professional development and shouldn't be judgmental.” Another said, “It should encourage development and teacher motivation and should not be judgmental.” Almost half of the classroom observers talked about the frequency of the observations. One said, “The number of the classroom observation shouldn't affect teachers' professional or subjective wellbeing.” Another said, “The one that does not judge, that does not make the teacher feel under pressure. Should be announced and should not be too frequent.” There were a few classroom observers who believed an ideal EFL teachers’ classroom observation system should be based on voluntariness. One of them said, “I personally believe the system could be improved if it were voluntary, I mean if the teachers were free to decide to be observed or not, it could work better.” Another classroom observer also talked about flexibility. The classroom observer said, “If the teachers were given the right to choose the observer they want to work with, they could be more volunteer to be observed and benefit from the system.” Regarding voluntariness, another said, “If the teachers could choose to be observed or not, they would be willing and open fully to the idea of development.”

EFL Teachers Perceptions. The most frequent theme that emerged in the teachers’ responses was *nonjudgmental*. More than half of the teachers stated that an ideal EFL teachers’ classroom observation system should be developmental and not be added to their teaching performance. Regarding this, one of the teachers said,

“The system should not be used as a threatening monitoring system by the administration. The aim of the system should be improving the teaching quality of the staff not a judgmental process about their teaching skills.” Another teacher said, “There should be a friendly atmosphere in an institution and encouragement to observe each other, not obligations. People improve themselves only if they do not feel under pressure.” “The observation must be for improvement, otherwise it cannot go further than power exercise.” was another teacher’s response. Another comment was made by one of the teachers:

There should be no grading system or something like that. The system should consist of constructive criticism and that is it. Otherwise, things tend to get ugly for both the observer and the observee, and the whole point of being observed or observing is lost.

The second most frequent theme was found to be *the quality of the observers*. Nearly one-fourth of the teachers stated the observers should be professionals who are competent in the field. One of them said, “The observers should have the necessary training and background knowledge.” Another teacher said:

I think first of all the observers should be very good in his/her field and he/she should be a very good teacher. They should not only give feedback but also share some very valuable information about teaching by giving concrete examples.

Another teacher made the following comment:

There should be no trust issues between the observer and the observee. The teacher whose lesson is being observed should believe that the observation can yield beneficial results for his overall teaching quality. This can be

achieved if the PDU members are knowledgeable enough in terms of professional development.

Furthermore, there were some teachers who thought the classroom observations can be beneficial for their professional development if the observations were *reciprocal*. One of the teachers said, “Everyone should be able to observe everyone they want, so the observers should also be the observees so that all of us can share and see what everyone does best and make use of it.” Another teacher said, “I think the teachers should be able to visit the observers' classes to have the chance of observing and learning better.” There were a few teachers who thought *the frequency* of the observations should be lowered. One teacher said, “There should be a healthy balance between observations and ample opportunities for the teachers to improve themselves. However, most of the teachers are overworked and the current system focuses more on the number of observations, rather than effectiveness.” There were two teachers who thought the classroom observation system should be *flexible* so that the teachers can choose the observer who is going to observe their class. One said:

We should be able to choose the people we want to be observed by because the observers must be available all the time and when we try something different, we should be able to find them easily to observe our classes and give us feedback without considering the scores or obligations.

Lastly, there was one teacher who thought the *rationale* behind the observations should be explained. The teacher said, “The instructor should be able to feel comfortable if s/he knows why all these things should be done and for what aims.”

Summary of the Findings

The perceptions of ELTC administrators, ELTC classroom observers, EFL teachers on the classroom observation system have been found to show variations in the following areas: *Aims, advantages/disadvantages for professional development, advantages/disadvantages for teaching quality, advantages/disadvantages for the management, the role of pre-observation conferences and post-observation conferences, commitment to the system, and an ideal EFL teacher classroom observation system.*

Table 8 below illustrates the variations among the perceptions of ELTC administrators, ELTC classroom observers, and EFL teachers on the classroom observation system with percentages.

Table 8

Summary of the Variations among the Perceptions on the Classroom Observation System

Sub-Sub Theme	A %	O %	T %
Aims			
Teacher reflectivity	100	100	36.3
Student Achievement	66.7	37.5	27.2
Gathering data	0	0	27.2
Surveillance	0	0	22.7
Standardized teaching	33.3	0	22.7
Collaboration	100	50	18.1
Advantages/disadvantages for professional development			
Better reflection for novice teachers	100	75	34.00
Better teacher reflection for experienced teachers	66.7	25	9.00
Gaining different perspectives	100	87.5	54.5
Discovering strengths and weaknesses	100	62.5	52.7
Disadvantageous for experienced teachers	0	0	25.00
Demotivating the teachers	0	0	25.00

Table 8 (cont'd)

Summary of the Variations among the Perceptions on the Classroom Observation System

Sub-Sub Theme	A %	O %	T %
Advantages/disadvantages for teaching quality			
Better teaching quality in the institution	100	75	22.7
Not advantageous	0	0	29.5
Advantages/disadvantages for the management			
Improving the teachers professionally	100	62.5	27.2
Better teaching quality	100	62.5	9.00
Advantages/disadvantages for the management			
Evaluating the teachers' performance	0	0	34.00
Ensuring a standardization in teaching quality	100	50.00	36.3
Having a motivating environment	100	25.00	0
The role of pre-observation conferences and post-observation conferences			
Better lesson planning	100	75.00	47.7
Better reflection of the lesson	100	75.00	36.3
Updating content knowledge	66.7	62.5	29.5
Disregarding differences in teaching	0	0	25.00
Ineffective	0	0	25.00
Commitment to the system			
Committed	100	100	47.7
Not committed	0	0	34.00
An ideal EFL teacher classroom observation system			
Frequency	66.7	37.5	13.6
Flexibility	0	0	4.5
Quality of the observers	33.3	0	22.7
Nonjudgmental	0	75.00	59.00
Voluntariness	0	25.00	0
Reciprocity	0	0	9

Conclusion

In this chapter, the data coming from the document explaining the classroom observation and the data gathered through, the questionnaire with open-ended

questions, and in-depth semi-structured interviews with the ELTC administrators, ELTC classroom observers, and EFL teachers were presented along with the detailed tables regarding the research questions. The next chapter presents the discussion and interpretation of the findings by referring to the relevant studies in literature along with an emphasis on the importance of the study and its implications for the field.



CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSION

Introduction

The purpose of this study was to investigate the perceptions of EFL instructors, ELTC administrators, and ELTC classroom observers on the classroom observation system in general and its contribution to the improvement of the teaching quality and teacher reflectivity. Regarding these purposes, the following research questions were explored:

1. How do English as a foreign language (EFL) instructors perceive the relationship between the institutional classroom observation system and their professional development in terms of
 - a. teaching quality
 - b. teacher reflectivity?
2. How do English language teaching context (ELTC) administrators perceive the relationship between the institutional classroom observation system and English as a foreign language instructors' professional development in terms of
 - a. teaching quality
 - b. teacher reflectivity?
3. How do ELTC classroom observers perceive the relationship between the institutional classroom observation system and English as a foreign language instructors' professional development in terms of
 - a. teaching quality
 - b. teacher reflectivity

4. What are the similarities and differences among the perceptions of EFL instructors, ELTC administrators, and ELTC observers on the institutional classroom observation system?

With respect to these research questions, the data were collected from three ELTC administrators, eight ELTC classroom observers, and 44 EFL teachers through the open-ended questionnaire and semi-structured interviews. Additionally, the document presenting the institutional classroom observation system process was analyzed to triangulate the data. The interview transcriptions and notes were transferred to the Microsoft Excel Spreadsheet program and analyzed by using a priori coding list extracted from the theoretical framework.

This chapter consists of four main sections: (1) discussion of the main findings of the study by revisiting Table 8 given in Chapter 4 and referring to the relevant literature, (2) its implications for practice, (3) the limitations of the study, and (4) implications for further research.

Discussion of the Main Findings

In this section, the areas that have been found to show variations among the perceptions of ELTC administrators, ELTC classroom observers, EFL teachers will be presented and discussed in the light of the literature review. The findings of the study will be discussed in the same order as the research questions are presented in the introduction of this current chapter.

How do English as a Foreign Language (EFL) Instructors Perceive the Relationship Between the Institutional Classroom Observation System and Their Professional Development in terms of Teaching Quality & Teacher Reflectivity?

The results indicated that the teaching experience (e.g., the number of years) of the EFL teachers had an impact on their perceptions regarding the relationship

between the institutional classroom observation system and their professional development in terms of teaching quality and teacher reflectivity. To illustrate, the novice teachers that participated in the study had positive attitudes towards the system. They indicated that the system was beneficial in that it provided them with different perspectives towards English language teaching. Additionally, they were able to find out their strengths and weaknesses in teaching with the help of the feedback they get after the observations. In doing so, they could realize the points to take into consideration while teaching and focus on them better. These results were in line with the previous studies particularly in terms of the aspect of teaching experience (e.g., Dervent, 2015; Kayapinar, 2016; Kuru-Gönen, 2016; Pultorak & Barnes, 2009; Şanal-Erginel, 2006). Along with the former studies, the current study demonstrated that the less experienced the teacher is, the more useful they will find classroom observations for their reflective teaching practices. Moreover, the novice EFL teachers stated the system was also advantageous for the administration. They believed the system would allow the administration to have a high-quality teaching staff.

However, the perceptions of more experienced EFL teachers differed from the perceptions of less experienced EFL teachers. That is, they indicated the system would be more beneficial for novice EFL teachers. This could be related to the fact that they do not believe the classroom observation system contributes to their reflective teaching. In line with this, more experienced EFL teachers added that although they were open to professional development and reflective practices in general, they were not satisfied with the way the classroom observations were conducted in this particular institution. They stated the reason for their dissatisfaction as the classroom observations being conducted by incompetent observers. This is

also mirrored in the literature, Tshabalala (2013) suggests that the teachers wish to be observed by more qualified personnel to be able to foster their learning process and develop their teaching skills. In addition to this, Alshehri (2019) suggested in the study she conducted with EFL teachers and classroom observers that classroom observation systems should be able to address the needs of experienced teachers, as well. Similarly, Vanci-Osam and Aksit (2000) suggested that since people wish to be observed and evaluated by qualified staff, a careful appraiser selection and intensive trainings need to be conducted by the school. To this end, observers need to be equipped with the necessary professional knowledge and skills so that they could cater to the improvement of experienced teachers' attitudes toward classroom observations.

Another important finding was that more experienced EFL teachers found the classroom observations demotivating, as they believed the real aim of the system was not to improve their teaching skills but to collect data about their teaching performance (e.g., Moradi et al., 2014). They believed that with the help of these observations the administration benefitted from the system as it enabled them to maintain standardized teaching in the institution. It is apparent that the difference between the perceptions of the administrators and the EFL teachers stems from the way the system is being conducted in the institution, namely being given scores to their teaching performance. That is, the EFL teachers do not believe that the school administration aims at implementing the classroom observations with formative purposes. Therefore, it is possible that these teachers viewed the system more as a summative one rather than a formative process. Similarly, Martinez et al. (2016), who collected data for their study from 16 schools in six countries with the top-performing education system, found that using the results of the classroom

observations varied greatly from one context to another. That is to say, in some educational contexts, teacher performance can be documented through a classroom observation system although there is a consensus that such systems improve the quality of instruction. Another study that supports this finding was conducted by Lam (2001) who suggested that although the agreement that classroom observations are for teacher appraisal, they should focus more on the professional development of teachers rather than evaluating them. Similarly, in the study of Vanci-Osam and Aksit (2000), it was concluded that if the teachers have questions on their minds about the aims of the system, it is likely that they feel some doubts about the system's benefits on their professional development.

Questions regarding the authenticity of the teaching practices that take place during classroom observations were another noteworthy finding of the study. A fair number of EFL teachers posited that the teaching practices they employed during the observations were far from reality. In other words, they stated they were doing things during the classroom observations that they did not normally do in their classes. Therefore, they concluded that the classroom observations were not advantageous for students or teachers. Similar findings also emerged out of Alshehri's study (2019), where she documented how the observed teachers felt nervous, as they taught differently during observed lessons. It is also evident in the literature that teaching performance is likely to be affected by the involvement of others as Borg (2018) posits there are changes in the observed teacher's performance as a consequence of an observer's presence. This behavior might be also stemming from the reason that observees generally tend to satisfy observers as they might be feeling worried because of the potential consequences of the classroom observations, which is also mirrored in the literature (e.g., Moradi et al., 2014). Therefore, these unnatural

practices were found not to be beneficial for teaching quality and student achievement.

The EFL teachers had differing views regarding the pre- and post-observation conferences for their professional development and teaching quality. In particular, the number of years of experience of the EFL teachers played an important role in shaping their perceptions. While novice EFL teachers found these conferences beneficial for preparing more effective lessons (Lasagabaster & Sierra, 2011) (e.g., a better staging of the lesson, increasing the quality of the student outcome), the others found the conferences ineffective, as the teachers believed the pre and post-observation conferences disregard personal differences in teaching and lead to more rigid lesson planning. In other words, they claimed that due to these conferences, they were not allowed to conduct their lessons as they wished. Additionally, since these EFL teachers questioned the competency of the observers, they tended to have a negative attitude towards these conferences (Vanci-Osam & Aksit, 2000). Bailey (2006) and Day (2013) suggested that post-conferences should be conducted with a more knowledgeable other in order to bring some kind of development in reflecting teaching practices. Nevertheless, the EFL teachers who emphasized the ineffectiveness of the conferences based their belief on the lack of expertise and content knowledge of the classroom observers. These different perceptions could have stemmed from the general attitude of the observer toward the observee. The observers might have given more teaching suggestions to the novice teachers while maintaining a lower profile with more experienced teachers. According to Amobi (2005), educational and social background, age, and fear can be counted as the factors that affect the way observers communicate with the observees.

How do English Language Teaching Context (ELTC) Administrators Perceive the Relationship between the Institutional Classroom Observation System and English as a Foreign Language Instructors' Professional Development in terms of Teaching Quality & Teacher Reflectivity?

The ELTC administrators had relatively positive attitudes towards the institutional classroom observation system. According to them, the system was beneficial to the EFL teachers' professional development in that it promoted their reflective practices in their teaching. Administrators believed that with the help of the system, the EFL teachers were able to gain different perspectives in language teaching and discover their strengths and weaknesses. Especially the novice teachers were thought to have benefitted from the system and shaped their beliefs and practices regarding language teaching. Therefore, the real aim of the system was considered to be increasing the teaching quality in the institution by promoting collaboration among the EFL teachers. These findings were in line with the study conducted by Bozak (2018), who posited that the administrators are in favor of classroom observations because they have a significant role in fostering collaboration and motivation among teachers.

In terms of teacher appraisal, although the ELTC administrators claimed the system had no intentions to assess the ELT teachers' teaching quality, it could still provide them with the opportunity to reflect on their teaching and to increase their overall performance. In other words, the data obtained from the system were not utilized to classify the ELT teachers as 'good' or 'bad' teachers. Instead, they allowed the ELT teachers to evaluate themselves personally. Similarly, the ELTC administrators were not in the opinion that the system demotivated the ELT teachers or it was not beneficial for experienced teachers. In addition to this, the system was

to increase the student achievement and overall teaching quality of the institution, which was regarded as another advantage of the system to the management. These conflicting perspectives of the EFL teachers and the administrators confirm the findings of Vanci-Osam and Aksit (2000). The findings also are in line with Shook's (2011) conclusion that classroom observations make great contributions to the quality of instruction and success of the management.

Finally, the ELTC administrators indicated that the pre- and post-observation conferences were also indispensable components of the classroom observation system. To them, these conferences enabled the EFL teachers to plan their lessons better and reflect on them by updating their content knowledge. Therefore, it can be concluded that according to the administrators, the conferences were neither ineffective nor indifferent to individual teaching practices. Instead, they could be the key to conduct more effective lessons and to flourish individual teaching differences. In this respect, the findings were consistent with the conclusions of Vanci-Osam and Aksit's (2000) study in which the appraisers noted the instructors' perceptions could be classified both into negative and positive views: those who perceive it as threatening to their teaching style and have negative attitudes, those who are satisfied with the way it is done and have positive attitudes, and those who do only because it is required by the administration.

How do ELTC Classroom Observers Perceive the Relationship between the Institutional Classroom Observation System and English as a Foreign Language Instructors' Professional Development in terms of Teaching Quality & Teacher Reflectivity?

The ELTC classroom observers had almost the same perceptions as the ELTC administrators regarding the classroom observation system. According to

them, the classroom observation system is beneficial to the EFL teachers' reflective practices in terms of helping them gain different perspectives and discover the missing details in their current teaching. Hence, they believed the aim of the classroom observation system is to promote teacher reflectivity and increase collaboration among the teaching staff. Moreover, according to some of them, in the long run, the system is also aiming at contributing to the teaching quality of the institution. However, the ELTC classroom observers did not state that the system is to gather data about the teachers' teaching performances or to monitor them.

Additionally, they had the same perception as the EFL teachers regarding the system's advantages for the novice teachers. Whereas almost all of them thought the novice teachers benefitted from the classroom observation system to a great extent, only one-fourth believed the experienced ones also find the system advantageous for their reflective practices. However, they did not state that the classroom observations are useless for the experienced teachers. This might have stemmed from the experiences that the classroom observers had with the experienced EFL teachers. Regarding this, Amobi's (2005) study with teacher education professors, who were also the classroom observers of the pre-service teachers, evidenced that attitudes towards reflective practices might differ from teacher to teacher due to age or educational background of the observer or the observee.

With regard to the advantages of the classroom observation system for the management, the perceptions of the classroom observers did not differ much from the ELTC administrators' perceptions. That is, most of the classroom observers believed the system ensures a more competent teaching staff and better teaching quality in the institution. However, the discrepancy that stands out between the ELTC classroom observers and ELTC administrators' perceptions is the belief that

the system enables the management to have a motivating working environment. Only one-fourth believes that the EFL teachers are motivated due to the classroom observations, which would be a benefit to the management. This might have stemmed from the workload that the system creates both on the classroom observers and the EFL teachers. In the same vein, in Hişmanoğlu and Hişmanoğlu's (2010) study, it was concluded that time constraints stemming from the workload disable efficient professional development practices. Similarly, Vanci-Osam and Aksit (2000) found both teachers and appraisers agree that the teacher appraisal system creates a heavy burden on teachers, as it is not self-initiated but imposed. As a result, teachers take part in observations for the sake of doing, which makes them feel distressed, panicked, and even frustrated.

Finally, the ELTC classroom observers found the pre-and post-observation conferences very useful for the EFL teachers' reflective teaching. To them, these conferences play a significant role in contributing to lesson staging and updating teachers' content knowledge. Therefore, they did not see these conferences as disregarding teachers' personal differences in their approaches to language teaching, which would be a great disadvantage to the teachers' professional development. Alshehri's (2019) study with the EFL teachers and EFL classroom observers is in line with this finding. That is, the feedback given after the classroom observations makes a great contribution to teachers' professional development and overall teaching quality.

What are the Similarities and Differences among the Perceptions of EFL Instructors, ELTC Administrators and ELTC Observers on the Institutional Classroom Observation System?

When the perceptions of the three groups (e.g., the ELTC administrators, the ELTC classroom observers, the EFL instructors) are compared, several similarities and differences can be documented. First, it can be stated that the ELTC administrators and the ELTC classroom observers have corresponding perceptions regarding the institutional classroom observation system. Both groups indicated that the system is advantageous for the professional development of the EFL teachers and the overall teaching quality of the institution. To them, the classroom observation system could provide an excellent learning opportunity both for novice and experienced EFL teachers. In connection with this, the quality of instruction can be increased in the institution. Second, both the ELTC administrators and the ELTC classroom observers posited that the pre- and post-observation conferences are favorable sessions that help the EFL teachers reflect on their teaching practices. According to both groups, as a result of these conferences, the EFL teachers would be able to be more aware of their strengths and weaknesses in terms of language teaching.

However, when these two groups are compared to the EFL teachers, it is possible to see similar and differing opinions. To illustrate, although the novice teachers' perceptions were similar to those of the ELTC administrators and the ELTC classroom observers, the experienced teachers were in the opinion that the system did not reflect the reality of everyday teaching practices. Moreover, the experienced teachers claimed that the system was conducted by incompetent

classroom observers. Thus, there was a need for a better-organized system and more competent classroom observers.

On the other hand, the evaluation of the commitment of the groups to the classroom observation system revealed that these groups had varying levels of commitment. While the ELTC administrators and the ELTC classroom observers came to the fore with a full level of commitment to the classroom observation system, less than half of the EFL teachers stated their faithfulness and adherence to the system. A small number of teachers who declared their commitment to the system also indicated that they participated in the system only because they had no other option. However, one-third of the EFL teachers openly expressed their lack of commitment to the system.

In terms of the perceptions of an ideal classroom observation system, each group had differing opinions. Apart from one of the ELTC administrators, who stated that the observations must be conducted more often, all of the administrators were contented with the current system as it was. On the other hand, the ELTC classroom observers pointed out that the system should be nonjudgmental and the data collected through the observations should not be included in the performance scores of the EFL teachers. Additionally, one-third of the observers believed that the number of observations should be decreased so as not to demotivate the teachers towards professional development activities. In this respect, it can be concluded that the perceptions of the classroom observers and the teachers were similar, as the EFL teachers also indicated that the observations should not be conducted as a part of the teacher appraisal system. Nevertheless, unlike the observers, some of the EFL teachers expressed that the observers should be better-equipped with the content knowledge to be able to cater to their professional needs. Furthermore, there were

also opinions that the system must be more flexible so that they would be able to choose the observers and would be provided with better teaching practices that would help them develop professionally.

Implications for Practice

The findings of the current study may have significant pedagogical implications that can affect the way classroom observations are conducted in educational contexts. As the findings suggested, although classroom observations are found to be effective for EFL teachers' reflective practices and professional development by administrators, classroom observers, and EFL teachers themselves, they should be designed in a way that could address the varying needs of individuals successfully. That is, both novice and experienced EFL teachers need to be able to benefit from the system for the sustainability of classroom observations. This can be achieved by providing classroom observers with both extensive and intensive trainings so that they can encourage the growth of expertise in language teaching by providing resources and raising EFL teachers' awareness of reflective practices (Bailey, 2006). For example, the classroom observers could be escorted by a trainer who could provide insightful feedback on the language that is used in pre-observation and post-observation conferences. Additionally, the school administration could hire an external trainer to observe the classroom observers' classes with the aim of providing feedback on the way they teach, or alternatively, the classroom observers might be required to conduct action research studies on English language teaching. As Rueda (1998) suggests effective educational environments are based on well-trained, successful teachers who are adequately equipped in terms of professional development.

Another implication could be removing classroom observations from the teacher appraisal system. It stems from the notion that classroom observations for appraisal purposes are perceived as threatening by observees (Howard, 2010; Vanci-Osam & Aksit, 2000). As the findings also suggested, a classroom observation that is conducted for appraisal purposes will subsequently result in one that is prepared to impress the observer (Tsui, 1995). As a result, classroom observations are not perceived as a tool to improve EFL teachers' reflective practices or learning standards within the educational institution. Instead, they are seen as demotivating activities that are conducted to evaluate their performances for other purposes such as being fired or demoted (Shah et al., 2018). Therefore, in order to create a positive learning atmosphere that aims to help support and develop teachers, classroom observations should not be included in the appraisal system.

Finally, to maximize the advantages of classroom observations' advantages for EFL teachers' reflective practices, and professional development, the system should be designed in such a way that it allows conducting more or fewer observations depending on the needs of the observee. By reducing the burden on teachers, such as removing obligations about the procedures of classroom observations or their frequency, administrators could ensure a more committed teaching staff who do not feel demotivated due to time constraints or excessive workload. For example, teachers should be able to choose the observers or be allowed to choose the lesson to be observed. In doing so, classroom observations would not be perceived as extra workload or a job that is done compulsorily. Moreover, the experienced EFL teachers could be given the opportunity of having a different observation system, which would enable them to shift their role from a teacher to a researcher (Huberman, 1993). For example, they could be encouraged to

utilize a new tool or activity in their class and conduct research about it. To do this, they could come together with their observer and work on the study collaboratively. In doing so, the experienced EFL teachers' enthusiasm and commitment to the classroom observations could be fostered. Furthermore, the system should be flexible enough to allow teachers to prefer technology-assisted tools instead of one-on-one observations with an observer (Borg, 2018). An online platform that enables teachers to upload their recorded lessons and get feedback from the observer could cater to the needs of EFL teachers better. This would reduce the anxiety of the observee arising from the presence of an observer during the lesson and the non-authenticity of the teaching performance.

Implications for Further Research

Based on the findings of the current study, certain suggestions might be made for further research. First, data can be obtained from some other institutions implementing a classroom observation system so that comparisons might be made to have more generalizable findings.

Second, classroom observations might be made by the researcher to obtain field notes that will enrich the interpretations of the data (Creswell, 2012). The researcher can attend the pre-and post-observation conferences with the observer and the observee to be able to make more reliable conclusions. In doing so, the data collection tools might be enriched and more accurate findings might be presented.

Finally, the current study drew conclusions from qualitative data only. However, the perceptions of ELTC administrators, ELTC classroom observers, and EFL teachers can be obtained by a survey from a wider range of institutions. This will allow the analysis of quantitative data statistically to see the relationships among

the variables explored in this study. Therefore, further research might enrich the data both through qualitative and quantitative research methodologies.

Limitations of the Study

The findings of the current study should be interpreted and approached carefully owing to some limitations. First, the nature of the study constrains its generalizability as it was conducted within a single case. For example, due to the setting constraints, an interpretation regarding the nationality of the participants could not be made in this study. However, with a longitudinal or more comprehensive study that compared different contexts regarding their classroom observation systems, more generalizable results would have been obtained.

Second, unexpected circumstances caused by the COVID-19 pandemic can also be counted as another limitation of the study. Under normal circumstances, the study intended to reach out to more participants through the questionnaires that would be given in person to be conducted manually. However, due to constraints, the questionnaires were sent through e-mails twice at a time when the participants were having difficulties related to the new online teaching system in the institution. As a result of this, the data were gathered from a fewer number of participants than intended. Therefore, the data gathered from a larger sample could have yielded more comprehensive results. Moreover, the semi-structured interviews were conducted through an online video conferencing software (Zoom) that made it more difficult to take notes about the body language or gestures of the participants. Thus, the data regarding the participants' feelings could not be caught to interpret the findings more accurately.

Another limitation is the lack of quantitative data. The data were gathered through questionnaires with open-ended questions and semi-structured interviews.

Quantitative data, in addition to these qualitative data, could have allowed for the triangulation of the results drawn from the qualitative component of the study.

Conclusion

In this final chapter, the areas that have been found to show variations among the perceptions of ELTC administrators, ELTC classroom observers, EFL teachers are presented and discussed in the light of the literature review. The findings of the study are interpreted by visiting each research question one by one. In the light of the findings, pedagogical implications for the field are made and the points that further studies need to take into consideration are given. Finally, the current chapter ends with the limitations of the study.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A

Questionnaire for the Instructors

Informed Consent

Dear Instructor,

This questionnaire was prepared for my thesis within the scope of İhsan Doğramacı Bilkent University, Teaching English as a Foreign Language Master's Program, with the purpose of exploring the perceptions of EFL instructors, teacher trainers and the management on classroom observation system as part of professional development at a foundation university in Turkey under the supervision of Asst. Prof. Dr. Tijen Akşit. It will take approximately 10 minutes to complete the questionnaire. In terms of this questionnaire;

- Your identification will never be disclosed.
- Your data will only be accessed by the researcher, will be kept on a password protected computer and will only be used for this thesis and possible related conference presentations, and journal publication purposes.
- Your answers will not be shared with your school and will not affect your working rights.
- You can leave the questionnaire any time you want.
- The results of the study will be shared with you if you request them. In this case, you can reach me via the e-mail address stated below.

Please tick the box below if you meet the criteria and agree to participate.

Criteria:

- I am over 18 years old.
- I have read and understood the information about this study above.
- I understand that I can withdraw from the study without any consequences at any time.
- I understand who would have access to identifying information provided and what will happen to the data at the end of the study.

- I understand that this study has been reviewed by and received ethical clearance through Bilkent University Ethics Committee.

I meet the criteria and agree to participate.

☐

IMPORTANT NOTE:

If you would like to volunteer for a short interview to provide me with further information, please share your e-mail address and phone number below.

e-mail: _____ mobile: +90 (5____) _____

Thank you for your contribution.

Zeynep Arslan

Bilkent University/ MA in TEFL

e-mail: zeynep.arslan@bilkent.edu.tr

Supervisor: Asst. Prof. Dr. Tijen Akşit

Please answer the following questions on the current classroom observation system in your institution by ticking the relevant box(es) and/or providing short answers.

1. What type of an observation have you been involved so far? Please tick all that apply.

☐by a teacher trainer

☐by a critical friend

☐by another person (Please specify)

☐self (through video or audio recording)

☐others (Please specify)

2. What do you think about the aims of the classroom observations in your institution?

3. What do you think about the meetings (pre and post-sessions) with the observer and the observee?

4. What do you think about your commitment to the classroom observation system up to now?

5. How do you think the results of the classroom observation system is beneficial for the Management?

6. How do you think the results of the classroom observation system is beneficial for the overall teaching quality in the school?

7. How do you think the results of the classroom observation system is beneficial for your own professional development?

8. Do you think there has been any change/improvement in teaching techniques as a result of classroom observations?

☐ Yes (please explain how)☐ No (please explain why not)

9. What do you think an ideal EFL teachers' classroom observation system should be like so that it could be beneficial both for the teacher and the institution to the utmost?

Any other comments on the classroom observations that you wish to add:

[illegible]

Finally, please fill in the following blanks.

Gender:

Nationality: ☐Turkish ☐Non-Turkish

ELT experience: ☐0-5 ☐6-10 ☐11-15 ☐16-20 ☐21-25 ☐

26+

Experience in this institution: ☐1-5 ☐6-10 ☐11-15 ☐16-20

☐21-25 ☐26+

BA/ BSc degree subject(s):

MA/ MSc degree subjects:

PhD degree subjects:

Any relevant teaching certifications/ diplomas:

Appendix B

Questionnaire for the Classroom Observers

Informed Consent

Dear Classroom Observer,

This questionnaire was prepared for my thesis within the scope of İhsan Doğramacı Bilkent University, Teaching English as a Foreign Language Master's Program, with the purpose of exploring the perceptions of EFL instructors, teacher trainers and the management on peer observation system as part of professional development at a foundation university in Turkey under the supervision of Asst. Prof. Dr. Tijen Akşit. It will take approximately 10 minutes to complete the questionnaire. In terms of this questionnaire;

- Your identification will never be disclosed.
- Your data will only be accessed by the researcher, will be kept on a password protected computer and will only be used for this thesis and possible related conference presentations, and journal publication purposes.
- Your answers will not be shared with your school and will not affect your working rights.
- You can leave the questionnaire any time you want.
- The results of the study will be shared with you if you request them. In this case, you can reach me via the e-mail address stated below.

Please tick the box if you meet the criteria and agree to participate.

Criteria:

- I am over 18 years old.
- I have read and understood the information about this study above.
- I understand that I can withdraw from the study without any consequences at any time.
- I understand who would have access to identifying information provided and what will happen to the data at the end of the study.

- I understand that this study has been reviewed by and received ethical clearance through Bilkent University Ethics Committee.

I meet the criteria and agree to participate.

☐

IMPORTANT NOTE:

If you would like to volunteer for a short interview to provide me with further information, please share your e-mail address and phone number below.

e-mail: _____ mobile: +90 (5____) _____

Thank you for your contribution.

Zeynep Arslan

MA. Bilkent University/TEFL

e-mail: zeynep.arslan@bilkent.edu.tr

Supervisor: Asst. Prof. Dr. Tijen Akşit

Please answer the following questions on the current classroom observation system in your institution by ticking the relevant box(es) and/or providing short answers.

1. What type of an observation have you been involved so far? Please tick all that apply.

☐by a teacher trainer

☐by a critical friend

☐by another person (Please specify)

☐self (through video or audio recording)

☐others (Please specify)

2. What do you think about the aims of the classroom observations in your institution?

3. What do you think about the meetings (pre and post-sessions) with the observer and the observee?

4. What do you think about your commitment to the classroom observation system up to now?

5. How do you think the results of the classroom observation system is beneficial for the Management?

Finally, please fill in the following blanks.

Gender:

Nationality: ☐ Turkish ☐ Non-Turkish

Your academic position: ☐ Instructor ☐ Assistant Professor

☐ Associate Professor ☐ Professor

ELT experience: ☐ 0-5 ☐ 6-10 ☐ 11-15 ☐ 16-20 ☐ 21-25 ☐ 26+

Experience in this institution: ☐ 0-5 ☐ 6-10 ☐ 11-15 ☐ 16-20
☐ 21-25 ☐ 26+

The program you teach in: ☐ Preparatory program ☐ Post-Preparatory
program

BA/ BSc degree subject(s):

MA/ MSc degree subjects:

PhD degree subjects:

Any relevant teaching certifications/ diplomas:

Appendix C

Questionnaire for the Administrator

Informed Consent

Dear Administrator,

This questionnaire was prepared for my thesis within the scope of İhsan Doğramacı Bilkent University, Teaching English as a Foreign Language Master's Program, with the purpose of exploring the perceptions of EFL instructors, teacher trainers and the management on peer observation system as part of professional development at a foundation university in Turkey under the supervision of Asst. Prof. Dr. Tijen Akşit. It will take approximately 10 minutes to complete the questionnaire. In terms of this questionnaire;

- Your identification will never be disclosed.
- Your data will only be accessed by the researcher, will be kept on a password protected computer and will only be used for this thesis and possible related conference presentations, and journal publication purposes.
- Your answers will not be shared with your school and will not affect your working rights.
- You can leave the questionnaire any time you want.
- The results of the study will be shared with you if you request them. In this case, you can reach me via the e-mail address stated below.

Please tick the box if you meet the criteria and agree to participate.

Criteria:

- I am over 18 years old.
- I have read and understood the information about this study above.
- I understand that I can withdraw from the study without any consequences at any time.
- I understand who would have access to identifying information provided and what will happen to the data at the end of the study.

- I understand that this study has been reviewed by and received ethical clearance through Bilkent University Ethics Committee.

I meet the criteria and agree to participate.

☐

IMPORTANT NOTE:

If you would like to volunteer for a short interview to provide me with further information, please share your e-mail address and phone number below.

e-mail: _____ mobile: +90 (5____) _____

Thank you for your contribution.

Zeynep Arslan

MA. Bilkent University/TEFL

e-mail: zeynep.arslan@bilkent.edu.tr

Supervisor: Asst. Prof. Dr. Tijen Akşit

Please answer the following questions on the current classroom observation system in your institution by ticking the relevant box(es) and/or providing short answers.

1. What type of an observation have you been involved so far? Please tick all that apply.

☐by a teacher trainer

☐by a critical friend

☐by another person (Please specify)

☐self (through video or audio recording)

☐others (Please specify)

2. What do you think about the aims of the classroom observations in your institution?

3. What do you think about the meetings (pre and post-sessions) with the observer and the observee?

4. What do you think about your commitment to the classroom observation system up to now?

5. How do you think the results of the classroom observation system is beneficial for the Management?

6. How do you think the results of the classroom observation system is beneficial for the overall teaching quality in the school?

7. How do you think the results of the classroom observation system is beneficial for your own professional development?

8. Do you think there has been any change/improvement in teaching techniques as a result of classroom observations?

☐Yes (please explain how)

☐No (please explain why not)

9. What do you think an ideal EFL teachers' classroom observation system should be like so that it could be beneficial both for the teacher and the institution to the utmost?

Any other comments on the classroom observations that you wish to add:

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Finally, please fill in the following blanks.

Gender:

Nationality: ☐ Turkish ☐ Non-Turkish

Your academic position: ☐ Instructor ☐ Assistant Professor

☐ Associate Professor ☐ Professor

ELT experience: ☐ 1-5 ☐ 6-10 ☐ 11-15 ☐ 16-20 ☐ 21-25 ☐

26+

Experience in this institution: ☐ 0-5 ☐ 6-10 ☐ 11-15 ☐ 16-20

☐ 21-25 ☐ 26+

The program you teach in: ☐ Preparatory program ☐ Post-Preparatory
program

BA/ BSc degree subject(s):

MA/ MSc degree subjects:

PhD degree subjects:

Any relevant teaching certifications/ diplomas:



Appendix D

Interview Questions

Informed Consent

This case study investigates the perceptions of EFL instructors, teacher trainers and management on an institutional classroom observation system. The data will be collected through semi-structured interviews. The interview will be conducted face-to-face at your university campus. The study explores how EFL instructors, ELT classroom observers and ELT administrators perceive the institutional classroom observation system in terms of teacher reflectivity and teaching quality. The exploratory study aims to obtain information about the EFL instructors', ELT classroom observers and ELT administrators' perceptions towards the classroom observation system itself. Moreover, it is intended to examine the differences between years of experience, educational background and nationalities with regard to perceptions on institutional classroom observation system. The study will offer some recommendations based on the findings.

Confidentiality: Your responses to interview questions will be kept confidential. At no time will your actual identity be revealed. You will be assigned a random numerical code. The recording will be erased as soon as it has been transcribed. The transcript, without your name, will be kept until the research is complete with a password that only the researcher will have an access. Your response will not be shared with the third parties and will have no effect on your relations with your university.

Agreement:

The nature and purpose of this research have been sufficiently explained and I agree to participate in this study. I understand that I am free to withdraw at any time without incurring any penalty.

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Name: _____

Interview Questions

1. What are your perceptions about the classroom observation system in general?

Follow up questions if need be;

- a. Do you find it advantageous or disadvantageous for your colleagues and students? Can you name them please?
 - b. Do you like the current classroom observation system? If so, tell me three things that you like the most. If not, what would you change about the current classroom observation system to improve it at this institution?
 - c. Do you believe the classroom observation system strengthens professional relationships? If yes, how? If no, why not?
 - d. Does it enhance mutual trust and respect? If yes, how? If no, why not?
 - e. Do you think the classroom observation system contributes to student achievement? If yes, how? If no, why not? Any suggestions?
2. What kind of a relationship between pre-conference sessions and teaching quality do you see? Please explain.
3. What kind of a relationship between post-conference sessions and teaching quality do you see? Please explain.
4. What do you think about the observer and observee's roles in;
- pre-conference sessions
 - during the class observation, and
 - post-conference sessions?
5. What kind of a relationship do you see between the classroom observation system and teachers' professional development? Please explain.

Follow up questions if need be;

- a. Are there better or alternative ways to the classroom observation system?
Can you name some or tell me about those systems?
6. Would you be interested in continuing or being involved in the classroom observation system in the future? Why/ Why not?

Anything you would like to add about the classroom observation system?

Appendix E

Second-Level Coding Categories

Teacher Appraisal (TA)- Aim& Dis/Advantages for the professional development (Dis/Adv-f-PD) & - Commitment (Comm)- Gathering Data (Gatdata)

- TA Gatdata- Aim- Rec- Recording the teachers' performance
- TA Gatdata- Aim- Doc- Documenting the teachers' weaknesses
- TA Gatdata- Aim- Emp- To employ or not
- TA Gatdata- Aim- Spy- To spy the teachers
- TA Gatdata- Aim- Eva- To be able to evaluate the teachers' performance
- TA Gatdata- Disadv-f-PD- Demotv-Demotivates the teachers
- TA Gatdata- Dis- Comm- Disadvantageous for the teachers' commitment

Teacher Appraisal (TA)- Aim & Dis/Advantages for the professional development (Dis/Adv-f-PD)-Surveillance (Surv)

- TA Surv-Aim- Insp- Inspecting the teachers
- TA Surv-Aim- Mon- Monitoring the teachers
- TA Surv-Aim- Chk- Checking how the teachers teach
- TA Surv-Aim- Cnt- Controlling what the teachers do
- TA Surv- Disadv-f-PD- Demotv- demotivates the teachers

Professional Development (PD)-Aim & Dis/Advantages for the professional development (Dis/Adv-f-PD)-Teacher Reflectivity (TR)

- PD TR-Aim- Rea- Making the teachers realize their strengths and weaknesses
- PD TR-Aim-Obj- Making the teachers see themselves more objectively
- PD TR-Aim-Self-A- Assessing your teaching skills
- PD TR-Aim-Ref- Reflecting on the teaching skills critically
- PD TR-Aim-Disc- Discovering the missing details in teaching
- PD TR-Aim-Exc- Exchanging ideas on teaching
- PD TR-Aim- Col- Increasing collaboration among the teachers
- PD TR- Adv-f-PD- NovT- Better reflection for novice teachers
- PD TR- Adv-f-PD- ExpT- Better reflection for experienced teachers
- PD TR-Adv-f-PD/Man-Comm- Increasing commitment to the system and the school

Teaching Quality (TQ)-Aim & Dis/Advantages for the Management & professional development & Teaching Quality (Dis/Adv-f-Man/ PD/ TQ)-
Student Achievement (Ss Ach)

- TQ Ss Ach-Aim-Imp Scss- Improving student success
- TQ Ss Ach-Aim-Ease- Easing understanding students' needs
- TQ Ss Ach-Aim-Contr- Contributing to students' achievement
- TQ Ss Ach-Adv-f-Man- Bet Qual- Better teaching quality in the institution
- TQ Ss Ach-Adv-f-PD- Bet Prodct- Better production from the students
- TQ Ss Ach- Disadv-f-TQ- Incomp- Incompetency of the observer

Lesson Planning (LP)- Pre-Con- Pre-observation conference- Dis/Advantages for the professional development (Dis/Adv-f-PD)-Lesson Objectives (Les Obj)

- LP Les Obj-Adv-f-PD- Spe Obj-Better focus on specified objectives
- LP Les Obj-Adv-f-PD- Les Stgng-Contributes to better lesson staging
- LP Les Obj-Adv-f-TQ- Prodct-Better production from the students
- LP Les Obj-Adv-f-PD- Updt- Updating content knowledge
- LP Les Obj-Adv-f-PD-Exc- Exchanging ideas with a colleague
- LP Les Obj-disadv-PD- SD- Dis dif- disregarding differences in teaching

Constructive Feedback (Const Fdbck)- Post-observation conference (Post-Con)- Dis/Advantages for the professional development (Dis/Adv-f-PD)- Attentive Eye (At Eye)

- Const Fdbck At Eye- Adv-f-PD- Disc- Discovering strengths and weaknesses
- Const Fdbck At Eye- Adv-f-PD- Updt- Updating content knowledge
- Const Fdbck At Eye- Adv-f-PD- Les Stgng-Contributes to better lesson staging
- Const Fdbck At Eye- Adv-f-PD- Ref- Reflecting on the lesson
- Const Fdbck At Eye- Adv-f-PD- Coll- Increasing collaboration among the teachers
- Const Fdbck At Eye- Dis/Adv-f-PD-Lang- The language used while giving feedback
- Const Fdbck At Eye- Disadv-f-PD- Incomp- Incompetency of the observer
- Const Fdbck At Eye- Disadv-f-PD- Artf- the observer is artificial

Standardization (SD)- Aim& Dis/Advantages for the Man/ professional development (Dis/Adv-f-Man/PD)-Standardized Teaching (Stan T)

- SD Stan T-Disadv-f-PD-Dis dif- Disregarding differences in teaching
- SD Stan T-Aim-Keep-T-cert-lev- Keeping teaching quality at a certain level
- SD Stan T-Adv-f-Man- Ensr- Ensuring a standardized teaching quality
- SD Stan T-Disadv-f-PD- Oblg- Obligating the teachers to have a standardized teaching

School Culture (SC)- Aim & Dis/Advantages for professional development (Dis/Adv-f-PD)- Collaboration (Coll)

- SC Coll-Aim- Fri Atm-Creating a friendly learning atmosphere
- SC Coll-Aim-Raise A- Raising awareness on mutual learning
- SC Coll-Aim-Ackn- Making the teachers acknowledge the system
- SC Coll-Adv-f-PD- Mot- Motivating for learning from each other

Suggestions for Improvement (Sug)- Frequency (Fre)/ Reciprocity (Rec)/ Voluntariness (Vol)/ Quality of the observers (OQ)/ Flexibility (Flex)/ Nonjudgmental (Nonjud)

- Sug Fre- Less Fre- Less frequent number of classroom observations
- Sug Rec-Mut- Mutual classroom observations
- Sug Vol-Compls- Not compulsory to do
- Sug OQ-Qual- Better quality in the observers
- Sug Flex-Free- Being free to choose the observer
- Sug Nonjud- Dev- Developmental not judgmental
- Sug Rat-Why-Rationale behind the system