

Professional development for English language teachers: perspectives from higher education in Turkey

Edited by Simon Borg



**Professional development for
English language teachers:
perspectives from higher
education in Turkey**

Edited by Simon Borg

ISBN 978-0-86355-764-4

© **British Council 2015**

Karum İş Merkezi No:21 D Blok Kat:5 No:436
Kavaklıdere 06700 Ankara / Türkiye

www.britishcouncil.org.tr

Contents

Foreword.....	3
Overview - Beyond the workshop: CPD for English language teachers <i>Simon Borg</i>	5
1 The ICELT teacher training programme <i>Hilal Handan Atlı</i>	17
2 Teacher research for instructors <i>Kenan Dikilitaş</i>	27
3 Dealing with teacher resistance <i>Yasemin Yelbay Yılmaz</i>	37
4 The podcast and e-documentaries task group <i>Nezaket Özgirin</i>	47
5 Peer evaluation <i>Ian Collins</i>	55
6 The reflective teaching and learning programme <i>Bahar Gün</i>	65
7 Faculty viewing of video-recorded lessons <i>Bayram Peköz</i>	77
8 Reflective peer observations <i>Wayne Trotman</i>	89

Foreword

Julian Parry

The British Council works in partnership with the public and private sectors to improve English language teaching and learning levels in Turkey by providing access to UK expertise in curriculum development, pre-service teacher development, continuing professional development (CPD) for in-service teachers, assessment policy and practice, learning technologies, teacher assessment and mentoring, and high quality digital resources for teachers and learners.

In 2013 the British Council worked with three universities in Ankara examining good practice in CPD as a means to improve English language learner outcomes. Lessons learned from the project were disseminated at a conference titled 'Ideals and realities: Continuing professional development for preparatory year instructors' hosted by Hacettepe University in January 2014. This conference attracted over 40 universities from across Turkey, many of which were introducing CPD for the first time for their ELT staff. This publication brings together eight case studies describing how CPD has been managed in different institutions in Turkey. The approaches used cover a very broad range of options from delivering formal qualifications to encouraging teacher research to using technology to facilitate peer interaction for learning and reflection.

It has been a pleasure and a privilege to work with these universities and these CPD practitioners over the last two years. Our understanding of the way CPD can be approached in different contexts has deepened as a result and we hope you find this volume a useful resource to help you identify ways you can address the issue of CPD in your own contexts.

I would like to express our thanks to Hacettepe University for hosting the 2014 conference and continuing to work closely with us on this vital area of teaching quality.

Finally, I would like to express our thanks to our editor, Simon Borg, and to all of those who have written papers for this publication.

Julian Parry, Director English, Turkey
British Council

Overview - Beyond the workshop: CPD for English language teachers

Simon Borg, ELT Consultant

Changing views of CPD

English language teaching worldwide is characterised by a strong tradition of continuing professional development (CPD). Within this tradition, though, the dominant approach to CPD remains one which places teachers in the role of knowledge consumers. To take an example with worldwide currency, CPD often requires teachers to attend one-off workshops at which they are introduced to and engaged with new ideas, information and practical advice. Teachers are subsequently expected to take that new knowledge back to their classrooms and to apply it. In this approach to CPD the teacher is seen as a consumer of knowledge – they are given information (sometimes called ‘received knowledge’) that has been generated externally (i.e. not by the teachers) and asked to implement it. The same basic model of CPD applies to longer in-service training courses which require teachers to attend classes (i.e. lectures and workshops) and complete assignments (theoretical and practical) in order to achieve a qualification. Here, too, teachers function largely as consumers (and often ‘reproducers’) of knowledge.

Workshops, courses and similar CPD activities do, of course, contribute significantly to the development of English language teachers around the world, at both pre-service and in-service levels, and countless ELT professionals have experienced fulfilling CPD that is delivered via structured input-based courses and programmes. Just as many perhaps, though, have had bad experiences of this kind of CPD, especially through compulsory in-service workshops and courses that are mandated centrally. Teachers often dismiss these as irrelevant to their needs, impractical and unfeasible, and which have minimal impact on what subsequently happens in the classroom. Institutions may feel they are supporting CPD by providing these mandated workshops, which are often delivered by external trainers. At management level, satisfaction can also be obtained from the quantitative knowledge that X teachers have spent Y hours attending Z CPD sessions. However, the harsh reality is that CPD in such cases is too often largely a waste of time.

There are, therefore, several drawbacks to a CPD policy which relies exclusively on externally-driven, ‘teacher as consumer’ modes of teacher learning. For example, teachers may become dependent on others for their professional development, rather than learning to take charge of it themselves. Teachers may also come to undervalue both their own knowledge and experience, believing that what they receive externally (e.g. from trainers) is more important. CPD which is externally driven also tends to limit the contributions teachers can make to both its content and process. Conventional approaches to CPD tend to take place in the ‘training room’ rather than the classroom (the site where teachers spend most of their professional lives) and focus on teacher behaviours (without acknowledging teachers’ beliefs). Additionally, the predominant mode of learning for teachers is

often individual rather than collaborative.

Internationally, there has been growing dissatisfaction (e.g. Mujs et al. 2014) with this approach to CPD, which I have referred to elsewhere as a ‘training-transmission’ model of language teacher education (Borg forthcoming). One overall criticism of this model is that it fails to produce sustained positive changes in teaching and learning. (For recent discussions in ELT, see, for example, Choi & Andon 2014; Kubanyiova 2012). And clearly, if CPD is not impacting positively on what happens in classrooms, including on the quality of learning that students experience, then questions should be asked about whether the time and resources invested in it can be justified. I am not suggesting that causal links between CPD and student learning (see Hayes & Chang 2012 for a discussion of this issue) should be the sole driving force for policy (CPD can target other benefits, including raising teacher motivation). However, CPD policy which is not informed by a concern for or evidence of student learning is hard to warrant.

Given the concerns outlined above, theory, research, policy and practice in CPD in education generally have shown increasing interest in approaches to CPD recently that have greater potential for transformative change in teaching and learning. Various reviews of literature have been written (e.g. Broad 2006; Timperley, Wilson, Barrar & Fung 2008) have sought to identify the characteristics of such CPD; and while it must be stressed that, because contexts will always vary, there are no universal templates for success, there is an emerging consensus that CPD ‘works’ better when it has these features:

- relevance to the needs of teachers and their students
- teacher involvement in decisions about content and process
- teacher collaboration
- support from the school leadership
- exploration and reflection with attention to both practices and beliefs
- internal and/or external support for teachers (e.g. through mentoring)
- job-embeddedness (i.e. CPD is situated in schools and classrooms)
- contextual alignment (with reference to the institutional, educational, social and cultural milieu)
- critical engagement with received knowledge
- a valuing of teachers’ experience and knowledge.

In contrast to the earlier idea of the teacher as a consumer of received knowledge, CPD with the above characteristics is more likely to conceive of the teacher as (also) a knowledge generator. In other words, we come to see CPD not simply as a strategy through which teachers acquire knowledge from external sources but one where, perhaps even more importantly, they engage in (collective) professional inquiry that generates new understandings from within. A range of strategies that have the potential to embody such characteristics have been widely promoted, and many readers will be familiar with ideas, such as teacher and action research (Borg 2013), peer observation, teacher support groups (see Richards & Farrell 2005) and various kinds of more and less formally structured approaches to reflective practice. Newer ideas, such as lesson study (Tasker 2011) are also increasingly being promoted. In ELT it is increasingly evident that such ideas are not just being talked about, but also being implemented in a systematic manner. (See, for example, the recent collection of innovative approaches to CPD in Hayes 2014). The current volume provides further evidence of this trend by describing a range of school-based strategies for the CPD of English language teachers in higher education institutions in Turkey.

Overview of the volume

The contributions in this volume originated at a conference held in January 2014 with the title, 'Ideals and realities: Continuing professional development for preparatory year instructors'. The event was held at Hacettepe University and organised with the support of the British Council. About 150 participants attended, representing 41 state and private universities. One of the aims of the event was to encourage the sharing of CPD practices from around Turkey and this took place through several presentations in which speakers talked about specific CPD activities and initiatives that were taking place on their preparatory programmes. Speakers were subsequently invited to prepare written versions of their talks and these appear in the eight chapters that follow this introduction.

For readers not familiar with Turkey, many universities stipulate that students demonstrate a certain proficiency in English before they can start their undergraduate studies, and for this purpose universities (through a School of Languages, Foreign Languages, or English) offer an English preparatory programme. There are some 180 universities in Turkey and preparatory programmes that cater for many thousands of students, and also employ large numbers of teachers ('instructors' is the more common term used for teachers in these contexts). English language teaching in Turkish university preparatory schools, then, is an important national activity. It is also one that is characterised by certain pressures which are created by the need to support large numbers of students whose goals in learning English are largely instrumental (i.e. to get into their faculties). Given these demands, it can be easy to lose sight of the needs of teachers and, in particular, of the important role that CPD can play in enabling them to support students effectively. But clearly, as international research increasingly argues, "an education system is only as good as its teachers" (UNESCO 2014: 9) and teachers are increasingly recognised as the single most influential factor on student learning. CPD is, therefore, key to the goal of promoting excellent English language learning, which all preparatory schools seek to achieve.

One characteristic of the examples of CPD that are discussed here is their variety. However, at a broader level they are united by common underlying concerns. They attempt to place teachers' needs at the heart of the CPD process, promote collaborative, on-going teacher learning, and actively foster (rather than just encourage) situated reflection and experimentation alongside opportunities for engagement with received knowledge. Naturally, there will be variations in how successfully these principles are realised in practice, but such concerns are central to contemporary discussions of 'good practice' in CPD.

Following this chapter, Hilal Handan Atli describes the ICELT teacher training programme at Bilkent University. This is the most formally structured of all the examples of CPD described here, given that it takes the form of an internationally accredited teaching qualification that runs over one academic year. However, despite my earlier comments about the limitations of 'course-based CPD', it is clear that over several years ICELT has been adapted so that it is very relevant to the needs of the novice instructors at Bilkent who take it. It is also embedded in instructors' work (i.e. they study and teach at the same time) and thus provides regular supported opportunities for reflection and classroom experimentation. Instructors are also required to engage with received knowledge, but do so in a way that makes it relevant to their work as classroom practitioners.

In Chapter 2, Kenan Dikilitaş describes how teacher research has become an established mode of CPD at Gediz University. Teacher research involves self-study – teachers systematically (i.e. by collecting and analysing data) study teaching and learning in their own classrooms and use the findings to make informed decisions about how best to support students. Introducing teacher research can be challenging and the chapter usefully highlights some of these challenges. What emerges clearly, though, is that instructors recognise the value of teacher research for their own professional development. They also value opportunities to share what they learn from teacher research with others, and the annual teacher research conference that Gediz University has organised in recent years has been an important part of the school's overall CPD strategy.

Despite the positive accounts of CPD provided in this book, it is important to maintain a sense of realism and to acknowledge that not all teachers are naturally attracted to CPD. Yasemin Yelbay Yılmaz's chapter on teacher resistance addresses this important issue and she describes how modest levels of interest in CPD are being addressed at Hacettepe University. The chapter illustrates a point made in most other chapters – that an effective CPD policy will be informed by teachers' opinions – and the starting point here in addressing teacher resistance was a survey about, amongst other issues, instructors' attitudes to CPD and the kinds of CPD they wanted to do. The results of the survey were used to formulate an approach to CPD that provides both institutional control and instructor choice. The approach is called 'Core, Mantle, Crust' to represent the different areas of teacher learning (ELT specific, general pedagogy, and broader personal development) that CPD can focus on.

Chapter 4 is by Nezaket Özgirin from Sabancı University. It describes how 'task groups' – groups of teachers who come together to pursue an issue of common interest – can constitute another valuable form of CPD. In this case, the task group worked on compiling an on-line 'library' of podcasts and videos (often accompanied by learning activities) and making these available to other instructors. This kind of CPD is wholly teacher-driven – there are no trainers and the group is responsible for deciding what they do and how they do it. The benefits of this approach to CPD are also broad. The task group members develop their own understandings of the issues under study, while the outputs of their work – in this case podcasts, videos and accompanying activities – become a resource for other instructors to use in their teaching. This is a good example of how CPD can contribute, not just to the development of the instructors involved, but also to their schools more generally.

Contemporary approaches to CPD emphasise its collaborative nature and this often takes the form of teachers observing one another or more generally giving one another feedback on areas for development. The latter is the focus of Chapter 5, where Ian Collins from Yaşar University discusses the use of peer evaluation as part of the appraisal system in his school. It is clear from his analysis that the appraisal dimension of the peer evaluation scheme has had a negative effect on its potential to support teacher development. Instructors do not engage fully with the scheme and generally co-operate in ensuring that everyone receives high peer ratings. Overall, while the scheme is gradually changing the attitudes that instructors have towards receiving feedback from peers, the paper illustrates how the relationship between CPD and appraisal can be a challenging one.

The final three chapters in the book also promote peer interaction as part of CPD, without, though, any element of peer appraisal. Bahar Gün from Izmir University

of Economics describes a reflective teaching programme which is one of the CPD options available to instructors there. Participants in this programme have their lessons video recorded and are asked to view these (privately) and to complete observation tasks in relation to specific areas of teaching (e.g. giving instructions). Participants then meet to discuss what they learned through studying their videos, sharing practical ideas and receiving trainer input in relation to the area of teaching under discussion each week. Instructors are also asked to provide feedback on the programme – evaluation of this kind should be part of any CPD scheme – and overall report that they have found the process of watching videos of their own classes and doing focused observation tasks very beneficial. Discussing their lessons with colleagues each week is also an activity the instructors found useful in developing their reflective skills.

Bayram Peköz from Hasan Kalyoncu University also describes a CPD activity which involves instructors being video recorded. Once again, they are given support in reflecting on their lessons (e.g. through observation checklists) and also have the option of volunteering for a more public viewing (i.e. with colleagues and managers) and discussion of their video recorded lesson. During these open viewings, instructors receive feedback from colleagues and have the opportunity to discuss this later in a private meeting with a manager too. Once again, the feedback from instructors participating in this CPD activity has been that they find the process of analysing videos of their lessons very beneficial; and while not all instructors have been willing to have their videos discussed publicly, those who have also say that feedback from colleagues has been helpful to them.

Peer observation is well-established as a collaborative CPD strategy (see, for example, Hamilton 2013) and in the final chapter here Wayne Trotman discusses how this strategy is being used at Katip Çelebi University. His focus, in particular, is on the descriptive and reflective accounts that the observers write about the peer observation process (including the post-observation meeting – though these do not always take place). He analyses the language used in a set of written accounts that identify two different kinds of teacher development (which he calls ‘pedagogic’ and ‘affective’) which seem to be occurring through peer observation. A feature of this CPD work is the way that peer observation was introduced in a structured manner – instructors were given an example of what the report of a peer observation cycle might look like and were also helped to identify (through a workshop) the kinds of issues that peer observation might focus on. Support of this kind is important when instructors are being encouraged to engage with new forms of CPD.

Some reflections

This collection of accounts illustrates the progress that is being made in promoting alternative and potentially more effective forms of CPD in English preparatory schools in Turkey. The descriptions and reflections in the eight chapters provide concrete ideas for other institutions in the country (and elsewhere) to consider, replicate, adapt and build on. It is important to acknowledge and celebrate the excellent work that is presented here; but it is also important to review it more critically and consider what the next steps might be in enhancing CPD in preparatory schools even further.

One issue I signalled earlier is that of representativeness. Eight institutions are represented here out of some 180 in Turkey, and although not all of these will have a preparatory programme, the majority do. To what extent then, are these examples of innovative practice reflected more generally across the country? It

is important not to assume that they are and it would certainly be an interesting exercise to survey the CPD landscape in Turkish preparatory schools more generally. This broader empirical description would not only facilitate the further sharing of CPD practices within the sector, but also (for example, by identifying constraints and challenges) inform decisions about how CPD can be promoted more effectively.

A second observation prompted by this collection relates to the monitoring and evaluation of CPD. It is important to monitor CPD activities through documenting levels of participation in them and collecting formative feedback from different sources along the way. It is also important that individual CPD activities and CPD strategies overall are systematically evaluated, again by using a range of tools and sources of information. Several of the papers in this collection do refer to teacher evaluations of CPD and that is positive, but I think this is an area of CPD in preparatory schools that can be strengthened further. What impacts do schools hope their CPD will have on teaching, learning and the organisation? What evidence is needed to assess how far those impacts are occurring? And what tools can be used to collect this evidence (and could tools be developed collaboratively across schools and shared)? Could an external person be involved in an institutional review of CPD? (Preparatory schools could collaborate with each other by reciprocating in providing external reviewers.) In the absence of systematic evaluation, there is a risk that opportunities for development will be missed and that isolated instances of excellence will mask significant shortcomings elsewhere. What support, then, do preparatory schools need in order to systematically monitor, evaluate and review their approaches to CPD?

The issue of appraisal and CPD has already been raised and this is a good example of an issue that might be addressed as part of a broader survey of practices in preparatory schools that would ask vital questions, such as to what extent is CPD compulsory for instructors? How, if at all, does it contribute to instructor appraisal? What impact does close links with appraisal have on participation in CPD? We have seen examples in this volume which suggest that when CPD is linked to appraisal instructors are motivated to attend, and have also seen examples where CPD is not compulsory, but instructors still participate enthusiastically. There was an example where linking CPD and appraisal limited the benefits instructors experienced, and also one where CPD was optional and participation was modest. My personal view is that CPD should not be optional, but that institutions should create appropriate conditions within which teachers have some choice regarding the kind of CPD they want to engage in. And because CPD is not just for the personal benefit of the instructor, institutions are entitled when necessary to create CPD policies and frameworks that require instructors to focus on certain issues. Even in such cases, though, institutions have the responsibility to create appropriate conditions for instructors to participate in meaningful professional learning. One key condition is time, but providing time alone will not guarantee productive engagement by instructors in CPD. So there are many interesting issues that merit further investigation.

One final issue worth highlighting here is instructors' beliefs about and attitudes towards CPD. These will have a major impact on the extent to which instructors engage in or seek out opportunities for CPD. In designing a CPD strategy then, institutions need to consider not just the kinds of options that are offered to instructors, but also the extent to which instructors have attitudes and beliefs conducive to effective CPD. For example, do instructors understand the purpose of CPD and value it, and do they value learning with and from colleagues? One of

the chapters in this volume does address this issue of underlying dispositions and I think it is an issue that should be considered more broadly in further analyses of CPD in preparatory schools in Turkey.

In conclusion, the organisers of the event which led to this publication should be thanked for their initiative, as should, of course, the contributors to this volume. We have not included separate acknowledgements in each chapter, but I know that the authors would also like to thank the management of their institutions for supporting the CPD work described here. It reflects well on the participating preparatory schools and should inspire other schools around Turkey and even further afield to examine their existing CPD policy and to consider ways in which it can be enhanced for the benefit of staff, students and the organisation more generally.

Further reading

Borg, S. (2013). *Teacher research in language teaching: A critical analysis*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Borg, S. (forthcoming). Researching language teacher education. In B. Paltridge & A. Phakiti (Eds.), *The Continuum companion to research methods in applied linguistics* (Second ed.). London: Bloomsbury.

Broad, K., & Evans, M. (2006). *A review of literature on professional development content and delivery modes for experienced teachers*. Toronto: Canadian Ministry of Education.

Choi, T. H., & Andon, N. (2014). Can a teacher certification scheme change ELT classroom practice? *ELT Journal*, 68(1), 12-21.

Hamilton, E. R. (2013). His ideas are in my head: Peer-to-peer teacher observations as professional development. *Professional Development in Education*, 39(1), 42-64.

Hayes, D. (Ed.). (2014). *Innovations in the continuing professional development of English language teachers*. London: British Council.

Hayes, D., & Chang, K. (2012). Theoretical perspectives on and international practice in continuing professional development for English teachers. *English Teaching*, 67, 107-129.

Kubanyiova, M. (2012). *Teacher development in action: Understanding language teachers' conceptual change*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.

Muijs, D., Kyriakides, L., van der Werf, G., Creemers, B., Timperley, H., & Earl, L. (2014). State of the art – teacher effectiveness and professional learning. *School Effectiveness and School Improvement*, 25(2), 231-256.

Richards, J. C., & Farrell, T. S. C. (2005). *Professional development for language teachers*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Tasker, T. (2011). Teacher learning through lesson study. K. E. Johnson & P. R. Golombek (Eds.), *Research on second language teacher education* (pp. 204-221). London: Routledge.

Timperley, H., Wilson, A., Barrar, H., & Fung, I. (2008). *Teacher professional learning and development: Best evidence synthesis iteration (BES)*. Wellington, New Zealand: Ministry of Education.

UNESCO. (2014). *Teaching and learning: Achieving equality for all. 11th EFA global monitoring report*. Paris: UNESCO.

The author

Simon Borg has been involved in ELT for over 25 years, including 15 years at the University of Leeds, where he was a Professor of TESOL. Simon now works full-time as an ELT consultant, designing, implementing, evaluating and researching language teacher development programmes and projects around the world.

Details of his work are available at <http://simon-borg.co.uk/>.

Email: s.borg@education.leeds.ac.uk

The ICALT teacher training programme

1

The ICELT teacher training programme

Hilal Handan Atli, School of English Language, Bilkent University

Introduction

Founded in 1984, Bilkent University was the first private, non-profit university in Turkey. Bilkent University School of English Language (BUSEL) has over 200 full-time English language teachers, over one third of whom are internationally recruited. The majority of the teachers are working on the preparatory programme. BUSEL recognises the value of CPD and has invested substantially in in-service teacher education. The school offers its language teachers opportunities for personal and professional development through in-house teacher training, as well as through Cambridge English certificate and diploma programmes.

The Cambridge English ICELT course

ICELT stands for In-service Certificate in English Language Teaching and is part of the Cambridge English suite of teacher training courses. It is a course for practising teachers which is run in many parts of the world (e.g. Russia, Mexico, Brazil and South Korea). ICELT is considered by Cambridge to be a higher level qualification than the CELTA (a pre-service qualification) and is seen as a valuable precursor for someone wishing to eventually take the more advanced Delta modules. On the British National Qualifications and Credit Framework, ICELT is at Level 6 (undergraduate degree level study), with CELTA at level 5 and Delta at level 7.

The ICELT course is designed for teachers, both English native speakers and non-native speakers, who are early in their career, but may also be of great benefit to those who need to refresh their existing knowledge base, or have never had the opportunity to take a formal ELT teaching qualification. The course aims principally to improve teaching skills, deepen theoretical knowledge in relation to classroom practice, and further develop a teacher's professional use of language. The assessment criteria, syllabus, and standards for the ICELT (e.g. the number of assessed teaching practice lessons, peer observations, the content of methodology assignments) are defined by Cambridge English. However, one of ICELT's major strengths is that it gives centres the flexibility to tailor the course to their own teaching context. The course is internally assessed but moderated through visit(s) by moderators, externally appointed by Cambridge English, to ensure that standards are being maintained across programmes around the world.

The ICELT course at BUSEL

In our preparatory programme, the ICELT serves as a structured induction programme. Novice staff and new graduates or teachers with only one or two years of experience recruited to the School of English Language are required to take the course. Since it was first offered in 2002, over 200 teachers have taken

the ICELT. Teaching practice (TP), methodology assignments and language tasks are incorporated into the programme, which takes place during novice teachers' first year at the institution. The ICELT programme is also part of the probation requirements for new teachers in BUSEL.

All the input sessions and materials that are used relate to institutional needs. The delivery of sessions is mostly based on reflection on classroom practice and student responses, watching filmed lessons from BUSEL classrooms and discussing the stages in those lessons, as well as exchanging experiences and ideas. Regular group meetings are held amongst teachers to discuss professional issues that help to address the feeling of isolation new staff can experience. These meetings also create a sense of belonging to a teaching community, where newcomers support one another as they acclimatise to a new working context. In addition, the personal tutoring and mentoring they receive from their tutors and the content of the input sessions help them to make a smooth transition into the profession and teaching context.

Course Requirements

The curriculum is approved and moderated by Cambridge English. There are four broad requirements that teachers have to meet, which are:

1. Planning and delivering four assessed teaching practice cycles.

The TP foci are receptive skills teaching, grammar teaching, vocabulary teaching and productive skills teaching. The teachers have to plan their TP lessons by considering the student profile in their classes, the weekly course programme and the institutional course books. Course participants have to come, with their lesson plan and materials ready, to a pre-conference with their personal tutor, who is there to challenge their beliefs or guide them to an effective implementation of their beliefs through probing questions. After the TP, teachers reflect on their teaching practice in writing before meeting their personal tutor for a post-conference, where they discuss different aspects of the lesson observed and go over their tutor's running commentary. In BUSEL, teachers generally have a non-assessed TP cycle before the first assessed one. The teachers' line manager participates in the TP cycles as part of the assessment of whether they are meeting the institution's probation requirements.

2. Writing four language tasks for teachers.

To develop their professional use of language, teachers have to audio record themselves while teaching a lesson, then listen to their recording and comment on their accuracy and appropriacy from different perspectives (phonology, discourse, grammar, vocabulary and register) while taking into account the students' proficiency. They also have to analyse and comment on:

a) Students' spoken language by listening to how they speak, commenting on an individual student's progress, in terms of appropriacy and/or accuracy, and stating what further support the class needs as a whole

b) Students' written language by practising giving written feedback on two student papers from two different levels. This involves firstly identifying and correcting all written language errors and then, on a different copy, giving feedback on the written work by using different written error correction techniques.

In these two assignments teachers need to consider the nature of the errors and the level of the students, i.e. they have to shift attention from themselves to the students and familiarise themselves with the learning objectives of the institution's different language proficiency levels. As for the final language task, each teacher is assigned a different journal article in conjunction with one of the input sessions on the course. They have to read, comprehend, summarise and present it orally in ten minutes to their peers by using professionally appropriate discourse. This task focuses on teachers' reading comprehension skills, the appropriacy and accuracy of their spoken language for the task in hand, and their ability to adjust language to a multi-national audience.

ICELT teachers have reported (see Figure 1) that the above mentioned tasks helped them to monitor both their own and students' spoken and written language, develop an understanding of the causes of mistakes and students' progress, equip them with the language terminology to talk about language, and familiarise them with the expected learning outcomes at different language proficiency levels. The quotes in Figure 1 below are taken from end-of-course evaluation questionnaires and reflect the general opinion of the teachers who completed the course.

Figure 1: Comments on language task assignments

"This assignment was a good way to be aware of (spoken language) by listening to our own language objectively, analysing it critically and reflecting on it."

"I have become more aware of the process the learners go through while learning a second language."

"This assignment helped me to learn the way I should give written feedback."

3. *Writing four reflection essays on their classroom practice (methodology assignments).*

To deepen their knowledge through structured reading and improve their teaching skills through reflection, teachers have to:

- a) plan and deliver lessons to their group of learners and reflect on their effectiveness;
- b) adapt coursebook materials according to their learners' needs and learning styles and the level objectives, plan and deliver the lesson, and reflect on the effectiveness of any supplementary material;
- c) plan and deliver a lesson, reflecting on how different types of learners responded to the tasks and activities during the different stages in the lesson, and state what they would consider doing in future lesson planning to involve all types of learners in their classes;
- d) plan and deliver a grammar lesson, reflect on how much learning took place and then plan a series of three lessons that will give learners further practice and extend their analytical thinking.

Figure 2 provides some extracts from teacher end-of-course evaluation questionnaires that highlight quite representatively their views about the reflection essays.

Figure 2: Comments on reflection essays

“With this assignment I had the opportunity to analyse the course books that we use and now I believe I can take decisions to use or not to use the activities more easily.”

“After writing this assignment, I try to consider learner types and individual differences as much as possible and try to add variety in the lessons.”

“This assignment contributed to my lesson in terms of planning a series of lessons... I learned a lot of things, especially about the challenge level of the activities I prepare.”

4. *Completing eight peer observation tasks by observing experienced colleagues in the institution.*

A further requirement of the ICELT course is to carry out eight peer observation tasks, two of which can be video-recorded lessons. The focus of each peer observation is set by the ICELT tutors and is in line with either of the input sessions, TP foci, or the content of methodology assignments. While observing their experienced colleagues' lessons, the teachers have to produce a running commentary and afterwards use their notes to reflect on the lesson by answering questions given in a peer observation tool supplied by the tutors. We believe observing different class profiles and experienced colleagues adds to a teacher's repertoire of teaching skills, allows them to see the commonality and differences between different groups of learners, discern how experienced colleagues respond to different learner profiles and exploit institutional teaching materials to meet the needs of their students.

The impact of ICELT

Through the methodology assignments, language tasks and teaching practice cycles, teachers develop a better understanding of institutional level objectives, teaching methodology and learner profile. They also improve their skills in analysing textbook materials, as well as in using and adapting institutional course books and supplementary materials to meet the needs of their learners more effectively.

Since teachers receive individual attention from their personal tutors during the TP pre- and post-conferences, and receive tutorials on their assignments in the form of mentoring, they develop reflective skills, become aware of their strengths and learn to develop strategies to work on areas where they need to improve. Through tutors' probing questions during these individual meetings they develop a mind-set that helps them to become more competent teachers while planning their lessons and solving classroom-related issues. Likewise, as the teachers get feedback on their classroom language, this aspect of their work improves too.

The methodology assignments, language tasks and peer observation reports that the teachers need to complete on the course require them to write approximately 10,000 words in total. Teachers receive both written and oral feedback on the above mentioned work, which not only increases their awareness in terms of teaching methodology and language systems, but also improves the organisation, language, discourse and mechanics of their writing skills. This has important implications for the classroom as participants improve their skills in teaching academic writing and giving written feedback, which is generally an area that all teachers need to work on in the early stages of their career.

Since almost all BUSEL preparatory programme teachers do the ICELT, the course has had a very positive impact on institutional culture and contributed to an open door policy where colleagues are willing to accept observers into their classes, collaborate and share ideas and experiences in the staff room. At the same time, the tasks that accompany peer observation help contribute to the socialisation of new staff into the school culture. Below are some comments from teachers about the impact that ICELT has had on their professional development.

Figure 3: Impact of ICELT on teachers' professional development

“I started questioning my beliefs and role as a teacher, and began reflecting on my experiences in the classroom...”

“ICELT was an opportunity... to construct and reconstruct my knowledge of and about teaching...”

“The sessions and the assignments helped me to have broader perspectives about language teaching.”

“The course enabled me to manage my time effectively...”

“... it was very motivating to see the rapid improvement I made...”

“ICELT helped me prepare more efficiently and effectively ☺... and adapt to the demands of the teaching profession and the institution...”

“Now I am doing DELTA/MA without experiencing any major difficulties.”

Further reading

Borg, S. (2011). The impact of in-service teacher education on language teachers' beliefs. *System*, 39(3), 370-380.

Farrell, T.S.C. (2006). The first year of language teaching: imposing order. *System*, 34(2), 211-221.

Farrell, T.S.C. (2003). Learning to teach English language during the first year: personal influences and challenges. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 19(1), 95-111.

Phipps, S. (2010). *Language teacher education, beliefs and classroom practices*. Saarbrücken, Germany: Lambert Academic Publishing.

See also www.cambridgeenglish.org/teaching-english/teaching-qualifications/icelt/ for details of the ICELT.

The author

Hilal Handan Atli is a teacher educator at Bilkent University School of English Language, where she directs the Cambridge English ICELT course. She is undertaking a PhD in Curriculum and Instruction and her research interests include in-service language teacher development and professional learning, classroom-based research and evaluation of learning. She has published in the area of in-service teacher educator roles and is currently researching teacher identity and teacher transitions during the first years of teaching.

Email: hilal@bilkent.edu.tr

Teacher research for instructors

2

Teacher research for instructors

Kenan Dikilitaş, School of Foreign Languages, Gediz University

Introduction

Gediz University is located in Izmir and was established in 2009 as a private foundation university. It now offers courses in five faculties, in most of which English is the medium of instruction. To equip students with the foreign language skills necessary for their studies, the preparatory school provides a nine-month English language programme (divided into four eight-week blocks) to 700-800 students every year. To be eligible to start their degree studies, students must graduate from the English language programme at B2 level. The programme aims to develop the students' ability to use oral and written language productively as they need to listen to their lecturers and communicate with them, as well as to submit weekly reports and assignments in English. There are 60-70 English language instructors on the programme with varying degrees of experience. As a policy, the preparatory school administration encourages instructors to actively participate in professional development activities throughout the academic year.

Teacher research

Gediz University CPD activities are designed and implemented by the Academic and Professional Development Office, which was established in 2010. Since then, the office has been offering the following CPD activities:

1. Doing, presenting and writing up teacher research.
2. Classroom observation for developmental purposes.
3. Peer observations.
4. Workshops on specific teacher needs.

This chapter focuses on the first of these. I was appointed Head of Professional Development (PD) at Gediz University in September 2010. One of my first initiatives was to establish Teacher Research (TR) as a professional development option for our staff. Briefly, TR is an activity where teachers conduct systematic inquiry into some aspect of their work in order to extend their professional understanding and to enhance student learning. TR provides a number of benefits for teachers (see Borg 2010; Lankshear & Knobel 2004; Burns 2010). For example, it promotes reflective skills, enhances teacher autonomy and allows teachers to make informed decisions about how to work with their students. Our aims in promoting TR at Gediz are to:

- encourage instructors to reflect critically on current teaching practices
- raise their awareness of new practices
- encourage them to examine and review their beliefs
- help them gain further insight into their teaching
- improve their motivation
- heighten their awareness of learners.

Between 2010 and 2014, 71 instructors chose to do TR as their CPD activity. Numbers were higher in the first two years as participation was compulsory. More recently, however, TR has become one of several CPD options that are available and remains a popular choice. Instructors decide on what topics to focus on and different macro-skills, such as speaking and reading have been studied, together with areas such as technology, motivation and vocabulary teaching. The teaching of grammar, though, has been the topic studied most often by teacher researchers at Gediz. This reflects the important position that is awarded to grammar by instructors and students in our school.

Structure of Teacher Research Projects

Figure 1 outlines the various tasks that instructors complete while doing TR. The tasks are presented here as a list, but this should not imply that TR is a linear process. Although certain tasks must occur in an obvious order before others, in reality, many of them interact throughout the life of a project. Presented in this manner, though, the list does make the point that TR involves a range of activities and that important among these are the initial stages of awareness raising, where instructors' attitudes to research are made explicit and challenged – this is important in helping them understand what TR is and how it differs from conventional academic research.

Figure 1: Phases of teacher research

Critical Thinking through reflection	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introducing TR as a CPD tool • Sharing the objectives of the TR programme • Doing attitude training to address misconceptions • Sharing stages of TR • Identifying problems • Asking research questions • Reading relevant literature • Selecting and developing research topics • Bringing together ideas • Collecting data • Analysing data • Getting feedback from colleagues in workshops • Reflecting on the results for implications • Presenting the study • Publishing 	One-to-one and group meetings
--------------------------------------	--	-------------------------------

Over the course of an academic year, the instructors go through the tasks at their own pace individually, in pairs or as a group. In my role as head of professional development, I support the instructors during their projects through individual tutorials and group sessions as necessary. I also support the instructors by giving them feedback on their work and providing access to relevant readings, both about their topic and about the process of TR itself.

Successes and Challenges

Our experience of TR at Gediz highlights both successes and challenges. Among the successes are that instructors are becoming committed to TR as a form of professional development. They are also deepening their own understandings of their teaching and their students, and professional inquiry is now becoming part of our school culture. Each year we have also managed to publish instructors' work and organise a conference where they can talk about their projects, and both of these activities have been a great source of motivation for instructors (and a source of pride for the school too).

We have also faced several challenges. Some instructors have struggled to see themselves as researchers. Others have expected to see immediate benefits from TR without understanding that improvements in teaching and learning are the result of an extended process of experimentation, inquiry and reflection. Despite structured support, difficulties have also arisen at the stages of report writing and presentation, due to lack of experience, know-how and also time (especially for the writing up). Finally, we have also noted that more experienced instructors and those who are seeking to do an MA in English Language and Literature (i.e. whose primary interests are not pedagogical) do not want to engage in TR.

The management of the school are supportive of the progress we are making with CPD. However, to date this support has not resulted in any concrete time allowance for instructors engaging in TR. Rather, instructors are asked to focus on their research at times when they are not teaching. Given their heavy workloads (nearly 24 hours a week), instructors understandably struggle to dedicate quality time to their projects, and this is most obvious at the stages of data analysis and report writing. Table 1 summarises a range of factors identified by our instructors that can diminish interest in TR or act as a barrier to its uptake. These factors are the ongoing focus of my attention as I continue to seek ways of improving our TR scheme.

Table 1: Barriers to TR

Lack of	Description
Research skills	Good quality TR requires adequate research skills.
Motivation	The basic motivation to do TR may be lacking in teachers.
Academic language skills	Writing reports is a demanding process.
Institutional support	The institution does not act on the findings of TR.
Time	Official time is not allocated to TR.
Incentive	No official rewards for TR are offered.
Curricular flexibility	It is difficult to integrate new ideas from TR into the curriculum.
Adequate reflection	Opportunities to reflect critically on new practices are lacking.

Evaluation of TR

I interviewed 22 teacher researchers at Gediz and asked them for their views on the benefits of TR. Table 2 summarises the key benefits they mentioned and provides an illustrative quotation for each. Overall, it is clear that the instructors have found TR beneficial in a range of ways.

Table 2: Impact of TR

“I felt that I was not confined to teaching in the classroom but had the freedom of researching my own teaching and classroom.” (Saul)

“When you research, you realise that your current practices contain weaknesses. I started to put the blame on me when students failed. The training helped me to question the failure of the students.” (Tuğba)

“After this research project, I could help my students more than before about reading strategies. I could easily find solutions to the problems about comprehension in class.” (Asiye)

“Doing research gave me the opportunity to engage in professional development at my pace, which is better than fixed hours in training sessions.” (Saul)

“I actually changed my classroom behaviours as a teacher. I tried out different roles for different periods and saw that teachers should be able to approach students in a mixture of roles.” (Rabia)

“I learnt how I could monitor students for a number of their characteristics, such as personality, learning skills, interaction with others, responsibility and enthusiasm with the lesson.” (Rukiye)

“I feel more confident about doing research and being a developing teacher.” (Sezen)

“Surely; it raised my self-awareness and enhanced my level of confidence and motivation in the areas that I was trying to teach.” (Savaş)

Of course, it is necessary not to make unwarranted claims about the impacts that TR is having; instructors engaged in the process are finding it beneficial, but the extent to which it is leading to sustained changes in teaching and learning is difficult to quantify. Some of the factors highlighted in Table 1, such as an inflexible curriculum, suggest that instructors may find it difficult to use TR to make significant changes in what they do. This remains an area that requires further systematic evaluation.

Conclusion

It has been satisfying to see the progress we have made with TR at Gediz in the last four years, despite the various challenges we have faced. TR is now an increasingly embedded part of our school culture and we have created an enthusiastic and capable group of instructors who recognise the benefits that TR can have for them and their students. We have been able to raise the profile of TR at Gediz through our annual TR conferences and stimulate other universities in Turkey to start their own TR research schemes. This augurs well for the future because TR provides instructors and schools with a powerful strategy to transform the teaching and learning of English.

Our work so far has led to the following recommendations for those who intend to initiate similar TR projects:

- TR is not a process that busy teachers can manage alone. It should be guided and supported at every stage by someone with suitable expertise.
- If institutions are committed to CPD then some official working time should be allocated to this activity.
- The findings and implications from TR studies should be shared with the administration and curriculum development office so that instructors’

- voices can be heard and considered in curricular decisions.
- Teacher researchers who show commitment should be offered incentives by the administration and supported in pursuing further personal and professional development.

Further reading

Borg, S. (2013). *Teacher research in language teaching: a critical analysis*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Borg, S. & Sanchez, H. (Eds.). (2015). *International perspectives on teacher research*. London: Palgrave Macmillan.

Burns, A. (2010). *Doing action research in English language teaching: a guide for practitioners*. New York: Routledge.

Lankshear, C., & Knobel, M. (2004). *A handbook for teacher research: from design to implementation*. Maidenhead: Open University Press.

The following websites provide examples of TR studies and information about communities that support TR (all working on 29 September 2014):

www.cambridgeenglish.org/images/170903-research-notes-56-document.pdf

<http://journals.library.wisc.edu/index.php/networks>

<https://sites.google.com/site/aeraarsig/>

www.aera.net/SIG126/TeacherasResearcherSIG126/tabid/11980/Default.aspx

<http://resig.weebly.com/>

<http://sdawp.ucsd.edu/resources/teacher-research/>

www.actionresearchconference.info

The author

Kenan DİKİLİTAŞ is a lecturer and head of academic and professional development in the School of Foreign Languages at Gediz University. He holds a PhD in English Language Teaching from Yeditepe University. His professional interests include research in language learning and teaching, in-service language teacher education, professional development and training, and supervising teacher research for professional development.

Email: kenandikilitas@gmail.com

Dealing with teacher resistance

3

Dealing with teacher resistance

Yasemin Yelbay Yılmaz, School of Foreign Languages,
Hacettepe University

Introduction

Hacettepe University is a public university in Ankara founded in 1954. The School of Foreign Languages was established in 1967 and provides preparatory language training to more than 3,500 students in English, German and French (almost 90 per cent of whom study English). The school also provides faculty level language training in 11 foreign languages in the Modern Languages department.

There are currently 169 language instructors employed at the school (ten of whom are part-time). In each department there is a curriculum unit, a testing unit and an administrative unit. The school follows a modular system (introduced two years ago) and students must complete four modules in one academic year (one module provides 175 hours of input). The language proficiency exit level of the students is B1+ on the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR). This is the minimum requirement and students can study at higher levels based on their progress. Classes have on average 33 students (locally, this is considered a high number) and the students' motivation is not high, as was reported in their end of term evaluation forms (which was noted by teachers). They must, though, attend courses and reach the minimum exit level in order to gain admission to their chosen faculty.

The continuous professional and personal development unit

Under different names, there has been a unit dedicated to CPD in the School of Foreign Languages since 2004. Its primary function has been to design and run induction programmes for new instructors in the school (for example, through an 'Intensive Training programme' and an 'Action Research programme'). Workshops for all members of staff were organised too, as well as specific projects. For example, the school received the European Language Label Award for its VOLL project (Vocationally Oriented Language Learning). Overall, though, a systematic training programme for instructors has not been provided.

In 2012, the name of the unit responsible for CPD changed from 'Teacher Training Unit' to the 'Continuous Professional and Personal Development Unit' (CPDU). The new name signalled a change in the school's approach to the professional development of instructors. Greater emphasis was placed on on-going professional development and there was also a desire to provide opportunities, time and space for personal (in addition to professional) development. By moving from 'training' to 'development', we also wanted to indicate that professional growth is not simply a process of trainers telling instructors what to do through occasional workshops. Rather, CPD was now seen as a more dynamic process in which instructors were expected to take some responsibility for their own learning.

The CPDU now serves all the school's departments. Three members of staff work in the unit and are appointed by the Director, based on their experience, qualifications and personal attributes. Decisions about the CPDU are made by the school's administration board, with limited participation by instructors. The board is, though, very supportive of professional development and financial support is available for instructors to attend national and international conferences. Requests by instructors to attend longer courses, either abroad or at locally accredited institutions, are also considered. Instructors are particularly encouraged to complete Master's and PhD degrees and the school adjusts instructors' timetables and workloads in order to allow them to attend graduate courses.

Staff are informed by email of available CPD activities within the school and strongly encouraged to attend, but attendance is not compulsory unless the session is administrative (e.g. introducing a new curriculum) or technical (i.e. showing how to use new equipment). CPD activities are periodic rather than regular (heavy instructor workloads are seen as an obstacle here). There are one or two workshops per semester of at least two days each, a national symposium that is open to other institutions, as well as 'Professional Sharing Seminars' once a semester, where colleagues who have attended conferences and similar events share their papers and/or other experiences. There is no staff appraisal system in the school and the CPDU is not involved in any assessment of the instructors' performance.

Instructor morale has in recent years been negatively affected by a major change in the organisation of the preparatory programme, from a year-long model to a modular system. This has had wide-ranging implications for both the curriculum and assessment, and instructors have had to adjust to this new system very quickly. It has made significant additional demands on instructors, which has impacted on the extent to which they are willing to participate in CPD activities.

Designing a new CPD programme

In the 2013-14 academic year, the CPDU decided to be proactive and design a more intensive CPD programme based on the needs of all our instructors, not just the recently recruited ones. To begin with, the CPDU devised a questionnaire to collect data about the opinions and needs of the instructors. We knew from our own experiences, observations and informal discussions with colleagues that there was a growing need for CPD activities, as well as a growing resistance against it. Some experienced instructors had not undergone training for many years and that was a big challenge. We decided that the first thing we should do was to conduct a needs analysis.

The questionnaire

The questionnaire had four sections and consisted of 35 Likert-type items. The first section collected descriptive (i.e. background) data about the respondents, the second included questions about institutional awareness, and the third section was about instructors' opinions about CPD in general. A fourth section listed 14 proposed CPD topics and instructors were asked to nominate those that were of interest to them (this section is not discussed below for reasons of space).

Survey findings

The response rate to the questionnaire was high – 114 instructors out of 159 (71.7 per cent) and below I discuss the key findings. (Fuller details are available on the T-PLUS website: www.tplusturkey.org/ T-PLUS is a group for language teacher

educators in university language programmes in Turkey).

The results were striking. In terms of descriptive information, 43.9 per cent of the staff had 16 years or more experience and 23.7 per cent had 11 years or more – we were clearly working with a very experienced group of instructors. Also, 64 per cent of the respondents had either completed or were in the process of completing graduate degrees, so the profile of qualifications in the school was also quite high. We needed to take this instructor profile into account when designing the new CPD programme. Table 1 summarises the responses to the questions about institutional awareness. A mean score out of five is given for each statement, with a higher mean indicating a higher level of overall agreement.

Table 1: Instructors' institutional awareness

Statement	Mean (out of 5)
1. I am aware of my duties and responsibilities.	1.20
2. I have opportunities to build a close professional relationship with my colleagues.	1.96
3. My school provides opportunities for me to improve myself professionally.	2.46
4. I know a great majority of my colleagues.	2.14
5. I know how to use the technological devices and tools for teaching in class.	1.73

As the table shows, instructors generally disagreed that they were aware of their responsibilities and duties. Respondents said they did not know the majority of their colleagues very well and thought that opportunities to build a close professional relationship with colleagues were not provided. They believed that the school provided opportunities for them to improve professionally to some extent. Respondents disagreed that they were competent at using technological equipment in their teaching.

Respondents' opinions about CPD were also not very encouraging as seen in Table 2, where the means on all statements were quite low. Even the statement 'CPD activities should include practical things that I can use/ implement in my classroom' received a low level of agreement. Overall, instructors did not feel that the CPDU would be beneficial to them.

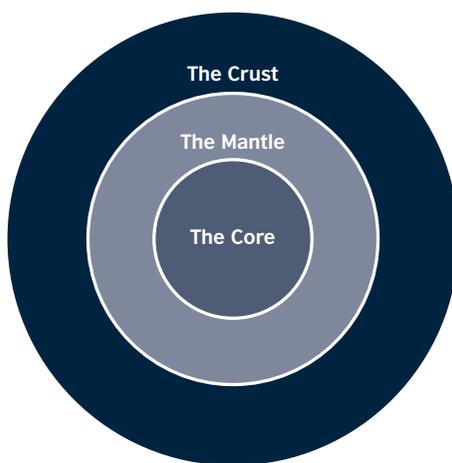
Table 2. Instructors' opinions about CPD

Statement	Mean (out of 5)
1. CPD activities should include practical things that I can use/ implement in my classroom.	1.61
2. CPD activities should include conceptual issues regarding teaching that we can discuss.	2.20
3. The impact of the CPD activities should be evaluated.	1.93
4. I would like to be informed about what's new in the field and unfamiliar terms (EAP, ESP, CEFR, Erasmus etc.)	1.86
5. I believe that the CPDU will be beneficial for me.	2.24

The Core, Mantle, Crust Model

In light of the low morale among the instructors and the quantitative results of our survey, we concluded that the major obstacle we had to deal with before we could implement a successful CPD programme was teacher resistance. We started doing more research on this topic, particularly about the causes of teacher resistance and ways of overcoming them. We agreed with Knight (2005: 508), who states that: “rather than blame teachers and ask, ‘Why do teachers resist?’ perhaps those of us who lead change should ask, ‘What can we do to makes it easier for teachers to implement new practices?’”. Patterson et al. (2008) and Davenport (2005) also discuss teacher resistance and underline the importance of teacher awareness and autonomy in addressing it. Informed by our reading, discussions, experience and the results of our survey, the CPDU team devised The Core, Mantle, Crust (CMC) Model. This model for CPD is being implemented in the School of Foreign Languages in the 2014-2015 academic year.

Figure 1: The CMC Model



The model (Figure 1) seeks to give instructors flexibility, choice and control over their professional development. It is a two-way system allowing both top down and bottom up processes. It is a bottom up process as instructors can choose among a variety of CPD activities based on their needs and on professional development goals that they have set for themselves. It is also a top down process through which the institution requires all instructors to participate in CPD.

There are three groups of activities in the CMC Model. *The Core Activities* are themes directly related to ELT methodology – for example, the use of L1 in the classroom and how to teach skills. *The Mantle Activities* are themes related to educational sciences, such as classroom management, motivating students and fostering learner autonomy. *The Crust Activities* are themes that are indirectly related to teaching and are more about personal development, such as time management, stress management and active listening. Bailey, Curtis & Nunan (2001) state that personal development is one of the cornerstones of professional development. We believe that the ‘Crust’ activities will therefore add to the overall quality of our CPD programme.

Advantages of the CMC Model

Not every instructor has the same professional development needs or goals, so why give them the same programme and, even worse, make it compulsory? We think that this is almost a guaranteed way of creating resistance. The CMC Model seeks to overcome this problem by allowing instructors to make choices about their professional development. We believe that this is a very empowering way of involving colleagues in CPD activities. People tend not to resist something that they have willingly chosen and that is meaningful for them. Just like choosing something from a menu, the teacher is able to choose the activities they want to do in the CMC model. A particular teacher might think that personal development activities from the 'Crust' part of the model are what they need, whereas another teacher might want to revisit some topics from the 'Core'.

The CMC Model can thus allow for customised professional development plans and each instructor can choose topics from the Core, Mantle and Crust group activities in different proportions in order to meet their needs and goals. Eventually, we may be able to give instructors complete flexibility in the choices they make. For the first year of the scheme, though, we will ask all instructors to choose at least two activities from each group. The school administration will also want to ensure that every instructor has participated in a certain range and number of activities, without severely restricting instructor choice. The degree of institutional control is an area we will continue to monitor and evaluate as the new CPD programme is implemented.

Challenges

The CMC model will work most effectively when instructors have a good range of CPD activities to choose from. To address this issue, we have identified a pool of possible activities, presentations and workshops, especially on the Core and Mantle group topics. However, as the Crust topics are a new area and we do not have an existing archive of activities, we are planning to outsource this area and to ask experts and colleagues from outside our school to assist. In time, though, we expect to build up an extensive range of CPD activities across all three areas of the CMC model.

For the first year, which will be the piloting phase of the model, we are planning to use the Crust area for socialising and team building activities. We hope this will have a positive effect on the problems that our colleagues reported in the needs analysis, regarding not knowing each other well and not having opportunities to build close professional relationships.

Conclusion

The CMC model is informed by our extensive needs analysis and will, we hope, address the teacher resistance to CPD that was highlighted in our survey. It is a model that provides variety and, more importantly, choice for instructors. It enables our staff to set professional development goals for themselves and pursue activities relevant to these goals. We believe that this is an effective way of responding to the problems we are encountering at our school regarding CPD, and that it will have a positive effect both on the morale of instructors and the school ethos. Longer term, we are confident it will also have a positive effect on the overall quality of the English language programme we deliver. This is a pilot year for the model and we will evaluate it through another study at the end of this academic year and then share the results with you.

Further reading

Bailey, K.M., Curtis, A. & Nunan, D. (2001). *Pursuing professional development: the self as source*. Boston, Massachusetts: Heinle and Heinle.

Davenport, T. H. (2005). *Thinking for a living: how to get better performance and results from knowledge workers*. Boston: Harvard Business School Press.

Knight, J. (2009). What can we do about teacher resistance? *Phi Delta Kappan*, 90(7), 508-513.

Patterson, K., Grenny, J., Maxfield, D., & McMillan, R. (2008). *Influencer: the power to change anything*. New York: McGraw-Hill.

The author

Yasemin Yelbay Yılmaz is Assistant Director and Coordinator of the CPDU at Hacettepe University. She has 20 years of combined experience as a teacher of English, trainer and administrator, and worked in various public and private school settings, from K-12 to tertiary levels. Her key interests are teacher education and neurolinguistics.

The podcast and e-documentaries task group

4

The podcast and e-documentaries task group

Nezaket Özgirin, School of Languages, Sabancı University

Introduction

Sabancı University is an English medium university. The School of Languages provides various courses, but its main aim is to prepare students both linguistically and academically for their university studies. Unlike many other preparatory schools, Sabancı University, School of Languages (SU-SL), has a 'flat management' system, which means there are no separate units to deal with different aspects of teaching and learning in the school. Instead, there are special teams that are open to colleagues who are willing to specialise in those areas. Although there used to be separate curriculum and assessment units, they have now been combined into the Curriculum and Assessment Team (CAT). Encouraging staff to work in teams and grow as a team with input from all colleagues are key features of the school's mission. There is no Teacher Training Unit, but many Continuous Professional Development (CPD) activities are available to instructors and I will now discuss these.

Continuous professional development in SU-SL

Some of the CPD options that are available are formal and lead to a certificate. These courses may involve attending workshops and lectures, doing assignments and presentations and conducting classroom observations. Some courses are also open to instructors from outside Sabancı, such as SLTEP (Trainer Education Programme). Special Interest Group (SIG) meetings organised by the instructors working at SU-SL are also available to teachers outside the school. The vocabulary group, grammar group and podcasts and e-documentaries group are just a few examples of these SIGs. However, most of our CPD activities are only for our instructors, and they participate in these on a voluntary basis, depending on their own particular interests. For example, SLTTP (Teacher Training Programme) is for colleagues who want to develop as teacher trainers, while a range of in-service training activities (INSETs) are also provided (led by colleagues or external speakers) on specific areas, such as research, grammar or technology.

'Space for myself' is another area of CPD work which encourages colleagues to share their knowledge and expertise in areas that interest them. Doing classroom-based research and presenting at conferences are also quite popular CPD activities. When our colleagues learn something new or useful for everyone, they share their knowledge with the rest of the group by either writing reviews for the school blog or by giving voluntary workshops. 'Space for myself', though, is not limited to academic matters; staff may also develop skills related to, for instance, Thai massage, facial masks, colour therapy and cake decoration.

The more experienced instructors have often completed all of the formal teacher training courses available and these individuals are thus given the chance to create CPD opportunities for themselves and others by leading a task group which allows them to specialise in an area they are particularly interested in. The rest of this chapter discusses one such task group.

The podcasts and e-documentaries task group

In 2009, podcasts were still a relatively new source of material for language classrooms. Thanks to initial efforts by Erica Hoffman, who started downloading content-related podcasts for SL, we began to build up a bank of relevant listening resources that also had accompanying tasks prepared by various colleagues and their learners. In addition, many podcasts were prepared or organised by Ali Nihat Eken on various interesting topics as a pool for authentic listening (see <http://sl.sabanciuniv.edu/projects/podcast>).

Authentic listening materials help learners to become autonomous and confident listeners, skills which are very important in the development of the language, and improve the academic skills necessary in an English medium university. To develop as listeners, though, learners need training and practice and the podcasts and e-documentaries task group (PDTG) contributes to this by creating opportunities for learners to improve their listening, either in class or outside (through the SU-SL online learning environment, SU Course). PDTG members have not only created a beneficial system for everyone, but have also kept searching for more podcasts, according to the needs of different levels. (The appendix gives examples of some of the podcasts that are currently available).

An analysis of the use of authentic listening materials at SU-SL was conducted by Demirdirek & Özgirin (2013). The results showed that when teachers systematically make use of these resources in their teaching, students report that they greatly improve their listening skills. Students also say that they like doing the listening exercises independently when they have time. The podcasts on the SU Course help them to organise their studies and provide a guide to practice their English outside of class time. Many students also value the topics and the role of using real listening materials in their content area. In a small-scale study, Özgirin (2012) also researched the effectiveness and usefulness of these resources with her classes and shared the results both in and outside school. One interesting finding was that students thought that podcasts, documentaries, TV series and YouTube videos improved their listening skills more than the teacher talking.

In addition to organising podcasts and listening materials and doing research related to these, PDTG also designed various online folders with useful links and documents related to both podcasts and e-documentaries and made them available to teachers, both within and outside SL (see www.livebinders.com/play/play?id=130527).

SL Podclass is the online podcast website which has all the relevant podcasts and their teaching and learning materials. This is a good example of a 'sharing environment' which is essential for continuous professional development. It is enriched by the collaboration of both teachers and learners and contributes to the sharing culture in the institution (Demirdirek & Özgirin, 2013).

E-documentaries

In addition to its work on podcasts, PDTG has also built up an organised collection of documentaries and videos, accompanied by tasks. Video material can enhance language learning and motivation (Demirdirek et. al., 2010) by providing entertaining and engaging input. Videos can also act as a valuable source of supplementary material and lend themselves to a wide range of pre- and post-viewing tasks, including those which promote critical thinking. Videos and documentaries also play a key role in supporting Content Based Instruction by making complex concepts and content clear through visual support.

For all of the above reasons, the use of video is popular among instructors and learners, and to support this interest PDTG has created an electronic library of video material. Firstly, it was essential to prepare an inventory of all the available videos and their accompanying materials and classify them according to the levels and units in the course books. These were then made available online (on campus only) and the title 'e-documentaries' was given to these resources. Colleagues in the university's Information Systems department (SU library) assisted by securing any permissions that were required to use the materials in this way. Another aim of PDTG was to collect the task sheets that had been created for these videos. Thanks to our colleagues who were willing to share their materials, an online pool of e-documentaries was created for all levels and units of the institutional course book (Beyond the Boundaries). PDTG created answer keys for the task sheets where possible. Thus, instructors have been able to save time while preparing lessons or assigning extra listening tasks.

Conclusion

Task Group activities help teachers to keep their motivation high, as there is a purpose in working on a specific area and doing further research on the effectiveness of the teaching and learning materials that are developed. However, keeping track of podcasts and e-documentaries and creating or improving the materials is an ongoing task, and relevant podcasts and documentary materials also need to be regularly added to the system. Task group members also need to provide workshops or induction sessions to colleagues who are not familiar with the system. It is also useful to design study plans for the learners to help them organise their listening practice more effectively. All this work can be quite time consuming and instructors will be more motivated if at least some of the time they invest is officially recognised as part of their workload. This is a policy that SU-SL follows, as far as circumstances allow. Task groups are empowering in the way that they encourage instructors to take the initiative and support others (e.g. through training). They also contribute to the improvement of the school and to the creation of a collaborative environment where professional development is valued.

Further reading

Demirdirek, N. & Nezaket Ö. (2013). *Improving listening: Podcasts and E-documentaries. A practical guide to English Language curriculum development in an academic context*. Istanbul: Sabanci University and Blackswan.

Demirdirek, N., Nezaket Ö., & Salataci, R. (2010). E-documentaries in content-based instruction (CBI) in an academic EFL setting. *Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 3, 203-209.

The following online resources are also relevant (all working on 13 October 2014):

A livebinder on useful listening resources – www.livebinders.com/play/play?id=130527

SU-SL Podcast Series – <http://sl.sabanciuniv.edu/projects/podcast>

SU-SL Blog – <http://sl.sabanciuniv.edu/>

Link to a presentation on learner evaluation of authentic listening materials – <http://prezi.com/u76t6qtcylqp/authentic-listening-materials-and-useful-webtools/>

Link to the documentary library –

https://www.blendspace.com/lessons/R-zHbuk_aEXMaw/documentary-library-for-sl-courses

Appendix: Examples of Podcasts

- Scientific American
- Sea World podcast
- Self-Access Center for Language Learning
- Spotlight scripts
- TechLearning Podcast (Technology tips for teachers)
- TED Talks audio
- TED Talks Video
- The Best of National Geographic
- The Cambridge Science Festival Podcast
- The Economist
- The Naked Scientist
- Today's podcast
- TOEFL
- VOA Special English
- Women's Hour

The author

Nezaket Özgirin did her MA and RSA/DOTE courses at Bilkent University. She is currently teaching at Sabancı University, coordinating a task group called 'podcasts and e-documentaries' and working as part of the 'team-development' task group. Currently, her main interests are exploiting useful web 2.0 tools to cater to the changing needs of learners, as well as increasing motivation and team dynamics through the use of indoor and outdoor games.
Email: nezaket@sabanciuniv.edu

Peer evaluation

5

Peer evaluation

Ian Collins, School of Foreign Languages, Yaşar University

Introduction

Yaşar University was established as a private foundation university in 2001. As is common in Turkey, most of its students attend two semesters of preparatory intensive English tuition prior to commencing their degree programmes. The English Preparatory Class, which is in the School of Foreign Languages (“Prep Class”), currently accommodates around 1,300 students and 90 Faculty members. Over the years, the student profile in the Prep Class has gradually improved from a relatively low base and an increasing number of very able students have been attracted to Yaşar by its scholarship programmes. Nevertheless, there remain ongoing issues with students’ language levels, motivation, general study skills and critical thinking abilities. In light of this, the university is making great efforts to improve its programmes to attract higher calibre students.

As far as the Prep Class is concerned, the effort to improve its programme has recently centred on obtaining accreditation from the US-based Commission for English Language Program Accreditation (“CEA”). This is a professional body set up to promote good practice in English language teaching. Within the US it is a very powerful organisation, since by law no foreign student wishing to come to the US to study in an intensive English language programme can obtain a study visa, unless the institution is CEA-accredited. Outside the US, the CEA’s scheme has become international, with a number of institutions seeking accreditation. Yaşar became the first English preparatory class in Turkey to achieve CEA accreditation in December 2011, and the process of achieving this and the ongoing obligations of being accredited have led to many significant improvements in most systems and practices.

The Prep Class recognises, however, that although accreditation has been an important tool with which to raise standards, the most effective way to stimulate and embed improvements that have a real effect on students’ learning is through the continuing professional development (CPD) of the Prep Class’s teachers. Historically, little formal institutional CPD had been provided and both during and after the accreditation process, this came to be regarded as the most significant challenge for the Prep Class.

CPD at the prep class

During the self-study period of the accreditation process in 2010-11, a formal CPD function was established in the Prep Class to coordinate training, staffed by one instructor with a reduced teaching load. A rudimentary needs analysis was conducted to identify training needs and a list of key areas defined. The CPD officer is not a qualified teacher trainer and does not herself train teachers. Instead, she facilitates training sessions given by staff members, and attracts and organises training to be given by external trainers. As part of this, she maintains a

database of all training given, together with an online record of all CPD undertaken by each staff member. The CPD officer also publicises external conferences and training available and takes part in external working groups that have been established to promote training. In addition, as the School of Foreign Languages is an SIT TESOL training certificate centre, the CPD officer facilitates SIT TESOL courses. As this programme develops, we envisage providing certificate courses to staff free of charge, funded by the fees received from external participants. Finally, one growing area is collaborations and faculty exchanges with overseas institutions which have started and seem to be producing good professional development opportunities.

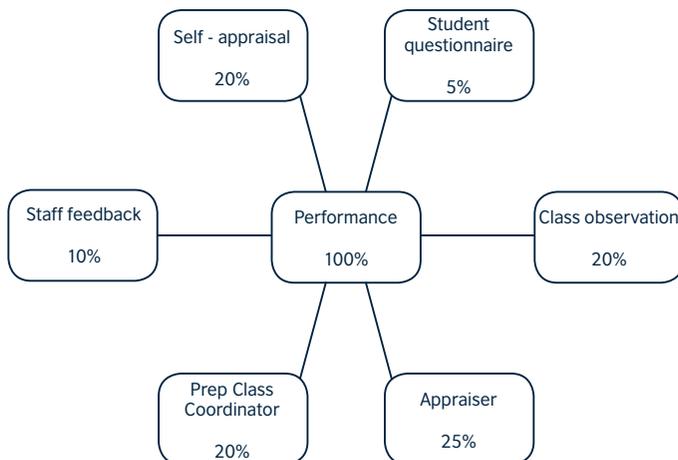
The CPD office has no formal budget and relies on the goodwill of staff members and on what publishers can provide either by way of sponsorship of external trainers or sending staff members to events. This is acknowledged as a significant weakness but one which in the current climate is unlikely to be remedied in the short term. Nevertheless, the CPD office achieves much success and there are several workshops or presentations each semester. A great number of staff take part in these sessions, which are aimed at all instructors, regardless of experience and qualifications, and the feedback received is generally positive. What is missing, however, is teacher-specific opportunities to improve on discrete areas (for example, the writing of standardised test items). There is no lack of enthusiasm for CPD amongst most instructors, and they would like more in-depth and/or specific training involving workshops in which they can focus on a target issue.

Accreditation also brought with it an obligation to have a formal appraisal system. Appraisal in the Prep Class seeks to be a mechanism through which training needs can be identified and practical solutions for meeting those needs found. For appraisal purposes, instructors are also expected to demonstrate what CPD they have done in the year. The appraisal system relies on input from a number of different sources and one of these in particular – peers – will be discussed in the next section.

The prep class appraisal system

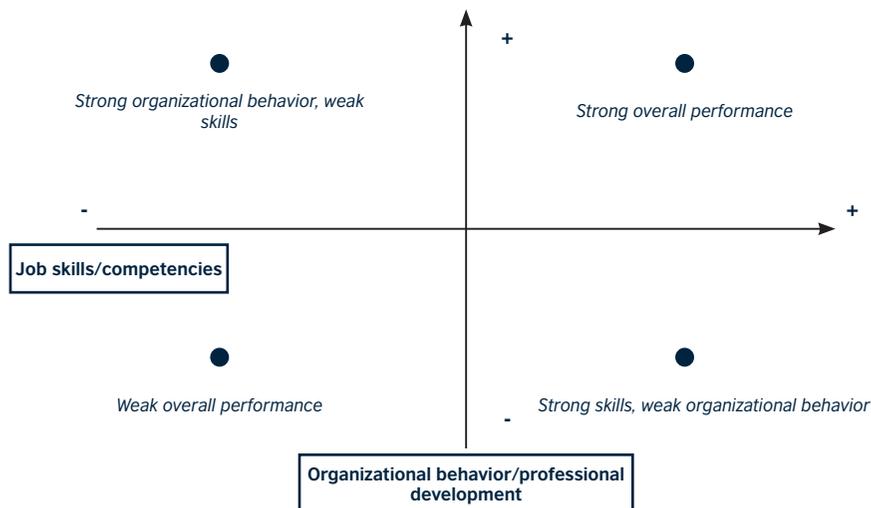
In an attempt to draw on as many sources of information as possible, appraisal in the Prep Class is informed by student questionnaires, evaluative class observations, evaluations from staff members' peers, as well as feedback from line managers. A number of teaching and organisational objectives have been set, and each source of feedback gives a score for the teacher against the various relevant objectives. The allocations to the overall assessment of performance from these sources of feedback can be seen in Figure 1.

Figure 1: Sources and weighting of feedback in teacher appraisal



Once the feedback has been received from all sources, it is converted by using a spreadsheet into a scatter plot across two axes: job competencies (i.e. teaching performance) and organisational behaviour (e.g. contributions to the department, team working, etc.). An example of this can be seen in Figure 2.

Figure 2: Example of an appraisal scatter plot



This is the “evaluation” each instructor receives in addition to the feedback discussion that forms part of the formal annual appraisal meeting. It is intended to give recipients a broad overview of their strengths and areas for development, and also complements the issues discussed in the appraisal meeting. In addition, it provides an opportunity for the management to use aggregated data for all staff members to assess institutional performance and needs.

Peer evaluation

It has long been recognised that students cannot evaluate everything that is necessary to build up a picture of an effective teacher. For instance, Keig & Waggoner (1994) note that students are not necessarily well-placed to evaluate:

- goals, content and the organisation of courses
- methods and materials delivery
- evaluation of student work
- professional and ethical behaviour.

Leaving aside the first bullet point, on the grounds that instructors in the Turkish university preparatory class context are not typically involved in course design, the other bullets are likely to be best judged by those with teaching expertise (which is not to say students' opinions on such matters should not be taken into account). Such issues may be addressed through evaluative class observations undertaken by teacher trainers. Alternatively, a system of peer evaluation can be used to assess colleagues in what would hopefully be a formative, rather than summative, assessment.

Moreover, there are good reasons generally why peers may be in a strong position to offer valuable feedback on colleagues' performance. Firstly, they work with their colleagues on a day-to-day basis without the barriers caused by formal hierarchy. Secondly, they are usually intimately familiar with the job of the appraisee. In addition, it is arguable that the esteem of one's peers is a very valuable motivating force and one that could also help promote a sense of shared ownership of goals. Lastly, and perhaps most importantly, effective feedback from a peer may well lead to more practical and specific ideas on how to address development areas. Regrettably, Yaşar is currently not quite in a position to implement a process of in-class peer evaluation, as this would require extensive training and staff confidence in the system. Nevertheless, it has tried to implement a feedback channel as part of its appraisal system, through which colleagues rate their peers in respect of Yaşar's organisational behaviour objectives (as opposed to its teaching competencies). These organisational objectives are to:

- contribute to creating a pleasant and productive working atmosphere in the Prep Class
- work collaboratively with colleagues
- consistently meet personal and Prep Class deadlines (e.g. grading deadlines)
- regularly participate in Prep Class working groups and extra-curricular meetings and activities
- give constructive feedback and respond positively to constructive criticism
- demonstrate a constructive attitude to change in the organisation
- contribute to the promotion of a positive image of the Prep Class and demonstrate a positive attitude to teaching and working in the Prep Class.

Colleagues nominate peers (they can ask several, but in practice it tends to be one) to give feedback on them and these nominees give scores against each objective on a scale of 1-10. While there is the option not to answer particular items because of lack of direct knowledge, it is stressed to staff that any person nominated who cannot substantially answer the questionnaire is not an appropriate person to choose. Moreover, the appraisee can be asked to justify the choice of peers to prevent instructors simply choosing their friends to give

feedback on them. In addition to the rating of 1-10, respondents also have the opportunity to write comments supporting the feedback they have given in a free text box. The scores are sent directly to the administration (i.e. without any discussion between the appraisee and appraiser, although this is encouraged). They are entered into a spreadsheet and contribute to the “score” represented on the organisational behaviour axis of the appraisal matrix described above (Figure 2).

Outcomes

While far from perfect, Yaşar’s Prep Class appraisal system has resulted in some positive changes. In particular, it does appear to have contributed to a growing sense of the importance of professional development generally, and of reflective practice specifically. Staff seem to have accepted conceptually what the system is designed to do and, in the context of the accreditation process generally, have internalised the notion that professionalism is all about striving to progress and improve.

Nevertheless, there remain significant issues with regard to the operation of the appraisal system and the peer evaluation component is possibly its most dysfunctional aspect. In practice, staff have found it extremely challenging to give effective feedback, with the vast majority simply awarding very high marks to their peers for all items. This is a common problem in all peer evaluation systems and is perhaps exacerbated further by the high importance given to working relationships in Turkish culture, whereby workplace harmony and friendships can supersede strictly professional considerations.

There are many other possible explanations for why the system is not providing the anticipated results. These could be structural – for example, the objectives/questionnaire items may not be appropriate. Alternatively, the issues may be fundamental and conceptual – there is a suspicion, for instance, that peer evaluation in a work context creates something of a Prisoners’ Dilemma situation, whereby the logical outcome of peer evaluation is to be “nice” to everyone you evaluate. There is in effect a tacit “agreement” between all staff that the safest option is not to criticise anyone else too much. This idea is summarised in Figure 3.

Figure 3: Example of instructors’ ‘Prisoners’ Dilemma’

		Teacher A	
		Say nice things about B	Criticise B
Teacher B	Say nice things about A	Both get good appraisal	A wins B loses
	Criticise A	B wins A loses	Both get bad appraisal

**Note: Colleagues do not necessarily directly rate each other (Figure 3 has been simplified). The point is that the system arguably creates an atmosphere in which staff believe there is a mutual benefit in not being overly critical of each other*

One other issue that should perhaps be taken into account is the fact that those with the most development needs may lack the wherewithal to recognise their own limitations. Kruger & Dunning (1999: 1121) note that “not only do [such individuals] reach erroneous conclusions and make unfortunate choices, but their incompetence robs them of the ability to realise it”. In practice, this means that the staff who are in most need of training may be incapable of accurately assessing high performance and so give totally ineffective feedback. This could be a simple question of proper training in giving feedback, but there is evidence from the Yaşar appraisal data that staff who have the most development needs tend to rate themselves the highest and also have an inability to rate peers reliably. This would suggest the problem is more fundamental than simply training staff how to use a rubric.

Conclusions

To date, the Prep Class at Yaşar has not been able to implement a reliable system of peer evaluation as part of its appraisal system. The reasons may be conceptual or structural, or more likely a combination of both. The notion of peer evaluation may itself be flawed. Nevertheless, the attempt to include peer evaluation has not been a total failure. Seen as part of the appraisal system, which is improving in its functioning gradually over time, peer evaluation can be said to help reinforce the reflective aspect of the process. It is also part of the way in which the Prep Class is seeking to support instructors in building up a frame of reference for their assessment of what professionalism means and what is expected of them as teachers. While the Prep Class has not yet witnessed clear practical benefits, it is believed that a culture of continuous professional development will gradually take hold and that peer evaluation is one of the tools for achieving this. In the future, it is also hoped that such evaluation can be attempted in the classroom. Whilst this is a very challenging goal, conceptually it has many advantages over formal evaluative class observations by an external agent, or by a superior within the institution.

Further reading

British Council (2012). *A guide to continuing professional development – peer observations*. Retrieved on 11 November 2014 from <http://englishagenda.britishcouncil.org/sites/ec/files/C227%20CPD%20Peer%20Observations%20Report%20v2.pdf>

Hanushek, E.A. & Rivkin, S.G. (2010). Generalizations about using value-added measures of teacher quality. *The American Economic Review*, 100(2). *Papers and Proceedings of the One Hundred Twenty Second Annual Meeting of the American Economic Association*, 267-271.

Jacob, B.A. & Lefgren, L. (2008). Can principals identify effective teachers? Evidence on subjective performance evaluation in education. *Journal of Labor Economics*, 26(1), 101-136.

Keig, L. & Waggoner, M.D. (1994). Collaborative peer review: The role of faculty in improving college teaching. *ASHE-ERIC Higher Education Report, No. 2*. Washington, DC: The George Washington University, Graduate School of Education and Human Development.

Kruger, J. & Dunning D. (1999). Unskilled and unaware of it: how difficulties in recognizing one's own incompetence lead to inflated self-assessments. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 77(6), 121-1134.

Malderez, A. (2003). Observation, *ELT Journal*, 57(2), 179-181.

Staiger, D.O. & Rockoff, J.E. (2010). Searching for effective teachers with imperfect information. *The Journal of Economic Perspectives*, 24(3), 97-117.

The author

Ian Collins is the Academic Assistant Director of the School of Foreign Languages at Yaşar University, responsible for the English for Academic Purposes and Modern Languages programmes. In addition to all things related to EAP, his interests include education policy and accreditation matters. Having previously led Yaşar's steering committee in obtaining accreditation from the US-based Commission for English Language Program Accreditation (CEA), he is also currently the Self-Study Coordinator for Yaşar's CEA re-accreditation application.
Email: ian.collins@yasar.edu.tr

The reflective teaching and learning programme

6

The reflective teaching and learning programme

Bahar Gün, School of Foreign Languages,
Izmir University of Economics

Introduction

Izmir University of Economics was established in 2001 by the Izmir Chamber of Commerce Education and Health Foundation. It is the first foundation university in Izmir and in the Aegean region. Within the university, the School of Foreign Languages (SFL) provides graduate and undergraduate students with the best possible foreign language education by creating an environment in which critical thinking, creativity and leadership qualities are encouraged, enabling students to use two foreign languages effectively in academic, social and professional environments. The school's vision is to develop the university as a respected institution of higher education by providing its students with world-class educational opportunities and research facilities. The SFL has been accredited by EAQUALS.

There are three main programmes within the SFL:

1. Preparatory Programme
Besides encouraging students to become effective, enthusiastic and autonomous learners, the overall aim of the English Programme is to prepare students for their academic studies by using a communicative approach.
2. Undergraduate English Programme
ENG101 and ENG102 are compulsory freshman courses. They take an integrated approach to language teaching and learning, with an emphasis on the process of moving from academic input (listening/reading) to academic output (speaking/writing).
3. Second Foreign Languages
Izmir University of Economics aims to teach a second foreign language, in addition to English, to all students, thus increasing their marketability. The SFL offers courses in a wide range of additional languages, including French, Italian, German, Russian, Spanish, Japanese, Greek, Portuguese, Chinese and Arabic.

Continuous professional development (CPD) in the SFL

The Teacher Development Unit (TDU) in the school was established to provide in-service support and development, which enables language teachers to achieve their full potential. We believe that teachers who continue to learn will be more effective. Since the school was established in 2001, the TDU has been responsible

for organising structured developmental activities for the school's teaching staff. The activities offered by the TDU mainly centre around classroom observations, interactive workshops, short courses, professional development programmes (e.g. on reflective teaching), as well as projects, such as Special Interest Groups. The types of activities offered to the teachers, which could be in the form of a workshop or short course, are usually determined by the trainers in the unit and the school administrators, according to the current needs of the teachers working in the school. The content of the activities (e.g. what a workshop will focus on) is based on the teachers' preferences, which are solicited through questionnaires. The TDU head announces the different TDU activities (see <http://sfl.ieu.edu.tr/tdu/index.html> for more details) and the teachers then sign up for these on a voluntary basis, as attendance at all TDU activities is optional for them.

It is part of the school's mission to offer every one of its teachers opportunities for development and teachers are expected to develop professionally by choosing from the range of the activities offered by the TDU. As CPD contributes significantly to the school's Performance Review System, participation in the activities offered is usually high. Teachers who fail to participate in CPD are encouraged to do so during the appraisal interviews that are carried out every two years and they may also be put on probation for six months.

Reflective teaching and learning programme

The Reflective Teaching and Learning Programme (RTL) is one of the CPD options offered by the TDU. The main premise of the programme is that, although teachers are constantly encouraged to reflect on their teaching, they need specific training in order to do this effectively. Therefore, this programme offers the teachers opportunities to:

- observe themselves teaching, which enables them to exploit their strengths and work on their weaknesses
- develop themselves, not only for their own benefit, (so they can become more confident teachers), but also for the benefit of their learners
- identify and discuss relevant aspects of teaching as preparation for appraisal observation
- share their experience of teaching, and learn through focused discussions with colleagues and trainers, as well as follow-up reading
- find alternative approaches to development and become more autonomous.

Although teachers are observed as part of the RTL programme, under no circumstances is trainers' feedback on these observations made available to the administration. Participants, of course, are free to discuss their experiences of the RTL programme, including any feedback they receive, with anyone they like.

Rationale

A reflective approach to teaching is one in which teachers collect data about their teaching and use the information they have obtained to examine critically their attitudes, beliefs, assumptions and teaching practices (Richards & Lockhart 1994).

The RTL programme in the SFL (see Gün 2011 for a more detailed analysis) is based on a reflective approach and considers how reflection can become more effective through systematic training and practice. When reflection is only preached, it is less likely that it will be embraced and subsequently pursued by

the participants (Leather and Popovic 2008). In order for teachers to become reflective practitioners, they may need structured support (Wallace 1996). With this principle in mind, the school's RTL programme aims to develop teachers' reflective skills by giving them the opportunity to watch video recordings of their lessons and to support their analysis of them.

Procedures

The programme consists of eight input sessions and a minimum of three class observations spread over eight weeks. The starting point in each cycle is the observation and video recording of a lesson. During the lesson, the trainer also completes observation tasks (see Appendix 1 for an example). The focus of the observations varies each week and includes different areas of classroom teaching selected by the trainers, such as giving instructions, feedback, teacher talking time and error correction. The focus for each week is not revealed to the teacher until after the observation.

Immediately after the observation the teacher is asked to complete the same observation task the trainer did during the lesson. The teacher then watches the video of their teaching and completes the same observation task again. Making the teacher do the observation task twice highlights the difference between 'reaction', which is a more emotional response right after the lesson, and 'critical reflection', which is based on the analysis of observable (i.e. video-recorded) evidence.

The next stage of the process involves input sessions. These have a different focus each week and are conducted in an informal and friendly way. During these sessions, the teachers talk about their videos and what they have learnt from analysing them. All the teachers and trainers sit in a circle and have informal discussions about their classes and what they are specifically focusing on that particular week. There is usually a considerable amount of sharing, understanding and empathising, which contributes to a significant increase in awareness for all those involved. Reading and discussing short articles that are relevant to the week's focus and writing action plans are also an important part of the input sessions.

On completing the eight-week programme, participating teachers are given a feedback form (see Appendix 2) and asked to provide an evaluation of RTL at the start of the following academic year (see Appendix 3).

In the last five years, around 65 teachers from the SFL have completed the programme. It is still being offered to teachers on a voluntary basis.

Outcome

Feedback from the teachers involved showed that they had benefited most from watching videos of themselves and, while they watched the videos with a specific predetermined focus, they noticed additional aspects of their work that could potentially be improved. Below are some quotes from the teachers' feedback forms:

"Watching myself on the video was very beneficial in the sense that I was not the teacher I thought I was. However, the feedback I received from the trainer was beneficial because in the feedback session he made me aware of more positive things to look at while observing others or reflecting on my own teaching. In conclusion, I believe that seeing oneself on the screen is quite valuable as there is no offense, no denial, basically no way out. You accept the way you are and seek solutions, inevitably."

“I certainly did see improvements, especially about being more aware of oneself. I think once awareness is raised, improvement follows naturally.”

“The feedback by the trainer was motivating but watching the video was enlightening. I became more conscious of how students see me and will hopefully adjust certain aspects of my teaching accordingly.”

“I learnt a lot from the RTL programme. It helped me improve my teaching skills.”

Conclusion

The feedback obtained from course participants in recent years suggests that a structured and guided procedure for critical reflection is extremely useful for their professional development. We have continued to offer RTL in the SFL because the videos have nurtured reflective thinking and provide teachers with “observable evidence of their instructional decisions” (Rich & Hannafin 2009: 61). As a result, this appears to have greatly helped the teachers to become more autonomous in analysing their work. Also, RTL has enhanced the teachers’ ability to notice areas of their classroom practices that can be improved and to, collaboratively and openly, identify practical strategies they can try out to achieve such improvements.

The ultimate aim of any reflection training programme should be to make reflection an integral part of classroom practice. In the long term, training programmes with this aim may be of greater value than those that simply give teachers new ideas for classroom techniques and procedures.

Further reading

Bailey, K. (2006). *Language teacher supervision*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Gün, B. (2011). Quality self-reflection through reflection training. *ELT Journal*, 65(2), 126-135.

Kurtoglu Eken, D. (1999). Through the eyes of the learner: Learner observations of teaching and learning. *ELT Journal*, 53(4), 240-246.

Leather, S. & Popovic, R. (2008). Time for reflection. *English Teaching Professional* 55, 1-3.

Nunan, D. (1990). Action research in the language classroom. In J. C. Richards & D. Nunan (Eds.), *Second language teacher education* (pp. 62–81). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Rich, J. R. & M. Hannafin. (2009). Video annotation tools: technologies to scaffold, structure, and transform teacher reflection. *Journal of Teacher Education* 60(3), 52-67.

Richards, J. C., & Lockhart, C. (1994). *Reflective teaching in second language classrooms*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Wallace, M. (1996). Structured reflection: The role of the professional project in training ESL teachers. In D. Freeman & J. C. Richards (Eds.). *Teacher learning in language teaching* (pp. 281-294). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Appendix 1: Focus: Teacher Talk and Student Talk

OBSERVATION TASK (adapted from Nunan 1990:81)

	Tallies	Total	Notes
Teacher asks a question			
Teacher explains a grammatical point			
Teacher explains meaning of a word			
Teacher gives instructions			
Teacher praises			
Teacher criticises			
Learner asks a question			
Learner answers a question			
Learner talks to another learner			
Teacher-whole class discussion			
Other			

Now please answer the following questions (based on Kurtoglu Eken 1999: 248)

1. A. How much do you think the teacher talked in this lesson?
 a) More than necessary b) A lot c) Sometimes d) A little

 B. Do you think this is good or bad? Why/Why not?
 (Please write in the space below)

2. A. How much do you think the students talked in this lesson?

 B. Do you think this is good or bad? Why/Why not?
 (Please write in the space below)

Appendix 2: Final Feedback Form

Thank you very much for your invaluable contribution to this project. As this 'piloting phase' of the Project reaches its end, we would like to hear a little more from you. Here are a few questions we would like you to answer:

1. Whose feedback was the most beneficial and useful to you (peer, student, trainer or watching yourself in the video)?
2. Did you see any improvement at the end of the input sessions? Which one had more impact on you/your reflections?
3. Will the meetings we had along this term for the Reflective Learning and Teaching Project help you in the future? If so, how?
4. How do you compare the regular observations you have had so far with these ones you have had for the Project?
5. What could we do to help you continue developing?

Appendix 3: RTL Evaluation Form

	After having completed the RTL project, I have now become more aware of...	Totally disagree	Disagree	Undecided	Agree	Totally agree
1	How to set clearer lesson objectives to meet the needs of my learners.					
2	My TTT, increasing or decreasing it, always to the benefit of learners and their learning.					
3	Dealing with my learners' errors more sensitively.					
4	When and why I use the error correction techniques that I know.					
5	The amount and quality of feedback I give my learners during the lesson.					
6	The effectiveness of the different kinds of feedback to the learners and their learning style.					
7	The importance of giving clearer instructions.					
8	Checking my instructions when necessary.					
9	Breaking longer and complicated instructions into manageable chunks.					
10	Grading my language, bearing in mind my learners' level.					
11	My teaching style and my learners' style and, as a result, I have become more critical about my lessons.					
12	How important it is to ask myself more frequently, "how much learning is taking place in my lessons?"					
13	The importance of observing my students and their outcomes, thus I am able to act on my feet (outside the lesson plan) when the need arises.					

Please feel free to make general comments or comments about specific items below.

The author

Bahar Gün holds BA, MA and PhD degrees in ELT. She currently works at the Izmir University of Economics as the Head of the Teacher Development Unit (TDU) in the School of Foreign Languages (SFL). She is in charge of in-service teacher training and teacher development programmes. Her research interests include EFL teacher education in general, and teacher cognition and reflective teaching and learning in particular. She is also a CELTA and ICALT tutor, and an OTA trainer.
Email: bahar.gun@ieu.edu.tr

Faculty viewing of video-recorded lessons

7

Faculty viewing of video-recorded lessons

Bayram Peköz, School of Foreign Languages,
Hasan Kalyoncu University

Introduction

The School of Foreign Languages at Hasan Kalyoncu University was established in the 2010-11 Academic Year, as part of a private foundation university in Gaziantep to provide English preparatory education, as well as general English, French, German, Russian, Spanish, Chinese and Arabic classes to departmental students. It has 300 students in the preparatory programme with 25 instructors. A quarter of the instructors are from non-Turkish backgrounds.

The administrative structure of the School consists of a director and two vice-directors, who are responsible for academic and administrative issues respectively, and co-ordinators that are responsible for the curriculum's implementation.

The School aims to provide interactional learning environments and its motto is 'teaching for real-life situations'. The features of our programme include:

- a learner-centred curriculum that is tailored to students' evolving learning needs
- the integration of computer technology into teaching, through computer-assisted language learning classes
- regularly revised and updated materials
- English for Specific Purposes programmes and study skills courses to prepare students for study in their departments
- close monitoring of student progress through a counselling programme
- a speaking club, movie club and writing centre
- real-life assessment
- evaluation discussions with students in small groups of 20
- a learning environment that fosters critical and creative thinking
- continuing professional development opportunities for instructors.

The continuing professional development (CPD) unit

Until recently, professional development activities were organised centrally by the School administration. Now the School has formed a Continuing Professional Development (CPD) Unit. Four colleagues work at the unit, mainly on a voluntary basis, as there is not an official position in the school that has responsibility for CPD.

The establishment of the CPD unit has allowed us to organise and deliver our activities more effectively and efficiently. The unit conducts a needs analysis

survey each year in order to determine the different needs of the academic staff. Its activities include:

- in-service seminars and workshops conducted by external specialists and school staff
- the organisation of ELT conferences
- supervisory observations
- peer observations
- viewing of video-recorded lessons
- a mentor-mentee programme
- training in assessing writing by using students' exam papers
- training in assessing speaking by using recordings of students' performance.

All instructors are required to participate in the first five CPD activities listed above, while the final three (mentor-mentee programme and training in assessing writing and speaking) are for new instructors only. CPD activities organised by other institutions are also publicised by the CPD unit and instructors are encouraged to participate in these too.

Evaluating video-recorded lessons

I will now focus on one professional development strategy that we have found very useful – getting teachers to study video-recordings of their own lessons. Viewing one's own teaching acts "as a stimulus for critical reflection" (Orlova 2009:30). It enables teachers to identify and focus on specific characteristics of their teaching (Lofthouse & Birmingham 2010) and raises awareness of their teaching strengths and weaknesses (Pellegrino & Gerber 2012). Studying videos of their work also allows teachers to view their own teaching from a different perspective and gives them the opportunity to evaluate themselves more critically as an 'outsider' (Akcan 2010).

One decision that we needed to make was whether the viewing and evaluation of the videos should be done privately (just by the instructors involved) or also publicly (with the participation of other instructors). Some instructors expressed concerns about privacy and being the subject of public criticism (or even gossip). We believe that there are psychological, sociological and emotional reasons behind such concerns, so the procedures we adopted involved instructors viewing and evaluating the videos of their lessons privately. Additionally, in cases where the instructors gave permission, their videos were also viewed and discussed in a more public session that was attended by other instructors. The following section will provide detailed information about the viewing and evaluation procedures.

Procedures for viewing video-recorded lessons

These are the six stages of our professional development work that we do with the video-recorded lessons:

1. Instructors select one of their own classes to be video-recorded.
2. The video recording equipment is arranged and placed in a non-obtrusive place, usually in the corner of the classroom. Instructors normally report that they soon forget about the video recorder and concentrate instead on their teaching.

3. First viewing: they watch their video for the first time, getting an overall sense of the lesson and not focusing in detail on any particular events. This is the stage when they usually show “emotional response” (Orlova 2009: 32).
4. Subsequent self-viewing: at this stage they “feel more detached” (Orlova 2009: 32) and are less constrained by immediate emotional reactions. As a result, they focus on specific issues and reflect critically on them, which raises self-awareness. They then fill in an observation checklist and self-evaluation form (see Appendices 1 and 2).
5. All the instructors meet once a week to view and discuss the video of those instructors who have volunteered for this more public activity. Afterwards, the instructors complete a checklist and answer some open-ended questions. The checklist is the same one that instructors use for self-evaluation (Appendix 1), while the open-ended questions their peers complete are slightly different (Appendix 3).
6. Evaluations by the instructors are collected and collated (see Appendix 4 for an example). A subsequent private meeting then takes place between the instructor and a member of the school’s management team. During this meeting, the instructor is first asked to present a short overview of the lesson and their own evaluation of it. They are then presented with a summary of both the checklists completed by their peers and of their open-ended comments. The instructor is encouraged to reflect on this feedback, before the management team representative gives their comments and sums up.

Conclusion

Despite the instructors’ initial concerns, they have become increasingly willing to participate in both the public viewing and the subsequent discussion of the videos of their teaching. Those that do not participate are now in the minority, and we hope that in time everyone will take part. In addition to the benefits from the literature noted above, instructors have said that they appreciate receiving critical feedback from their peers. Furthermore, instructors who viewed videos of their peers felt they benefited from seeing the different ways that English lessons could be conducted. Overall, we feel that it has been advantageous to make the videos available for private reflection and collective discussion as this benefited the professional development of the school’s instructors.

Further reading

Akcan, S. (2010). Watching teacher candidates watch themselves: reflections from a practicum programme in Turkey. *Profile: Issues in Teachers' Professional Development*, 12(1), 33-45. Retrieved 12 May 2014, from www.scielo.org.co/scielo.php?script=sci_arttext&pid=S1657-07902010000100003

Brophy, J. (2004). (Ed.). *Using video in teacher education*. Amsterdam: Elsevier.

Farrell, T.S.C. (2003). Reflective teaching: the principles and practices. *English Teaching Forum* 41(4), 14–21.

LeFevre, D. M. (2004). Designing for teacher learning: video-based curriculum design. In J. Brophy (Ed.), *Using video in teacher education* (pp. 235-258). Amsterdam: Elsevier.

Lofthouse, R., & Birmingham, P. (2010). The camera in the classroom: video-recording as a tool for professional development of student teachers. *Teach Journal*, 1(2). Retrieved 12 May 2014, from <http://194.81.189.19/ojs/index.php/TEAN/article/viewFile/59/70>

Orlova, N. (2009). Video recording as a stimulus for reflection in pre-service EFL teacher training. *English Teaching Forum*, 2, 30-35. Retrieved 12 May 2014, from <http://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/EJ923452.pdf>

Pellegrino, M., & Gerber, B. L. (2012). Teacher reflection through video reflection analysis. *Georgia Educational Researcher*, 9(1), 1-20. Retrieved 12 May 2014, from www.gaera.org/ger/v9n1_2012/No1_FALL_12_Pellegrino_Gerber.pdf

Appendix 1: Observation checklist

THE TEACHER	Very much	Much	Moderately	Very little	Not at all
1. Shows enthusiasm					
2. Arouses and maintains student interest					
3. Teaches in an organised manner					
4. Is good at classroom management					
5. Relates teaching to students' real life					
6. Encourages student participation					
7. Uses a variety of activities					
8. Uses appropriate activities					
9. Employs an appropriate level of difficulty					
10. Teaches at an appropriate pace					
11. Uses the board effectively					
12. Uses a variety of materials effectively (visuals, technology, etc.).					
13. Presents clear instructions					
14. Shows support and concern for students					
15. Praises and encourages students appropriately					
16. Asks questions effectively (clarity, relevance, redirection, wait time, etc.).					
17. Provides effective feedback					
18. Establishes good eye contact					
19. Has a clear voice (pleasant, audible)					

Appendix 2: Self-evaluation form

Was the lesson successful? How do you know you have/haven't been successful?
What did you like/dislike about the lesson?
Did you do what you had planned to do?
What were your main strengths?
What were your main weaknesses?
If you had the opportunity to teach the lesson again, what would you do differently?

What did you learn from the experience of teaching this lesson?

Other comments?

Appendix 3: Peer evaluation form

Was the lesson successful? Why? / Why not?
What did you like/dislike about the lesson?
What were the main strengths?
What were the main weaknesses?
If you had the opportunity to teach the lesson, what would you do differently?
Other comments?

Appendix 4: Summary of open-ended peer comments

•	Was the lesson successful? Why? / Why not?	
-	Yes, it was well prepared	-
-	Yes, it was related to real life	
-	Yes, it was organised	
•	What did you like/	/dislike about the lesson?
-	Students' involvement	- Pacing wasn't appropriate
-	Classroom management	- Not everybody was involved
-	Pre-stage	- Reading text was incoherent
-	Clarity	
-	Activity sheet	
-	Supplementary materials	
-	Selection and organisation of activities	
-	Clear voice, good tone, body language	
-	Teacher's personality and approach	
•	What were the main strengths?	
-	Real-life situations (3)*	- Giving time limitations for activities
-	Supplementary materials	- Creating an interactivational environment
-	Tone of voice	- Follow-up activity
-	Well-planned activities	- Variety of activities
-	Appropriate warm-up (10)*	- Classroom management
-	Effective questions	- Production
-	Critical thinking questions	- Arousing interest
•	What were the main weaknesses?	
-	Too much teacher talk (5)*	- Too much time for pre-stage
-	A bit boring	- More relevance to real life needed
-	Frequent correction of errors	- No allowance for self-correction
-	More pair work needed	- Teacher-centred at the beginning
-	Insufficient wait time	- More open ended questions needed
-	Feedback must indicate where mistakes are made	
-	Ineffective use of the board	
•	If you had the opportunity to teach the lesson, what would you do differently?	
-	Use the board more effectively and more frequently	
-	Give real-life examples of gossiping (2)*	
-	Use drama	
-	Give more time to read	
-	Use visuals for teaching vocabulary	
-	Ask them to create a gossip situation	
-	Show a supplementary video on Turkish culture (gossiping)	
*Indicates frequency		

The author

Bayram Peköz received his Master's and doctoral degrees in TESOL from the University of New South Wales, Australia. He has worked as a teacher trainer, head of ELT department and director of school of foreign languages at several universities. Among his research and teaching interests are L2 teacher education, task-based learning, materials development and language testing. He currently works as the Director of the School of Foreign Languages at Hasan Kalyoncu University.

Email: bayram.pekoz@hku.edu.tr

Reflective peer observations

8

Reflective peer observations

Wayne Trotman, School of Foreign Languages,
Izmir Katip Çelebi University

Introduction

Izmir Katip Çelebi is one of five newly-established state universities in Turkey that was opened in 2010. It is located in Izmir and is the most recently founded of the four state universities there. The School of Foreign Languages preparatory English language programme runs a full-time intensive English teaching course that caters for approximately 900 students each year and is now in its third year. The students are predominantly Turkish (at A1 and A2 levels) and taught in classes of 20-25 by forty EFL instructors (who are all Turkish, apart from me).

I was responsible for teacher development in the School of Foreign Languages during the period of CPD activity outlined in this chapter. Part of the role was to observe teachers (including pre- and post-observation meetings), but my own teaching load and the growing number of staff meant that observing individual instructors on a regular basis became increasingly unfeasible. In order to address this issue, I encouraged, set up and monitored a voluntary peer observation scheme, while continuing to a lesser degree with individual observations. Although not all of my colleagues participated (generally due to a lack of time, energy or motivation), 24 chose to do so. This provided me with a corpus of 12 peer observation accounts to analyse. What follows are the key issues that my analysis of this corpus highlighted (see Trotman, 2014 for a more detailed discussion of these findings).

Peer observation

The term 'peer observation' tends to have various meanings in different institutions. In many contexts it involves instructors being observed and receiving feedback and advice on their performance. However, for this study it involves individual instructors who monitored a mutually pre-determined lesson or part of a lesson given by a colleague to gain an understanding of a specific aspect of either teaching, learning or classroom interaction. As Cosh (1999: 25) points out, "in a reflective context, peer observation is not carried out in order to judge the teaching of others, but to encourage self-reflection and self-awareness about our own teaching". Cosh argues that staff will only achieve genuine professional development if they accept peer observations. Head & Taylor (1997) argue that since peer observation is meant to be supportive rather than evaluative, it allows instructors to learn from and support each other, while Basturkmen (2007) explains how peer observation discussions help instructors to reflect on their practice. He believes it enables instructors to explore the reasons and beliefs that underlie their classroom behaviour.

One method of writing an account of a peer observation is an observer narrative. The most important aspects of the lesson are described objectively and any form

of initial evaluation is avoided. A second approach to recording events is field notes, which consist of brief descriptions of key events. There is perhaps one entry for each five minutes, including the observer's reflective interpretations. Checklists may also be used as a focused and systematic means of data collection, although it needs to be stressed that teachers need training to assess real-time observed behaviours against predetermined criteria. In our peer observation scheme teachers were encouraged to write observer narratives (see Appendix 1 for an example).

Peer observation typically involves three stages – a pre-observation meeting, the observation itself and a post-observation discussion. During the pre-observation meeting, the focus of the observation is negotiated and discussed. Defining a focus was an issue that our instructors initially struggled with, so I arranged a workshop at which possible topics were brainstormed in order to support them with this facet of peer observation (see Appendix 2).

After the observation, both observer and observee will ideally meet to read through the former's account of the lesson and share perspectives in relation to the agreed focus. Our experience so far is that it has not always been possible for instructors to meet for a post-observation discussion.

Evaluation

At the end of the semester I analysed the corpus of 12 peer observation accounts, with each written more or less according to the template I had earlier sent out (see Trotman (forthcoming) for a more detailed analysis). I examined the kinds of topics that were being focused on, and also studied the accounts for evidence of professional development. With regard to the first of these issues a number of points emerged:

- Classroom management was the focus of the majority of the accounts, with giving instructions, L1 use and discipline being the most common topics. The use of the L1 was chosen in three cases, suggesting this is a particular area of interest for our instructors.
- In terms of whether observers' accounts focused on grammar teaching or on skills, there was a slightly greater emphasis on the former.
- In all but one of the cases the observer's analysis focused on teaching, with generally little attention to the perspective of learners.
- In line with the first suggestion on the list of focus areas we brainstormed, (Appendix 2), comparison with a colleague was a feature of five of the 12 cases of peer observation I analysed.

Concerning my second question, I analysed the peer observation narratives for evidence of increased awareness on the part of either the observer or the observee. Two categories of development could be discerned – pedagogic and affective. Those in the pedagogic category related predominantly to classroom management, such as in the example in Figure 1 which shows the observer's heightened awareness of the need to monitor students during group work.

Figure 1: An example of pedagogic development

Reflective comment	Category	Developmental outcome
I spotted my weak point. That is, I didn't use to check what my students were doing in a group activity as I was supposed to do.	Pedagogical knowledge	Monitoring students is vital

Not all comments in the peer observer narratives, though, had an explicit pedagogic focus. Sometimes a heightened awareness was evident that was more affective in nature, such as the example in Figure 2. This shows an observer becoming more aware of the need to consider teaching from the students' perspective.

Figure 2: An example of affective development

Reflective comment	Category	Developmental outcome
It was interesting to sit next to students. I could easily detect the confused ones and put myself in their shoes; I'll pay closer attention to each student in my class	Affective / Emotion: empathy	Teachers should try to see things from the students' perspective

Conclusion

Peer observation is a strategy which makes it more feasible for teachers to be observed for the purposes of professional development. It not only reduces the burden on professional development co-ordinators who do not have the time to observe every instructor in their school, but also makes observation a less hierarchical process, as peers observe one another. As I have noted, we have faced some challenges in implementing this scheme – for example, several instructors have not participated and post-observation discussions do not always take place. But I feel that by setting up this scheme, we have created a basis on which to build and which in the longer term will benefit CPD in the school generally.

Further reading

Basturkmen, H. (2007). Teachers' beliefs and teacher training. *The Teacher Trainer*, 21(1), 8-10.

Cosh, J. (1999). Peer observation: A reflective model. *ELT Journal*, 53(1), 22-27.

Hall, G. & Cook, G. (2012). Own language use in language teaching and learning. *Language Teaching*, 45(1), 271-308.

Head, K. & Taylor, P. (1997). *Readings in teacher development*. Oxford: Heinemann.

Richards, J. C., & Farrell, T. S. C. (2005). *Professional development for language teachers*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Trotman, W. (forthcoming). Reflective peer observation accounts: what do they reveal? In Howard, A. & Donahue, H., (Eds.) *Teacher evaluation in second language education*. London: Bloomsbury.

Appendix 1: Peer observation narrative

Observer:	Wayne Trotman
Observed teacher:	X
Observation focus:	Teacher use of the students' own language
Date / time:	Monday, 18th February, 2013. 10.30 – 11.15
Class:	S102. (23/26 students were present)
Lesson material / subject:	My Grammar Lab: Module 7, Unit 36.

Pre-observation / background: I had previously noticed in an observed lesson with the instructor in the first semester that she used the students' L1 at certain times. In the post-observation feedback session, the instructor said, amongst other things, she felt this was both necessary and useful as the class were noticeably weak, as indicated by their recent exam results. As I have a research interest in the topic, we discussed the effectiveness and value of using the L1 at times with weaker classes. I pointed out that in contrast to her, two (unnamed) instructors at IKÇU SFL refused to use / allow any use of the L1 at any time in the lesson. We agreed that I would observe her teaching again, but with a specific focus on her use of the L1 with a 'Support' Class. This was one that largely consisted of students from her previous Main Course class (109). Prior to the lesson I gave her a copy of Hall & Cook (2012), an article on the use of the L1. She was unable to read it until later, however.

Lesson focus: How often, for what purpose, and with what degree of success would the teacher's use of the L1 be used?

During the observation: The lesson concerned four activities, all related to the form of the present perfect tense, which Turkish learners find particularly difficult to grasp. Asterisks (*) below indicate where she used Turkish. During the 45-minute lesson she used the L1 on seven occasions and for various reasons.

Early in the lesson, and in English, she offered the students the opportunity to explain in Turkish a brief grammar point. Students opted, however, to answer her (correctly) in English.

On the *first occasion she used the L1, it was to elicit the correct use in the present perfect tense of 'never' and 'ever'; there was a lot of healthy student response following this.

On several occasions, when a student asked a question in the L1, she answered in the L2.

- * She also used it to elicit the meaning of "bulundu" / the difference between 'been' and 'gone' and followed this with examples in English on the board.
- * She used the L1 to introduce and explain what to do prior to starting task three.
- * She used it to check students knew the meaning of 'seçenek'.
- * She used it to explain the use of 'recently' and 'before'.
- * She used it to ask if there were any questions.
- * She used it to set time limits and to let the class know she'd be collecting their questions for each other.

Data analysis:

She used the L1 on seven occasions for three purposes:

Classroom management: 3/7

Explaining differences in usage: 2/7

Eliciting / checking meaning: 2/7

Post-observation discussion: We both noted how well the lesson went; students appeared to appreciate her use of the L1 on the above occasions. She suggested recording the lesson next time to measure more accurately her use of the L1. She would be happier to use more of the target language in future, and in fact already does so with more able classes, but her priority with this class was to motivate what appear to be fairly unmotivated students. It was interesting to hear her use of the word 'humanistic'. I agreed that using the students' own language, where necessary, was treating them as people with two languages.

Appendix 2: Topics for Peer Observation

- Compare how you and a colleague deal with the same class / topic / skill.
- Focus on how a colleague deals with disruptive students: what is said and done?
- For what purpose and how often does the teacher use the L1? Can you categorise examples?
- How does s/he begin and end the lesson? What does s/he say and do?
- To what extent and how does s/he motivate the class?
- How does the teacher get the students to produce the target language?
- How much authentic (unscripted) language is produced by the students? Spoken? Written?
- What is the ratio of TTT (Teacher Talking Time) and STT (Student Talking Time)?
- What is the ratio between the teacher and students doing the work in the lesson?
- How does the teacher manage time in the lesson? Is there too much / little focus on key aspects?
- Oral error correction: how and how much? Instant or delayed? Examples? How effective was it?
- How much does the teacher grade his / her language to suit the level of the class / individual students?
- Instructions: how many? Are they clear and easily understood? Can you label and / or categorise them?
- How does the teacher group the students? Any variations on the normal “U-shape” classroom? Why?
- How does the teacher organise work on the board? Is it clear and legible?
- How does the teacher monitor the class while they are working on a task?
- If applicable, how closely was the teacher able to follow the lesson plan?

The author

Wayne Trotman completed his doctoral studies with the University of Warwick (UK) in the field of feedback on EAP writing. He is a long-time resident in Turkey and is currently working at Izmir Katip Çelebi University, where he is an assistant professor in the School of Foreign Languages responsible for teacher training and education, and supervising teacher research projects.
Email: waynetrotman@gmail.com

This publication contains contributions from the January 2014 conference 'Ideals and realities: Continuing professional development for preparatory year instructors'. This conference reported on the work the British Council had done with three universities in Ankara examining good practice in CPD as a means to improve English language learner outcomes. The conference was hosted by Hacettepe University and attracted over 40 universities from across Turkey, many of which were introducing CPD for the first time for their ELT staff. The eight case studies in this volume describe how CPD has been managed in different institutions in Turkey. The approaches used cover a very broad range of options and the British Council hopes that the volume will provide valuable insight for anyone interested in CPD in their own contexts and offer a means to reflect on and refresh practice for the benefit of teachers, trainers, and their students.

Simon Borg, editor of this volume, has been involved in ELT for over 25 years in a range of international contexts. After 15 years at the University of Leeds, where he was a Professor of TESOL, Simon now works full-time as an ELT consultant. He specialises in the design, delivery, evaluation and study of teacher education and development programmes.

www.teachingenglish.org.uk
www.britishcouncil.org/englishagenda
www.britishcouncil.org/learnenglish
www.britishcouncil.org/learnenglishteens
www.britishcouncil.org/learnenglishkids
www.britishcouncil.org.tr



ISBN 978-0-86355-741-5

© British Council 2015

The British Council is the United Kingdom's international organisation for cultural relations and educational opportunities.