CONSTRUCTIVISM AS A NEW NOTION
IN ENGLISH LANGUAGE EDUCATION IN TURKEY

A dissertation submitted to the
Kent State University College
of Education, Health, and Human Services
in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

by

Arzu Gül

August 2016
A dissertation written by

Arzu Gül

B.A., Ondokuz Mayis University, 1995
M.A., Kent State University, 2003
Ph.D., Kent State University, 2016

Approved by

_____________________________, Co-director, Doctoral Dissertation Committee
Wendy C. Kasten

_____________________________, Co-director, Doctoral Dissertation Committee
Alexa L. Sandmann

_____________________________, Member, Doctoral Dissertation Committee
Eric Jefferis

Accepted by

_____________________________, Director, School of Teaching, Learning and Curriculum Studies
Alexa L. Sandmann

_____________________________, Interim Dean, College of Education, Health and Human Services
Mark A. Kretovics
Even though Ministry of National Education (MoNE) in Turkey has been switching from the traditional approach to the constructivist one since 2005, the classroom practices, teaching methods, evaluation system, school structures and materials, and the aspects of the administrators and teachers are still traditional and contrary to the principles of constructivism. This study examined the drawbacks of the traditional education system and offered constructivism as a new notion in teaching English as a foreign language in Turkey. A 10-day professional development seminar was given to 6 English teachers working in 2 public schools in the city of Ankara, and the impacts of the seminar on teachers’ change were observed.

Different types of data sources, such as participant periodic interviews, observational fieldnotes and artifacts, and researcher logs were collected and analyzed in order to get some answers to the research questions of this dissertation. The findings in general, showed that the teacher development seminar helped the teachers learn constructivism, and change in their approach, views, and classroom applications.

This study provided noteworthy findings regarding professional development seminars in the context of Turkey and teacher change. A well-planned and well-organized teacher development seminar with an on-going support and counseling is necessary.
Further, professional communities and critical conversation groups have notable roles in teacher development. This study also revealed that the teachers were the most important people in implementing a new educational system and policy change as they can reach their idealistic (constructivist) goals regardless of any insufficiencies.
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Impossible may be possible, but not easy. Pursuing a doctoral degree program with a job and three kids plus a new baby on the way was really challenging to me. Probably the most frequent questions I received lately were, “Are you done, Mom? Is the dissertation over yet? How many chapters are left? Will it ever be finished, Mom?” Fortunately, I was not alone in this tiring and challenging journey. People contributed during my doctoral studies one way or another, directly or indirectly, physically or spiritually.

First and foremost, I would like to take the opportunity to thank all my committee members beginning with Dr. Wendy C. Kasten whose guidance and support helped me greatly in completing this dissertation. Dr. Kasten, you did not leave me, even though you were retired. I appreciate it! Dr. Alexa L. Sandmann, Dr. Eric Jefferis, and Dr. Catherine Hackney, thank you for your contributions and support, especially during the difficult time of mine (when my mother had heart surgery).

I cannot forget Dr. Ersoy Karabay’s critical technical support during data analysis. Dr. Necdet Aykac and Dr. Kasim Yildirim were two great peer readers and qualitative analysis experts.

I want to thank the dedicated teachers who voluntarily joined the project: Ebrar, Esra, Gamze, Hale, Nil, and Zeynep. You are the main actors of this study. Without you, this study would have not come to exist. Together, we established a good professional community. And I am proud and glad to learn that you still continue with this professional community and even have expanded it.
Words are not enough to thank my parents for what they have done for me since I was born. Dear mother and father, you wanted and waited to see my earning doctoral degree more than any other people did. Thank you for your patience!

Special thanks go to my beloved husband Zakir, who always encouraged and supported me during my studies. Finally, I would like to thank my precious children for their patience: Mina Meryem, Emir Serdar, Gül Azra, and the expected baby girl (Büşra) who will join us soon. You are my precious diamonds.

I dedicate this dissertation to my Mom…
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ACKNOWLEDGMENTS</td>
<td>iv</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LIST OF TABLES</td>
<td>xii</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>CHAPTER</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I. INTRODUCTION</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Statement of the Problem</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Study</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Significance of the Study</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research Questions</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summary</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II. LITERATURE REVIEW</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Defining Constructivism</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relevant Approaches of Constructivism</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional Development for Teachers</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Why Professional Development Programs: Teacher Change</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Power of Professional Communities (Study Groups)</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adult Learning and Peer Coaching</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research on Professional Development for English Language Teaching</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A Review of Foreign Language Education</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Language Acquisition Versus Learning</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Foreign Language Education</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Foreign Language Education in Turkey</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English Medium Instruction (EMI) schools</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Private schools</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Traditional approaches in foreign language education in Turkey</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Constructivist best practice as a modern educational paradigm in foreign language education</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summary</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>III. METHODOLOGY AND DESIGN</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research Goals and Questions</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participants</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Settings</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Schools</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Classroom Settings</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Permissions and Regulations</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Design and Method ............................................................................................... 49
Data Collection Tools ............................................................................................... 52
  Pre-Workshop Demographic Interviews and Survey ........................................ 53
  Interviews .......................................................................................................... 53
  In-Class Observational Fieldnotes and Artifacts ............................................. 56
  Researcher Logs .................................................................................................. 57
Treatment .................................................................................................................. 59
Data Analysis ............................................................................................................. 62
  Pre-Workshop Demographic Interviews and Survey ........................................ 63
  Interviews .......................................................................................................... 64
  In-Class Observational Fieldnotes and Artifacts ............................................. 65
  Researcher Logs .................................................................................................. 65
Trustworthiness and Validity ...................................................................................... 66
Summary .................................................................................................................... 68

IV. ANALYSIS ................................................................................................................. 70
Participants .................................................................................................................. 70
  Participant Selection .............................................................................................. 70
  Pre-Workshop Demographic Interviews and Survey ........................................ 72
  Ebrar ..................................................................................................................... 76
  Esra ....................................................................................................................... 78
  Gamze .................................................................................................................... 79
  Hale ....................................................................................................................... 81
  Nil ......................................................................................................................... 82
  Zeynep ................................................................................................................... 83
Settings ....................................................................................................................... 84
  Schools ................................................................................................................... 84
  Classrooms .......................................................................................................... 86
Permissions and Regulations ...................................................................................... 86
Design and Method ................................................................................................. 87
Treatment ................................................................................................................... 91
Trustworthiness and Validity ...................................................................................... 98
Data Analysis ............................................................................................................. 99
Interviews ................................................................................................................... 100
  Summary of Interviews ...................................................................................... 100
  Findings of Interviews ....................................................................................... 103
    Before the teacher development seminar ...................................................... 103
    Turkish national education system on language ............................................ 105
    The problems of national education system in Turkey .................................... 106
    A good education ............................................................................................. 110
    Constructivist knowledge and applications before the seminar .................... 111
    Reason to join the project .............................................................................. 112
Professional Development Seminar ............................................................. 113
  An overview on professional development seminars in Turkey ...... 114
  Ten-day professional development seminar ..................................... 116
  Evidence/Planning application .......................................................... 121

Constructivism ............................................................................................. 123
  Application of constructivism ............................................................ 125
  Techniques of constructivism applied ............................................... 127
  Evaluation .......................................................................................... 129
  Overcoming challenges ...................................................................... 134
  Insights gained ................................................................................... 136

Discussion of Interviews .............................................................................. 138

In-Class Observational Fieldnotes and Artifacts ........................................... 143
  Summary of In-Class Observational Fieldnotes and Artifacts ............ 143
  Findings of In-Class Observational Fieldnotes and Artifacts: Ebrar .... 145
    First observation—21 October, 2014 ................................................. 145
    Second observation—25 November, 2014 ......................................... 146
    Third observation—5 January, 2015 .................................................. 146
    The findings of three observations ..................................................... 147
    The findings of five artifacts .............................................................. 147
  Findings of In-Class Observational Fieldnotes and Artifacts: Esra ....... 149
    First observation—24 October, 2014 ................................................. 149
    Second observation—15 December, 2014 ......................................... 150
    Third observation—15 January, 2015 ................................................ 150
    The findings of three observations ..................................................... 151
    The findings of five artifacts .............................................................. 152
  Findings of In-Class Observational Fieldnotes and Artifacts: Gamze .... 154
    First observation—30 September, 2014 ............................................. 154
    Second observation—4 November, 2014 .......................................... 155
    Third observation—30 December, 2014 ............................................ 157
    The findings of three observations ..................................................... 157
    The findings of five artifacts .............................................................. 158
  Findings of In-Class Observational Fieldnotes and Artifacts: Hale ....... 161
    First observation—1 October, 2014 ................................................... 161
    Second observation—17 November, 2014 ........................................ 161
    Third observation—17 December, 2014 ............................................ 162
    The findings of three observations ..................................................... 163
    The findings of five artifacts .............................................................. 164
  Findings of In-Class Observational Fieldnotes and Artifacts: Nil ........ 165
    First observation—2 October, 2014 ................................................... 165
    Second observation—27 November, 2014 ........................................ 166
    Third observation—9 January, 2015 .................................................. 167
    The findings of three observations ..................................................... 167
    The findings of five artifacts .............................................................. 168
Findings of In-Class Observational Fieldnotes and Artifacts: Zeynep...... 170

First observation—9 October, 2014 ................................................... 170
Second observation—9 December, 2014 ........................................... 171
Third observation—8 January, 2015 .................................................. 171
The findings of three observations ..................................................... 172
The findings of five artifacts .............................................................. 173

Discussion of In-Class Observational Fieldnotes and Artifacts ............. 175

Researcher Logs .................................................................................................. 179
Summary of Researcher Logs ...................................................................... 179
Findings of Researcher Logs: During the Seminar ...................................... 181
Day 1—1 September, 2014 ................................................................ 181
Day 2—2 September, 2014 ................................................................ 181
Day 3—3 September, 2014 ................................................................ 181
Day 4—4 September, 2014 ................................................................ 181
Day 5—5 September, 2014 ................................................................ 182
Day 6—8 September, 2014 ................................................................ 182
Day 7—9 September, 2014 ................................................................ 183
Day 8—10 September, 2014 .............................................................. 183
Day 9—11 September, 2014 .............................................................. 184
Day 10—12 September, 2014 ............................................................ 184
Findings of Researcher Logs: During the Semester .................................... 185
30 September, 2014 ............................................................................ 185
01 October, 2014 ................................................................................ 185
09 October, 2014 ................................................................................ 185
21 October, 2014 ................................................................................ 186
4 November, 2014 .............................................................................. 186
17 November, 2014 ............................................................................ 187
3 December, 2014 ................................................................................ 187
5 January, 2015 .................................................................................. 187
8 January, 2015 .................................................................................. 188
14 January, 2015 ................................................................................ 188
Discussion of the Researcher Logs .............................................................. 189
Teachers should have their own classes ............................................. 189
Teachers should not hesitate to do group studies ............................... 190
Teachers can succeed despite the insufficiencies............................... 190
Teachers may be affected by the standardized testing system ............ 191
Teachers may be affected by the family concerns and feel more pressure on their shoulders ........................................................... 191
The importance of professional community ...................................... 192
Teachers should know their students individually. ............................ 192

Summary of Findings........................................................................................ 192

Discussion of the Research Questions ....................................................... 195
Research Question One.............................................................................. 196
## LIST OF TABLES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Data Collection Methods</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Demographic Information of the Participants</td>
<td>74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Timetable</td>
<td>89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Approaches and Techniques in Teaching English</td>
<td>104</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Why MoNE Switched to Constructivism</td>
<td>105</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. The Problems of Turkish National Education System</td>
<td>107</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Ideas on Better Education</td>
<td>110</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Knowledgeable and Apply Constructivist Activities or Not</td>
<td>112</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Reason to Join the Project</td>
<td>113</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Seminars by MoNE</td>
<td>114</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. Ten-Day Professional Development Seminar</td>
<td>117</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. Evidence/Planning Application</td>
<td>121</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. Defining Constructivism</td>
<td>124</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14. Teaching Style Before/After Seminar</td>
<td>126</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15. Techniques Applied</td>
<td>128</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16. Constructivist Evaluation and Assessment</td>
<td>130</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17. Challenges/Problems Experienced</td>
<td>131</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18. Overcoming Challenges</td>
<td>134</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19. Insights Gained</td>
<td>137</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20. The Artifacts From Ebrar’s Classroom</td>
<td>148</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
21. The Artifacts from Esra’s Classroom ................................................................. 153
22. The Artifacts From Gamze’s Classroom............................................................ 159
23. The Artifacts From Hale’s Classroom............................................................... 164
24. The Artifacts From Nil’s Classroom................................................................. 169
25. The Artifacts From Zeynep’s Classroom........................................................... 173
26. Researcher Log Dates ..................................................................................... 180
CHAPTER I
INTRODUCTION

In this age of communication, foreign language education has an important role in the global world. There can be various kinds of purposes or goals for the learners to start a foreign language learning journey. Some of these purposes can be to be able to communicate with people they would otherwise not have the chance to know, to open doors to other cultures, and to understand and appreciate the people from other countries (Cummins, 1994). Therefore, it is vital that the foreign language education system meets the expectations of the learners and in order for the learners to be able to communicate with the people from other cultures when needed in real life at the end of their language learning journey.

For foreign language education, so many different teaching methods such as the grammar-translation method and the direct method have been used historically, which have limitations to provide the learners with effective language learning (Demirican, 1988; Demirel, 2003; Isik, 2009; Lou, 2008; N. Luk, 2006; Richards & Rodgers, 2007). In Turkey, where the education is mostly done by traditional ways, foreign language education has problems (Buyukduman, 2005; Er, 2006; Ersen-Yanik, 2008; Kavanoz, 2006; Kirkgoz, 2005, 2009; Sad, 2010) such as memorizing words, but not being able to make up sentences; learning advanced-level grammar but not being able to speak and understand; being part of the language learning but not as an active and participatory actor that in turn makes the students dislike the foreign language classes.
Statement of the Problem

All schools throughout the whole country of Turkey have to use the same curriculum for foreign language teaching, which is designed and required by the Turkish Ministry of National Education (MoNE), just like the other educational activities at schools which are designed by a national curriculum and are also controlled by superintendents assigned by the MoNE (Demircan, 1988; Seferoglu, 1996). Moreover, teachers are expected to teach the same curriculum throughout the country (Cakiroglu & Cakiroglu, 2003; Kirkgoz, 2005, 2009). The curriculum looks perfect and every single detail including methods, goals and objectives, grammar, vocabulary teaching, and all skills (reading, writing, speaking, and listening) are included in the written form of the curriculum (Demircan, 1988; N. Luk, 2006; MoNE Website, 2009). Once it is read, it could be thought that all students will be at advanced proficiency level in English, and know English almost as well as their mother tongue when they graduate from high schools. However, in reality and practice, this is not the case (Dogancay-Aktuna & Kiziltepe, 2005). They can learn just some grammar structures without gaining any speaking ability.

The students in Turkey are learners of English as a Foreign Language (EFL); that means they try to learn a foreign language in a country of which the national language is not English (Brown, 2000; Mitchell & Myles, 2004). Therefore, compared to English as a Second Language (ESL) learners, EFL learners are less advantaged as they miss the language context.
Even in classrooms, the students have limited time to be exposed to the target language. Especially in public schools, instruction is generally done in the first language. Teachers usually speak about the language while presenting the sentence structures and grammar rules of the target language but they rarely speak in the language. Thus, almost no listening for the learners takes place. As a result, students do not gain speaking ability. In addition, public schools are overcrowded, which in turn limits a teacher to interact with every student (Kirkgoz, 2009). In these overcrowded classes of 30 or more, students hardly have the chance to practice the language they are learning. As seen from the problems briefly mentioned above, traditional methods in schooling do not meet the foreign language education goals and objectives, one of which is to have students who are able to engage in conversations, express feelings, and exchange opinions in English (Demircan, 1988; MoNE Website, 2009).

**The Study**

Today, in modern communities, constructivism is a generally accepted approach in foreign language teaching where the classroom goals are focused on all of the components (grammatical, discourse, functional, sociolinguistic, and strategic) of communicative competence (Demircan, 1988; Dewey, 1916; Lou, 2008; N. Luk, 2006; Reinfried, 2000; Von Glasersfeld, 1995). Language techniques are designed to engage learners in the authentic, pragmatic, and functional use of language for meaningful purposes (Can, 2009; Demircan, 1988; N. Luk, 2006; Reinfried, 2000). In addition, fluency may take on more importance than accuracy to keep the learners meaningfully engaged in language use. In a constructivist class, students ultimately need opportunities
to use the language productively outside the classroom. Since such contexts will be unrehearsed, it is important to equip the students with skills necessary to communicate in those contexts. Furthermore, students are encouraged to take control of their own learning and feel responsible for their learning; they are given opportunities to focus on appropriate strategies for autonomous learning (Brooks & Brooks, 1999; Dewey, 1916; Piaget, 1973). Finally, the teachers are not perceived and expected to be “the master teacher of a method” (Moeller, 1996, p. 60). Their role is to guide, monitor, coach, and facilitate the students through their journey of meaning making and interaction with others (Can, 2009; Dewey, 1916; Piaget, 1973; Vygotsky, 1978). Teachers help their students in constructing and understanding their own learning.

The characteristics mentioned above express that a constructivist language teaching approach is different from earlier (traditional) approaches and methods. Unlike the traditional approaches, less attention is paid to grammatical rules in the constructivist approach. Learners’ needs are the basis for the curriculum making process in constructivism. According to the approach, learner-centered instruction should include techniques that focus on learners’ needs, styles, and goals while giving some control to the learner (Can, 2007; Cetinkaya, 2005; Demirel, 2003; Nunan, 1988).

Therefore, leaving the traditional approaches, which were mainly on grammar teaching, text translation, correctness rather than meaning making, hopefully things are moving towards more modern ones that can help the EFL learners in Turkey (Can, 2009; Demircan, 1988; Demirel, 2003; N. Luk, 2006; Reinfried, 2000).
In that regard, it can be said that foreign language education in Turkey should be accorded to reveal the benefits of the constructivism. A paradigm shift for a better, more effective, communicative, and student-centered foreign language teaching and learning is necessary. Even though the Ministry of National Education (MoNE) in Turkey has been switching from the traditional approach to the constructivist one since 2005, the classroom practices, teaching methods, school structures and materials, and the aspects of the administrators and teachers are still traditional and contrary to the principles of constructivism (Aykac, 2007a, 2007b; Aykac & Ulubey, 2012).

So, when will the expected positive changes happen? For this adjustment, first of all, foreign language teachers as the most important components of this education system (Cakiroglu & Cakiroglu, 2003; Garet, Porter, Desimone, Birman & Yoon, 2001; Kirkgoz, 2009; Nolan & Meister, 2000; Yilmaz, 2009) should be introduced with the new system and trained via teacher training/professional development seminars (Fullan, 2001; Munoz, 2007; Richards & Farrell, 2005; Seferoglu, 1996; Stein & Wang, 1988; Yilmaz, 2009). It should be noted that the teachers are adult learners where they like to bring and share their own experiences, participate in task-based activities, and construct their knowledge in a more complex way (Knowles, 1996; Moore, 1988; Sessions, 1995). Further, peer coaching and collaboration is an essential component of teacher development and training (Garmston, 1987; D. W. Johnson & Johnson, 1987; Joyce & Showers, 1982, 1987; Pugach & Johnson, 1990; Robbins, 1991; Showers, 1982, 1984, 1985).
Having a graduate level education in the U.S. helped me realize that professional
development seminars, and thus the quality of teachers, are not high priority of MoNE in
Turkey. In order to increase the quality of education, the teachers are the ones that
should be invested first and most (Yilmaz, 2009). In that regard, with the intention of
introducing constructivist best practice to six selected English teachers in Turkey through
a 10-day professional development seminar, this study aims to explore how these English
teachers understand constructivism as a new notion in education and how they apply it
into practice.

**Significance of the Study**

The classroom practices, teaching methods, evaluation system, school structures
and materials, and the aspects of the administrators and teachers are still traditional in
Turkey even though there has been a switch to constructivism. In that regard, foreign
language education system falls short in teaching English to the students in spite of taking
English lessons for years. This study may provide explanations for the failure and give
some suggestions and recommendations for English teachers and MoNE. Further, it may
help the English teachers understand constructivism as a new notion in foreign language
education and get some insights on the applications of constructivism in their foreign
language teaching. The current study may also provide insights about doing professional
development seminars and understanding the importance of teacher development
seminars in helping teachers change in their views and applications in teaching English.
The teachers are not considered as the main actors in a change. In that regard, the significance of this study may extend to reveal the role and importance of the teachers in the implementation of a new system and approach.

Finally, professional communities and critical conversation groups were not considered as important in teacher development in Turkey. This study may also help realize how essential professional communities and critical conversation groups were in the process of professional development.

**Research Questions**

Given a 10-day professional development seminar that supported constructivist principles, as fully defined in Chapter 2, and with a full description of the course/methods, in Chapter 3:

1. How do selected English teachers in Turkey understand constructivism as a new notion in foreign language education?

2. How do the teachers apply constructivism into their foreign language teaching?

3. What insights can be gained about doing professional development in foreign language teaching in Turkey?

The researcher conducted a qualitative study that explored understandings and descriptions of the participants’ opinions/views of the phenomenon based on their real life experiences. The research took place in two public schools in two neighboring administrative districts in the city of Ankara, Turkey, and included the participation of six English teachers.
After giving a 10-day professional development seminar to introduce constructivism as a new notion in education to the selected English teachers, the researcher observed them in their own classrooms to see how they applied it into practice. The data were gathered through audio recorded participant periodic interviews, in-class observational fieldnotes and artifacts, and researcher logs. All these, once analyzed, address the research questions. By analyzing the data and with the light of the ideas of several theorists and researchers in this field, it was hoped to get some answers and insights into English teaching in Turkey.

Summary

With its great importance in this communication age, English as a foreign language is still taught in traditional ways in Turkey. Because of the drawbacks of these traditional approaches, it needs new applications and methods to be effective. Constructivism was offered as one of the modern approaches used in foreign language teaching in this study. The main purpose of the present study was to explore how six selected English teachers, working in two public schools in Turkey, understand constructivism as a new notion in education and how they applied it into practice and also to see what insights could be gained about doing professional development in foreign language teaching in Turkey.
CHAPTER II
LITERATURE REVIEW

The literature review starts with detailed definitions of constructivism (as it is the backbone of this research study) from important theorists. To shed light on the exploration of the research questions, some relevant constructivist approaches are reviewed and presented. Then, adult learning is explained. Professional development and teacher change are reviewed before the professional communities (study groups) section. Next, a review on professional development for English language and foreign language teaching is presented. A review of foreign language education in Turkey is provided. In light of important theories and approaches in the field of education, traditional approaches and constructivist best practice in foreign language education are also explained.

Defining Constructivism

Constructivism is a theory of learning and knowing which comes from a variety of fields such as philosophy, psychology, and science (Walker & Lambert, 1995). Simply, the originating idea of constructivism is that we build or construct our meanings, and as a postmodern epistemology, it presents a view of learning which is different than a traditional one (Bentley, 1998). Being an epistemologically alternative approach to the objectivist tradition, it claims that the world out there is not independent from the knower, and the meaning is imposed on the world (T. M. Duffy & Jonassen, 1992). In other words, constructivism is in the mind of knowers where they construct a reality, or
interpret it, relying on their experiences, and how they deal with how they are constructed (Brooks & Brooks, 1999; Jonassen, 1992).

Experience is also important in constructivism. In that regard, knowledge is the life itself and it is the learners’ experiences, not something abstract out there independent from the learner (Dewey, 1916, 1938/1997). Therefore, teaching and learning processes should be related to the real practical world. Further, even the classrooms are designed and formed in a way where not only the teacher talks, but the students ask critical questions, share ideas and experiences, and exchange knowledge interactively (Brooks & Brooks, 1999).

Constructivism is “neither a person nor a method, but a theory of knowledge” (MacKinnon & Scarff-Seatter, 1997, p. 54). Further, it is a lens that lets people see and interpret the world in many various ways. Therefore, it is widely discussed in many different approaches of various disciplines (Vianna & Stetsenko, 2006) such as education and psychology. It can be said that the interest and professional literature has mushroomed (Lowry et al., 1996) in constructivism. Scholars and philosophers such as Dewey (1916), Piaget (1973), and Vygotsky (1978) had different perspectives and ideas on constructivism although they were arguing mainly around the same epistemology and ontology. In other words, the scholars interpreted the same concept from their different angles, experiences, minds, and worlds.

In a study that asked people about what constructivism was, the researchers received 10 different definitions (Gagnon & Collay, 2006). The reason, as explained by Gagnon and Collay, is what they read did not generate a single meaning but many due to
the readers’ prior knowledge and experience while interacting with the author’s words. Other scholars (e.g., Morrison & Collins, 1996) stated that the truth takes many forms due to the different contexts, subcultures, and understandings. Despite their difference, such theories and approaches help us see and explain the reality much better and simpler.

**Relevant Approaches of Constructivism**

Under this title, some of the influential perspectives of constructivism, especially in the field of education are presented. Education is seen as important to social life as the nutrition and reproduction is critical to physiological life (Dewey, 1916). Further, education is composed of transmission through communication, of which is a process of sharing experience until it turns into a common possession. There is an emphasis on the action and experience in education, in a classroom context and setting, where the learners build their knowledge by manipulating the materials. When the students experience something, they can take action accordingly, and when they do something to the thing, then it does something in return (Dewey, 1916).

The traditional education system for providing only specific prescription and dictation or providing only fixed and ready models is criticized. They do not necessitate the perception and explanation of ends, nor do they allow applying judgment in selecting and adapting means (Dewey, 1916). Therefore, more a participative, creative, and constructive way of education for the students is vital. Gundogdu (2010) conducted a quasi-experimental design study in Turkey. The subjects were 85 prospective teachers in a public university who were given Human Rights course. The control group was taught in traditional ways whereas the experimental group was taught in constructivist way.
Gundogdu found significant differences on constructivist applications. He stated that due to the fact that the real learner-centered activities based on constructivist approach are more effective and have long lasting effect on the attitudes, they can be used as cognitive and effective tools for development of learners (Gundogdu, 2010).

The development of child (cognitive) psychology in education is also important in constructivism. The learners construct their knowledge to know their world. Therefore teachers should consider the stages and steps of child’s mind development in teaching (Piaget, 1973). Piaget claimed that the child must pass through some stages that were formed by the ideas, which will be considered wrong at the beginning but essential later for the final correct solution. Stages should be taken into consideration when providing learning materials and doing activities. Further, the students’ motor and/or mental level should be considered, and any kind of requirement that is beyond that level should be avoided, because they may not be able to do some things if they have not reached the relevant stage already. Child’s thinking makes a gradual increase in knowledge and intellectual skills towards logical thinking.

Children are active learners, who are always in an interaction with their environment. They should be provided a classroom environment where they are involved with activities and practices of their interest in discovering and exploring relationships and other phenomena of the situations. In order to form the students as being capable of production and creativity, the appropriate conditions should be provided to them (Cambourne, 1988, 1995, 2001; Piaget, 1973). This way these people can have the chance to learn and understand by discovering. Cambourne (1988, 1995, 2001) discussed
some conditions of learning that are immersion, demonstration, engagement, expectations, responsibility, approximations, employment, and response. In the condition of immersion, the children are surrounded by and immersed with what is learned. When the children are given the chance of observing some examples of actions and artifacts, the condition of demonstration is applied. The engagement condition refers to the learner’s attending and participating in the things in which they are immersed and demonstrated. The expectations are the messages to the learners that learners are able to and expected to do the learning activity. The condition of responsibility provides the children to take some responsibilities and make their own decisions on what they learn. The approximation condition allows the learners to make progress gradually, rather than at once, so that they can approximate to the right level. The condition of employment refers to giving opportunities of application and practice of what is learned to the learners. Finally, the condition of response is about giving feedback or information in order for the children to see their improvement.

Another point in constructivism is that children learn the scientific concepts from tension that exists between their everyday perception and things around them (Vygotsky, 1978). They will possess concepts, which were memorized from an adult, only when they use and link it. While linking the solutions of problems, the speech has a significant effect on the child’s activity. The previous conceptions and the introduced scientific notions are not linearly and straightforwardly connected. They are intertwined, and each may influence the other as the child exercises his or her formerly known ideas with the lately introduced ones.
Social interaction and social context are crucial in the cognitive development. According to Vygotsky (1978), the functions of children’s cultural development happen at the social level first and then at the individual level. Put differently, it functions between people (interpsychological) first and later inside the children (intrapsychological), which relates to voluntary attention, to logical memory, and to the concept formation. He argued about the zone of proximal development (ZPD or Zo-ped), which is “the distance between the actual developmental level of a child as determined by independent problem solving and the level of potential development as determined through problem solving under adult guidance or in collaboration with more capable peers” (p. 86). So, the guidance, help, and support can make children understand things better and develop more compared to doing alone. Further, Vygotsky mentioned that language is an important component and tool for the child to create new chances for doing things and for organizing information. Therefore, the more comprehensive and loaded language experience given to the children within the ZPD, the more they learn, because the class activities generate a teaching environment.

From a different perspective, constructivism is more than just a learning theory; it is seeing the world from a broader perspective where various interpretations are present to shed light on the complex and abstract phenomena (von Glasersfeld, 1995, 1998). Further, constructivism is an unconventional approach where it assumes that knowledge is in the heads of people. Therefore, there is no other way but to construct what they know based on their experiences (von Glasersfeld, 1995).
Motivation is also important in constructivism. If the students know why the thing they learn is useful, they would be more motivated to learn it (von Glasersfeld, 1995). The traditional schooling system makes the students study for passing exams, rather than becoming more intellectually knowledgeable. In radical constructivism, there is more than just one right way or a fixed teaching procedure. Constructivism “cannot tell teachers new things to do, but it may suggest why certain attitudes and procedures are fruitless or counter-productive; and it may point out opportunities for teachers to use their own spontaneous imagination” (von Glasersfeld, 1995, p. 177). So, it can be said that constructivism provides a theory of knowledge, communication, and the learning process that could help and guide all of the teachers to start using their own imagination and creativity (von Glasersfeld, 1998).

Overall, constructivism is different than positivist approaches in terms of epistemology and ontology (Brooks & Brooks, 1999; Goodman, 2005; Oxford, 1997a). What all of the above-mentioned scholars argue is that the knowledge is not out there independent from the subject, but constructed by the subject, and, it is not something objective. In constructivism, the education is not as simple and linear as claimed but it is a complex issue that should be taken more seriously (Brooks & Brooks, 1999). Moreover, the students are more important and featured not to be treated based on the experiment results done on rats or pigeons (Goodman, 2005).

**Professional Development for Teachers**

Professional development seminars are important and necessary for the teachers’ improvements (Garet et al., 2001; Noom-ura, 2013; Richards & Farrell, 2005). Since
new issues, problems, and ways continuously exist, it is critical to have continuous
teacher development seminars to keep the teachers updated and equipped with the latest
improvements. Further, the seminars are also important for teachers’ professional
development because merely experience of the teachers is not sufficient (Richards &
Nunan, 1990). Professional development programs are “systematic efforts to bring about
change in the classroom practices of teachers, in their attitudes and beliefs, and in the
learning outcomes of students” (Guskey, 2002, p. 381). In that regard, effective
professional development programs are designed to enhance teachers’ content and
pedagogical knowledge, and (in turn) to improve student learning outcomes (Guskey,
2003). Professional development involves workshops, courses, seminars, programs, and
relevant activities that are designed to provide new ideas, skills, and competencies for
teachers’ improvement in the classroom (Fullan, 2007). Noom-ura (2013) conducted a
study of 34 English teachers in Thailand and concluded that professional development
seminars have a critical role in increasing the quality level of teachers and enhancing
their teaching skills (i.e., communication skills).

Even though teachers are usually required to participate in professional
development seminars, it is stated that most of them want to join the seminars to become
better teachers and improve in their professions (Fullan, 1993; Guskey, 2002). Therefore,
the teachers’ “belief that it will expand their knowledge and skills, contribute to their
growth, and enhance their effectiveness with students” (Guskey, 2002, p. 382) makes
them join the seminars.
Why Professional Development Programs: Teacher Change

One of the most important components of an education system is the teachers on which the curriculum success mostly depends (Cakiroglu & Cakiroglu, 2003; Garet et al., 2001; Hargreaves, Earl, Moore, & Manning, 2001; Kirkgoz, 2009; Nolan & Meister, 2000). In fact, they were the key factor in accomplishing educational ends and improving the quality of education in Turkey (Yilmaz, 2009). As nicely articulated,

Teachers don’t merely deliver the curriculum. They develop, define it and reinterpret it too. It is what teachers think, what teachers believe and what teachers do at the level of the classroom that ultimately shapes the kind of learning that young people get. (Hargreaves & Fullan, 1992, p. ix)

As Geringer (2003) also argued, the teachers are the most important actors in the learning process compared to the other variables such as motivation and classroom sizes, as good quality teachers can build a better learning environment for their students. Therefore, it is important for the teachers to be professionally well educated, trained, and equipped. In that regard, professional development programs are necessary for the development of the teachers.

Since teachers have this great responsibility in education, they need a continuous support of professional development to carry out the ideals (Munoz, 2007; Richards & Farrell, 2005; Seferoglu, 1996; Stein & Wang, 1988; Yilmaz, 2009). Its aim at long-term goals is an important attribute of teacher development. As indicated by Richards and Farrell (2005), teacher development has a long-term goal, which is to help teachers understand their teaching and themselves as teachers, too. When arguing about change,
Fullan (2001) claimed that the implementation of a new educational policy is more complex and difficult than it sounds.

Teacher development programs are critical in implementing new policies and helping teachers change. As Guskey (2002) formulated, professional development helps change in teachers’ classroom practices that in turn helps change in student learning outcomes, and hence helps change in teachers’ beliefs and attitudes. In this change equation, teachers are among the vital actors, and professional development is the key for those teachers to make the change reform possible. This big mission makes great demands on teachers’ own learning on modifying and extending their teaching, and requires multiple intelligences, ways of understanding and knowing how to integrate new technologies into their classrooms, and learning the ways of effective interactions (Fullan, 2001). Further, teachers’ belief in the need of the new program and change is also vital, as the teachers may not see and understand the importance and necessity of the change. Fullan went on to state that the mission and task should be clear, because, even when it is agreed that some kind of change is considered necessary, as teachers may want to improve some part of the curriculum or improve the school all together, the adopted change may not be clear enough about what teachers are expected/supposed to do differently (Fullan, 2001).

A study about understanding the gap between the theories and practices of 14 English teachers was conducted in Greece. Karavas-Doukas (1995) found inconsistencies between the theory and practice of the teachers in the study. She revealed that teacher training should be clarifying the principles of the innovation and
demonstrating the innovative principles of application in classroom activities. So, it was the lack of clarification that caused teachers to apply new methods successfully.

Professional development support and opportunities should be given to the teachers if they are expected to change and make changes (Garet et al., 2001). New methods in teaching can be introduced to the teachers by teacher training/professional development seminars. Such activities and facilities could contribute to teachers’ self-image, their perception of their profession, the way they view their students, and the quality of their teaching (Munoz, 2007; Richardson, 1990; Seferoglu, 1996; Tante, 2010). In that regard, teacher development programs are good to make some systematic change in practices, beliefs, and attitudes of the teachers (Guskey, 1986). However, it is not realistic to expect an immediate and easy acceptance to change in teaching methods and behavior as there will be some obstacles and resistance of which researchers should be aware (G. Duffy & Roehler, 1986). In other words, expecting and getting teachers to change is not easy (G. Duffy & Roehler, 1986; Nolan & Meister, 2000) and it is a slow and difficult process (Guskey, 1986).

As mentioned above, even though the process of change and adaptation of innovation is not easy due to several factors and takes time (Cuban, 1983, 1988, 1990), the starting point in this study still expects that when sufficient training and administrative support is provided, most of the teachers may be able to acquire the knowledge and skills that are necessary to implement most innovative educational practices (Stein & Wang, 1988). For example, if teachers want to or are expected to change the traditional way of teaching formal English grammar to more communicative
approach using grammar meaningfully in context, they could be encouraged to meet with their colleagues and do ‘communicative’ exercises themselves, talk about the application whether it works or not, and why (S. Gardner, 2008). Further, they could discuss the ways of applying and adjusting the exercises in the local context.

**Power of Professional Communities (Study Groups)**

A study group is a place where the participants could generate their own knowledge through dialogue, reflect on and process the work of other educators (Birchak et al., 1998). Moreover, a study group is also a place where the participants could voluntarily join and explore and develop innovations derived from questions and interests of the participants. As Birchak and her colleagues expressed, the participants can critique their own ideas and practices and explore some alternative ways in study groups, rather than regularly changing the teaching method according to some fixed and standardized structures.

One of the benefits of professional development programs is helping establish collegiality and collaborative exchange among the like-minded professionals. As Garet and his colleagues (2001) found

The collective participation of groups of teachers from the same school, subject, or grade is related both to coherence and active learning opportunities, which in turn are related to improvements in teacher knowledge and skill and changes in classroom practice. (p. 936)

Teachers value opportunities to work together, make reflections, exchange ideas, and share strategies in such professional communities (Guskey, 2003) as some teachers know
what some others do not know, and collective wisdom is better than individual ones (Grossman, Wineburg, & Woolworth, 2000). Professional communities and study groups are beneficial structures for teachers’ development in terms of classroom practices and student learning, and intellectual improvement (Birchak et al., 1998; Grossman et al., 2000). Such communities also help for ongoing teacher learning (Darling-Hammond & Sykes, 1999).

A professional community (study group) is not a staff meeting (Birchak et al., 1998) and different from a group of teachers sitting in a room (Grossman et al., 2000). Therefore, not all gatherings of teachers can be considered a professional community (Grossman et al., 2000). A study group integrates theory and practice, builds a sense of community, and cares and challenges beliefs and practice (Birchak et al., 1998).

It should be noted that a study group can be formed and used differently in different contexts and by different people (Birchak et al., 1998; Grossman et al., 2000). So, a study group may serve well for some teachers, whereas it may not work for others. Therefore, one single type of teacher community does not fit all cultures and subject matters (Grossman et al., 2000). It can be “whatever you need it to be” (Birchak et al., 1998, p. 143).

In brief, whereas a professional community (study group) is not a panacea for every issue, it is “a seed that can encourage teachers to believe in their right and their ability to ask and investigate questions, and to propose solutions” (Birchak et al., 1998, p. 143). With a study group, teachers can consult with each other as educational experts, and recognize their own professionalism.
Adult Learning and Peer Coaching

The participants of the current study were considered adult learners who used and benefited from critical conversations in their colleague groups. Further, peer coaching is inseparable from teacher development and training (Showers, 1985). Therefore, it would be helpful to present adult learning and peer coaching in this section.

Adult learning is different than young and children learning in several ways (Knowles, 1996; Moore, 1988; Sessions, 1995). In more technical words, andragogy is different than pedagogy (Knowles, 1968). As Knowles (1996) laid out, adults want to know why they need to learn; need to take responsibilities while learning; want to bring their experiences to their learning; want to learn when they feel they need it; and want to learn when learning is task-oriented. Moreover, they like to participate in discussions where they can share and learn experiences (Moore, 1988). In other words, “as adults matured, life became more self-directed. There were more experiences that could be used as learning resources: adults tended to learn for specific purposes, and wanted to apply what had been learned immediately” (Sessions, 1995, p. 28). Further, different than young learners, adult learners construct knowledge in a more complex way.

One important issue in adult learning is peer coaching and collaboration (Garmston, 1987; D. W. Johnson & Johnson, 1987; Joyce & Showers, 1982, 1987; Pugach & Johnson, 1990; Robbins, 1991; Showers, 1982, 1984, 1985). Peer coaching was defined as a “confidential process through which two or more professional colleagues work together to reflect on current practices; expand, refine, and build new skills; share ideas; teach one another; conduct classroom research; or solve problems in
the workplace” (Sessions, 1995, p. 11). So, the teachers coach each other as the peers are the most logical ones to coach others (Showers, 1985).

Studies found significant results that support the positive impact of peer coaching on adult learners. Pugach and Johnson (1990) found that teachers solved most of their teaching problems when they used peer coaching and collaboration. Another study indicated that peer coaching increased the teachers’ knowledge and improved their approach (D. W. Johnson & Johnson, 1987). Coached teachers also practiced new strategies more frequently and appropriately, developed skills much better, exhibited cognitions clearer, taught students more effectively, transferred training to classroom practices better, deepened collegiality, and increased professional dialogue (Garmston, 1987; Joyce & Showers, 1987; Showers, 1982, 1984, 1985).

**Research on Professional Development for English Language Teaching**

Professional development for English teaching is studied by the scholars in different nations (Baciu & Savu, 1996; Green, 2008; Lou, 2008). For instance, Green (2008) did a qualitative study in Argentina on teacher trainers and pre-service teacher trainees of English as a Foreign Language. She indicated that active participation and involvement of students are crucial in foreign language learning, especially in improvement of communications skills. Further, she concluded that it is important to find solutions to reduce the number of students in class, to generate opportunities to get to know all their peers of students, to promote an environment of tolerance of mistakes and acceptance of any ideas, to encourage and accept contributions, to provide strategies for
students to overcome their fear of speaking in front of the students, and to try to relate class topics to the students’ own experience (Green, 2008).

In another study conducted on six Taiwanese EFL teachers from different schools in Taiwan, Lou (2008) tried to investigate L2/EFL teachers’ language-teaching style and methods, and their experiences in Taiwan. Based on her observations, interviews, and feedback, she claimed that her instructions on non-traditional teaching methods helped these six teachers change and improve in their profession. In other words, the researcher’s treatment of constructivist training to the participants made them change and apply the new methods successfully.

A study on language awareness programs (i.e., workshops) was conducted on teachers in Romania about how to implement the curriculum successfully (Baciu & Savu, 1996). The workshop was aimed to promote/develop collaborative work at team level on a given issue. Some of the feedbacks of the participants indicate:

Teacher’s classroom situation becomes an issue of honest reflective inquiry, on a collective, collaborative basis and change is approached in a spirit of ‘knowing-in-action’; the exchange of experience does not occur on a purely didactic/theoretical basis; it is not only informational but equally participatory and empowering. (Baciu & Savu, 1996, p. 74)

Evaluation in foreign language should also be more in constructivist ways, which is a process applied during the entire semester, rather than depending on only some types of standard tests (Eisner, 2002) such as portfolios (Tillema & Smith, 2007). Chakrakodi (2010) conducted a study of portfolios on 67 trainee teachers that teach English classes to
5th, 6th, and 7th graders in public primary schools in India. She found that using portfolios might be beneficial evaluation tools in ESL contexts.

**A Review of Foreign Language Education**

Before the review of foreign language education, the difference between language acquisition and learning needs to be clarified.

**Language Acquisition Versus Learning**

The language acquisition occurs subconsciously whereas foreign language learning occurs consciously (Kosur, 2011; Krashen, 1982, 1994). The learner “is learning a language naturally as a result of living in a country” (Ellis, 1997, p. 3) in language acquisition, however she or he is “learning it in a classroom through instruction” (p. 3) in the language learning. In other words, a child acquires her or his first language (L1) in a natural setting without needing any learning instructions, whereas a second language (L2) learner does need teaching instructions such as the rules of the second language (Kosur, 2011; Krashen, 1982, 1994). Therefore, a first language learner does not put much effort in acquiring the first language as it is mostly an unconscious process, whereas the second language learner has to give much effort to learn the rules, practice, and apply some learning strategies (O’Malley, Chamot, Stewner-Manzanares, Russo, & Küpper, 1985) in order to learn it. Different than the first language learner, the second language learner has a deliberative and knowing action. Even the critical thinking skill may change when first language learners compared with second language learners (J. Luk & Lin, 2015).
In that regard, Goodman (2005) claimed that since learning a language in the real world and natural settings is easy and effective, the teachers should try to give language education in a natural way, by using more constructivist approach and activities, as well as creating more natural and realistic school and classroom settings.

**Foreign Language Education**

Language education should be considered specifically in constructivism. Language is not neutral as it carries views and perspectives constructively (Bruner, 1966, 1986). In other words, language does not only transmit, but also generates knowledge or reality. The language of education is the culture creating, not just knowledge consuming or knowledge acquisition. What people construct as a reality is based on any prior reality that is constructed in myriad forms of deeply encoded experience (Bruner, 1966, 1986).

The importance and purpose of learning English as a second language matters. The main purpose in the past was the mastery of language structure, whereas in this communication age it is more than just structure (Al Muhaimeed, 2013; Brookfield, 1995; Can, 2007; Cetinkaya, 2005; Demirel, 2003; Reinfrid, 2000). Now, learning English plays a major role, and the purpose has shifted from the structure to the use for communicative purposes.

The learners should see exactly where in the real life they can use that language pattern either by creating real life settings via hands-on activities, task-based real-world based problem solving activities prepared by the teachers, or directly being in the real social interactions. Therefore, foreign language teachers should create more meaningful classroom settings (Brookfield, 1995; Brooks & Brooks, 1999; Calvert & Sheen, 2014;
Honebein, 1996; Reinfried, 2000; Selinker, 1972) for learners which are more engaging with the world, and which gets them to realize the importance of learning for them in their real lives. Learning is best when it truly matters in a person’s life, when she or he believes it is important (Goodman, 2005; Zull, 2002). Otherwise, learning and memorizing the words, patterns of the target language will not be meaningful for the learners. As Goodman nicely quoted:

Keep language whole and involve children in using it functionally and purposefully to meet their own needs . . . invite pupils to use language. Get them to talk about things they need to understand. Suggest that they write about what happens to them. (2005, p. 4).

A study was conducted at a teacher-training institute within the Nanyang Technological University in Singapore on English trainee teachers of primary and secondary schools. Tang (2008) taught a discourse analysis course and introduced different types of analysis on spoken, written, and visual texts. Then, she collected essays of the participants and did a content analysis of all the reflections. The findings show that helping the learners look at English language critically, train them to think about texts analytically, give them the opportunity to experience these things as enjoyable and meaningful, and make them see the connection/relevance of the learned things to their lives is beneficial.

Another important issue in second language teaching is being learner-centered rather than teacher-centered (Al Muhaimeed, 2013; Can, 2007; Cetinkaya, 2005; Demirel, 2003; Nunan, 1988). In such a class environment, the learners have a more democratic,
collaborative, cooperative, stress-free, and meaningful applications while learning the foreign language, and the teacher is a leader who is guiding, empowering, delegating to, sharing with, and valuing the learners. In the learner-centered process, the chief agent is the learner and the learning environments and activities are based on the learners (Barr & Tagg, 1995). A learner-centered teaching includes “group activities, interaction, students’ participation in creating their own learning interests and needs, and which all lead to increase of understanding and appreciation of the subject matter” (Al Muhaimeed, 2013, p. 142).

The teachers should be aware of creating real-world settings where students are encouraged to engage in dialogue with other students and the teacher, and where collaborative and cooperative learning, and interaction is used (Brooks & Brooks, 1999; Goodman, 2005; Green, 2008; Oxford, 1997b; Reinfried, 2000; Selinker, 1972). Then, the foreign language learning process will be more contextualized for the learners. It should not be forgotten that learning is contextual and it is hard to learn languages in abstract settings. To be able to create real life contexts to contextualize the instruction, authentic tasks and activities that will lead to fluency and accuracy in communicative skills of learners can be presented.

Motivation also has an important role in learning a foreign language. Not only is it the case that motivation helps learning, it is also essential for learning (Can, 2007; Cetinkaya, 2005; Demirel, 2003; von Glasersfeld, 1995). Can (2007) stated that the learners should know about where to use the knowledge; unless they know the reasons why, they may not be very involved in using the knowledge that may be instilled in them.
As Demircan (1988) also indicated, there should be a purpose for learning/teaching a foreign language. If learners do not have any aims, or goals to learn a language, and if they do not know why they should learn it, then their motivation can be affected in a negative way. It is stated that motivated students may perceive high language proficiency that in turn may lead to the willingness to communicate in English (Cetinkaya, 2005).

Several studies show that constructivist ways of teaching English is better when compared the traditional approach. For instance, Al Muhaimeed (2013) found that using a constructivist technique helped students in schools in Saudi Arabia increase reading comprehension more than that of the traditional teaching method of the English language. In addition, that constructivist practice was a better way for English language teaching when compared to the traditional teaching method of the English language. Nikitina (2010) also found noticeable evidence that when the students were allowed to do constructivist activities such as using visuals and preparing a video project with teamwork, they learned a foreign language better. She indicated that the students liked the activity and considered it as beneficial. In another study conducted in a public school in India, Sengupta (2015) showed that by engaging the students with the collaborative writing task they made noticeable progress. The researcher concluded that the project “helped generate the learners’ original ideas and provided an opportunity to generate content through engagement with the computer and artwork” (p. 62). Further, the process-oriented approach of the researcher made the students complete the assignment successfully, exchange ideas and derive mutual support and encouragement from each other.
Foreign Language Education in Turkey

Foreign language education in Turkey is not something new. It is claimed that English teaching as a foreign language and medium instruction began with the arrival of the American missionaries in the early 19th century (Kocabasoglu, 2000). Before that time, the military schools, the engineering schools, and the medical schools were modeled and influenced highly by the French system. The curriculum was based on the French education system and included not only the sciences but also modern languages, such as French.

As a result, the foreign language introduced and accepted during that period was French. And that system produced the people that influenced modernization of education in the Ottoman Empire. In other words, the cultural and economic modernization of Turkey rested on the reformers’ knowledge of a Western language (Doran, 1969).

According to Demirel (2003), the opening of Galatasaray Lycee was also important in terms of foreign language teaching and learning in Turkey, as this was the first school that had foreign medium instruction on the secondary level education. Due to the influence of France and French Culture, the instruction language of that school was accepted as French.

After the declaration of the new Turkish Republic on October 29, 1923, Ataturk, the founder and the first president of the Turkish Republic, and his associates began a series of reforms in order to create a more modern Turkey. And the people who were given some administrative/executive positions in the new Republic administration were
the ones that were educated at the late Ottoman time (Demircan, 1988). So, a modern
level education and school system began with the Republic.

For this transformation to be complete, education had to go through some changes
as well. Beginning in 1920, a new Ministry of National Education (MoNE) was
established with respect to the new reforms and renovation in educational affairs (N. Luk,
2006). Furthermore, education was made available to everyone, the alphabet was
changed, and schools were secularized. More importantly, one of the great philosophers
and educators of the 20th century, John Dewey was invited to Ankara, by another
reformist, founder and the first President of the country, Mustafa Kemal Ataturk, in 1924
for an educational mission. Dewey wrote a report that turned into a paradigmatic
recommendation for such an educational policy of developing Turkey moving towards
modernity and democracy.

The same year of Dewey’s visit, a law for the Unification of Instruction (Tevhid-i
Tedrisat) unified the entire Turkish school system. This meant that all educational
institutions were placed under the control of the Ministry of Education (Demircan, 1988;
Wolf-Gazo, 1996; Yilmaz, 2009). With these new attempts, a new national identity was
created.

Then, the Ministry of National Education became the central organization for
managing and organizing the formal and non-formal education throughout the country;
elementary education became compulsory and also education at every level was provided
to every citizen by the government for free (Demircan, 1988; see also MoNE website).
Ministry of National Education is still responsible for this mission at all levels of
education, including private schools, except the higher education part. A Higher Education Council (YOK) is responsible for the higher education (universities, faculties, etc.) by law.

Ataturk and some other reformist individuals, most of whom were educated in the Western type schools and influenced by foreign education systems, reshaped the education reforms. They not only shaped the new nation’s education system with their modern ideas, but also dealt with the issues such as foreign language teaching believing in the importance of the foreign language for western civilizations (Dogancay-Aktuna, 1998; Doran, 1969).

Some other groups of pedagogical thinkers and writers who were educated in Western countries and highly influenced by these cultures and their languages as well as foreign models were also in that language and education modernization movement in Turkey. As Doran (1969) argued about the cultural and economic modernization of Turkey, he claimed that it rests on the reformers’ knowledge of a Western Language. For instance, these reformers could read foreign sources and visit different countries to observe and see different educational systems (such as Germany, France, Switzerland, etc.). In the late 1920s and 1950s the interest turned to United States (Salmoni, 2002).

The American schools steadily and slowly became more influential than others. Especially in the 1950s, due to closer relations with the United States and great impact of American economic and military power (Dogancay-Aktuna, 1998), English began to be the first and dominant foreign language replacing French (as well as German).
In the 1980s, English became the most important foreign language in Turkish Education because of Turkey’s frequent contact with the new free market products, concepts and terminologies, as well as popular American culture (Dogancay-Aktuna, 1998). Moreover, systematic curricular development programs were also started in the 1980s (Demircan, 1988; Kirkgoz, 2009). Afterwards, several educational reforms by the Ministry of Education were done and these new state attempts affected English language teaching programs and policies, as well (Kirkgoz, 2007, 2009).

In 1997, for instance, the compulsory primary education duration was extended from five years to eight years, and English language learning started from fourth grade level. The 1997 English Language Teaching Program (ELTP) brought new concepts and approach such as communicative language teaching and learner-centered teaching with new updates of curriculum and textbooks, in terms of policy (Kirkgoz, 2009). However, even though it upheld the ideals of communicative language teaching and highlighted the importance of student-centered, game-based method of instruction, where the language was used as a communication medium (Topkaya & Kucuk, 2010), it was still about the traditional approach and mostly about the transfer of knowledge.

Due to the ineffectiveness of the traditional way of teaching, MoNE made another reform by turning to a constructivist approach in education and renewing English courses of 4th, 5th, 6th, 7th, and 8th graders, in 2005 (Sahenk-Erkan, 2013). Because of redevelopment of English language teaching programs, the implementation of the new ELTP had to start with the fourth grades in 2006–2007 teaching year. The new program was designed to be more learner-centered, task-based, and process-oriented where
learners are guided to construct meaning in collaboration and cooperation with students and teachers.

The new program was a product of a combination of *The Multiple Intelligences Theory* and *Constructivist Learning Approach*. H. Gardner, in his argument of multiple intelligences\(^1\) (1983, 1993), indicated that there are distinct linguistic abilities that differ across individuals, and these individual differences should be taken into consideration in teaching. Put differently, teachers should use different learning styles in teaching. Therefore, it requires the use of more varied, task-based, and communicative activities such as dramatization, student conversation, stories, games, chants, rhymes, craft activities (Topkaya & Kucuk, 2010).

**English Medium Instruction (EMI) schools.** While regular state schools struggled with the foreign language part of the curriculum, the Ministry of Education established a highly successful new school system in 1955. The Minister of Education, Celal Yardimci, introduced the idea of English medium instruction (EMI) in these new schools’ curricula. These schools were called *Anatolian High Schools* (Lycees). They have been very successful from their very establishment (N. Luk, 2006). These high schools were modeled after the private American school of Robert College\(^2\), where a

\(^1\) H. Gardner (1983, 1993) provided eight different intelligences: linguistic intelligence, bodily-kinesthetic intelligence, spatial intelligence, musical intelligence, logical-mathematical intelligence, intrapersonal intelligence, interpersonal intelligence, and naturalist intelligence. He claims that individuals may possess these intelligences in varying levels.

\(^2\) Official website of this school is [http://rcwww.robcol.k12.tr/Pages/default.aspx](http://rcwww.robcol.k12.tr/Pages/default.aspx)
required year of intensive English language program is included. A special committee even selected the textbooks of these schools.

In short, the success of the *Anatolian High Schools* can be attributed to the intensive English program, the special selection of the textbooks, the use of the most recent methods of teaching EFL, and finally the students admitted to the program were selected with a highly competitive exam. And yet, the public perception of these schools was quite good in leading to a good job and better future (N. Luk, 2006).

**Private schools.** Private schools were significantly different than public schools. For instance, it is reported that foreign private schools provided the best pre-university education in Turkey (Doran, 1969). Further, English language teaching in Turkey is most successful and best in the foreign private schools. Tarhan (1998) analyzed the methods used in ELT in private schools and regular state schools, comparatively and found that there are noticeable differences between the regular schools and the English Medium schools in terms of success.

These private schools had a year of intensive foreign language preparation and English medium instruction. They could choose their own course texts. The American Private School, Robert College, even prepared and used *Spoken English for Turks* (SEFT) by Sheldon Wise.

A successful Turkish Private School, Turkish Education Foundation (Turk Egitim Dernegi, TED) was founded in 1929 (N. Luk, 2006). As indicated, the most important feature of the private schools was their English medium instruction and their good
reputation (N. Luk, 2006, p. 100). The students from these schools were usually from rich families.

**Traditional approaches in foreign language education in Turkey.** Foreign language education in Turkey is highly traditional, in the application and implementation. Language teaching is regarded as teaching the pre-planned/pre-packaged curriculum, prepared by the state level authorities (MoNE, 2009), without considering the student expectations and cultural needs (Cakiroglu & Cakiroglu, 2003); teachers are supposed to cover all of the topics in the curriculum and finish teaching them on time (Yilmaz, 2009).

In the curriculum, the four major skills of speaking, listening, reading, and writing are indicated (MoNE, 2009). In addition, the use of grammar, vocabulary, comprehension, and pronunciation are also given importance. Although, there have been several educational reforms (including English teaching) that require applying constructivist approach and methods (MoNE, 2009; Topkaya & Kucuk, 2010), the education is still mostly teacher-centered where the teacher speaks and the students listen, and have a change of very limited participation (Aykac, 2007a; Hesabcioglu, 1994; Yilmaz, 2009; see also Cuban, 1983, 1990). Teachers generally present the topics to the whole class, and do not tend to use different methods such as doing small group or pair work in instruction. Since they just transmit the knowledge to the students without visualizing, or contextualizing it (Cuban, 1983, 1990; Kavanoz, 2006), students do not get engaged in the lesson and sometimes they are even not aware of what is going on in the classroom, or what the teacher is talking about. This makes for a very abstract and meaningless lesson to them as no connection is made between the new topic and
students’ previous experiences to make the teaching process more concrete, and meaningful.

In English classes, students learn only the structure of the target language, memorize the grammar rules and the vocabulary, do mechanical drills as in-class activities, and then do the exercises given as homework (which has nothing related to real-life first language acquisition process). As Can (2007) expressed, it is hard to contextualize the instruction by presenting pre-determined instructional sequences by using traditional methods and techniques which isolate the learners from all social interactions, and which regard the education as teaching grammar only.

Students are periodically (once a week or less) taken to the language learning lab to do some listening practice, which exposes them to the target language, but for a limited time only. Unless they are exposed to the target language in a way, and encouraged to engage in dialogues with their classmates and the teacher, it is difficult for the students to improve their communicative skills, and become efficient speakers of the target language.

Student knowledge/success is measured only with standardized tests, which require quite long information full of collected ideas. Assessment/evaluation methods do not encourage the students to synthesize the others’ ideas with their own beliefs, thoughts, and ideas; they test only the memorization of the students. Test results are regarded as the indicators of students’ success. From the constructivist point of view, however, there should be portfolios as instruments of measuring the students.

Foreign language education in Turkey has many problems, as briefly mentioned above. It is easily noticed that traditional approaches in language teaching do not help
students learn a foreign language. Even though MoNE switched from traditional approach to constructivist approach in 2005, the traditional methods and applications are still being used rather than constructivist ones (Kirkgoz, 2009). In addition, most of the problems still exist. For example, a number of studies found quite common issues and problems: the classrooms were overcrowded; there was a lack of educational materials and audio-visual materials like tapes, videos, pictures and posters; there was a non-communicative environment; there was an inappropriate and traditional evaluation and assessment system (i.e., standard/written tests) and lack of constructivist techniques such as portfolios, projects, and presentations and a lack of constructivist activities (i.e., group study and role plays); there was time constraint for English classes, and mostly grammar content was disseminated (Aykac, 2007a; Buyukduman, 2005; Er, 2006; Ersen-Yanik, 2008; Kirkgoz, 2005, 2006, 2007, 2009; Sad, 2010; Seckin, 2011).

One study found that the classroom environment was insecure (coercive, aggressive, and discriminative; Sad, 2010). The textbooks used in the schools were not appropriately prepared (Buyukduman, 2005), did not support the proposed communicative teaching methodology (Kirkgoz, 2009), and were not sufficient enough for class activities and exercises (Ersen-Yanik, 2008). Further, Er (2006) stated that the curricula contents included unnecessary details and information and curricular programs were not prepared as entertaining, interesting, and student-centered. Despite curricular problems, the relevant staff did not collaborate, cooperate, and exchange knowledge and experience in order to improve the curricular program. It was also found that the overall implementation of the curriculum was highly traditional (Ersen-Yanik, 2008) and
overloaded (Seckin, 2011). Kirkgoz (2009) noticed that most English teachers remained unable to create the constructivist (i.e., communicative) learning environment.

Some other scholars (Aykac, 2007a, 2007b; Aykac & Ulubey, 2012) conducted several studies to see whether the applications were consistent with the plans and expectations of MoNE. Aykac found that the so-called constructivist change in the national system failed during the implementation due to some reasons such as lack of adequate infrastructure and conditions, insufficiency of school buildings, materials, tools, the lack of quality teachers and teacher development seminars, and presence of overcrowded classrooms. He stated that MoNE got wrong by making such quick change and expecting immediate response before making the necessary preparations and providing appropriate conditions. Therefore, he claimed, the attempt would not reach its goals until the holistic approach was accepted and complete preparation was done. In the same vein, Aykac and Ulubey (2012) conducted another study in another city and found similar findings that the teachers were not able to apply and carry out the constructivist activities, provide adequate guidance during the activities, take into consideration students’ individual differences, create a democratic atmosphere, encourage students to participate actively in the class, or use alternative assessments such as portfolios, projects and performance evaluation. Further, they found that the physical structure of classes were not suitable for performing constructivist activities.

Even though there were some reforms, policies, and attempts to contemporarily improve English language teaching as a foreign/second language in Turkey, in reality it is not as successful and effective as the state attempts as can be seen from the empirical
studies presented above. As expressed, “no matter how desirable language policies may be, unless they are backed by the will [of teachers] to implement them, they cannot be of any effect” (Bamgbose, 2003, p. 428, cited from Kirkgoz, 2009, emphasis added; see also Fullan, 2001). In order to get over with the ineffectiveness problem, probably teachers should be considered at first among others. As Topkaya and Kucuk (2010) stated, it would not be an exaggeration to say that the quality of the curriculum reform mainly depends on teachers’ work and ways of thinking, because teachers prefer their own ways of teaching, no matter what the change in theory is. For that reason, it is a necessity that teachers’ professional development should be encouraged in order for them to be equipped with the knowledge, understanding, and skills. Topkaya and Kucuk continued to explain that some in-service seminars and platforms where teachers can come together and share and exchange successful experiences and implementations of the new program are necessary. And yet, such seminars may be good for them to see how to overcome probable problems during the application of a new program.

Constructivist best practice as a modern educational paradigm in foreign language education. One of the main constructivist assumptions about learning is that knowledge is constructed (Dewey, 1916; Goodman, 2005; Piaget, 1973; Vygotsky, 1978). Put differently, the learners are trying to make sense of their experiences, by restructuring and constructing new information. Among the first major scholars of constructivist theory, who applied it to classrooms and childhood development, are Dewey, Piaget, Vygotsky, and Goodman.
Education depended on action (Dewey, 1916). More clearly, knowledge and ideas derived from a situation in which learners had to draw them out of their experiences that were meaningful and important for them. Piaget’s (1973) constructivism is based on the psychological development of children. In short, he contended that the teachers should understand the stages of the child’s mind development. Vygotsky (1978) believed that the child will only memorize what the adult tells him about the idea. In order for the child to get it as his property, he must use the concept and link it to the idea by himself. Goodman (2005) argued that students learn better and easier when they have relevance to their lives; could use for their own purposes; can make meaning of what is learned; when the students are well understood and respected; and empowered.

Another important notion that Vygotsky (1978) stresses in constructivism is the scaffolding, which can be explained as guiding the student from what is formerly known to what is to be known and when “the learner requires less help, the teacher slowly removes the no longer needed scaffolding that props up the learner, and the learner becomes increasingly self-directed and self-empowered” (Oxford, 1997b, p. 448; see also 1997a). Reinfried (2000) applied the constructivist principles in foreign language learning and teaching. According to him, constructivist language learning should be actively implemented.

When people acquire their mother tongue, they have a necessity (Can, 2009), which is to be able to communicate with the other people around. When the students do not feel and experience that necessity (i.e., survival), they will not continue English out of
Therefore, the situations in which they will use the target language should be created in the classrooms (Goodman, 2005).

Foreign language learning process should be action based, and the students should be able to practice what they have been learning in the classroom settings, which allow language learning to be through active participation of the learners with several authentic and real life-based activities (Brookfield, 1995; Dewey, 1916; Honebein, 1996; Laba, 2014; Reinfried, 2000). Selinker (1972) argued that structure practice, and rote learning is not enough. There should be natural discourse settings where the students are encouraged to engage in dialogues with the others, and where collaborative and cooperative learning and interaction through group work/pair work activities take place (see also Oxford, 1997b). For instance, drama and role play techniques can be used in order to create a more democratic, participatory, interactive, communicative and student-based environment (Bräuer, 2002; Chauhan, 2004). Even when the materials are authentic, the students are more interested and enjoyed. Laba (2014) conducted a study on ESL students and found that the students showed more interest in the authentic materials compared to others. Further, such authentic use of materials helped them learn better, as well. Regarding authentic materials, she stated that maps, brochures, or restaurant menus are considered as printed materials that are “not hard to find by teachers and they can collect what suits the students’ interests and level. Other materials could be audio such as conversation or radio shows and audio-visual materials such as movies or TV programs” (Laba, 2014, p. 25).
With regard to the implementation and application of constructivism in English language teaching in one primary public school in Turkey, some studies (Hisar, 2006; Yildiz, 2006) revealed that constructivist language teaching applications were more effective and successful than the traditional language teaching methods, whereas in another study (Donmez, 2010), it was found that the constructivist-based-curriculum of English language teaching in the primary public schools in Turkey was not successfully implemented due to some challenges such as the lack of support or guidance to the teachers about the implementation. The teachers complained that none of them had a chance to attend any in-service trainings or seminars related to the new approach and its implementation (Donmez, 2010).

**Summary**

Constructivism is an important approach in education, particularly in foreign language learning. The traditional methods of teaching English as a second language have drawbacks. In this regard, constructivist ways of teaching may fill the gaps. The literature on constructivism in foreign language education was given in this chapter. After its definition, several major theories and approaches of constructivism were provided. The foreign language education system in Turkey was explained and evaluated. The traditional way of teaching was also mentioned and compared with constructivist best practice. At the end, the importance of teacher development programs and teacher change was discussed.
CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY AND DESIGN

In this chapter, the research design of the study is presented. Beginning with research goals and questions, the section goes on with the method that is used in this dissertation. Second, the process of participant selection and data collection is explained. Third, the setting of the study is described; next, the research design is explained right before the information about the data analysis of the study is given. Finally, the trustworthiness and validity issues are discussed. Even though these phases (participant selection, data collection, analysis, etc.) are presented separately, it should be noted that all these processes in qualitative studies are interrelated with each other (Creswell, 2007).

Research Goals and Questions

The goal of this study was to introduce the constructivist approach in foreign language education to the six selected English teachers in Turkey, and explore and interpret how they applied this newer theory into practice. It was also intended to see what insights could be gained about doing professional development in foreign language teaching in Turkey context. As an English teacher myself in Turkey, I had always been very interested in exploring the new theories and methods; in short the new ways in foreign language teaching. With the help of my studies in the United States, I became aware of the importance of using constructivist best practices both in education in general and in foreign language education.

As a result, increasing my professional knowledge about this issue first, I introduced this new notion to the six selected English teachers through a 10-day
professional development seminar, and then observed them in their own classrooms to see how they applied it in practice. In this regard, the research questions in this study were:

1. How do selected English teachers in Turkey understand constructivism as a new notion in foreign language education?
2. How do the teachers apply constructivism into their foreign language teaching?
3. What insights can be gained about doing professional development in foreign language teaching in Turkey?

Participants

The participants of this study were six English teachers working in two public schools in two neighboring administrative districts in the city of Ankara, Turkey. All participants of the study unintentionally were females. In order to protect the participants’ privacy, the researcher used pseudonyms; they were named as Ebrar, Esra, Gamze, Hale, Nil, and Zeynep. The background and demographic information about the participants were provided in two ways: (a) demographic surveys (see Appendix N), and (b) pre-workshop interviews (see Appendix C for Interview Protocol I). All of the participants have four-year-college degrees. Ebrar holds an M.A. degree in education management. She has 10 years of teaching experience. Esra graduated from a faculty of education and has 15 years of teaching experience. Gamze holds an M.A. degree and continues her doctoral program in educational policies. She has more than 10 years of
teaching experience. Hale and Zeynep have more than 10 years of experiences in teaching English as a foreign language in Turkey.

Comparing participant selection process of qualitative methods with quantitative approach, there are some differences. As stated by Merriam, “Sample selection in qualitative research is usually (but not always) nonrandom, purposeful, and small, as opposed to the larger, more random sampling of quantitative research” (2001, p. 8). Qualitative studies focus in depth on purposefully selected small samples (Patton, 2002). Purposeful sampling means that “the inquirer selects individuals and sites for study because they can purposefully inform an understanding of the research problem and central phenomenon” (Creswell, 2007, p. 125). Again, according to Patton (2002), this nonrandom, purposeful sample selection leads to get more detailed information from the participants, which, as a result, helps the researcher to answer the research questions. Erlandson, Harris, Skipper, and Allen (1993) stated: “Purposive and directed sampling through human instrumentation increases the range of data exposed and maximizes the researcher’s ability to identify emerging themes that take adequate account of contextual conditions and cultural norms” (p. 82).

Having this information in mind, the researcher selected six English teachers from two public schools in two neighboring administrative districts in Ankara, Turkey. The main criterion in the selection of the teachers was their being English teachers in either public middle or high schools teaching at a variety of grade levels ranging from the 5th to 11th grades. Second, the participants were at least a graduate of a four year college. Finally, they had at least 10 years of teaching experience.
Selecting participants from the schools that were not very far from each other, it was expected to provide the researcher with some important advantages. For example, the teachers were easily accessed whenever needed especially during the data collection process during which class observations and interviews took place. Creswell (2007, 2009) signified the importance of this issue by saying that it is important for the researcher to find people who are easily accessible. In addition, selecting the teachers from close schools allowed them to have critical conversations and discussions with each other.

The researcher worked with this group of teachers from Turkey in this study because both the researcher and the participants shared the same cultural and educational background, which made the research process more meaningful and also convenient for the researcher.

The researcher selected the participants based on voluntary criterion and had them sign a consent form (see Appendix M) to take part in this research. The researcher provided thorough information about the research project and answered the possible questions from the volunteers regarding the project to eliminate the questions in their minds. They were given information about the details of the project, and also were ensured that the confidentiality and protection of their personal data were important during and after the process. In the consent form, the participants were told what they were asked to do during the project and how long it would last. In addition, they were informed about the benefits of the project for them. At the end of the form, the participants were provided with the contact information of the principal investigator (the
researcher) and co-investigators (the dissertation advisors). In addition, they were
informed that they could withdraw from the research project at any phase, anytime. This
way, it was hoped that the project was implemented properly and democratically.

Settings

The research was conducted in two public schools in Ankara, and the participants
were observed in their classrooms.

Schools

Two public schools were selected in two different administrative districts of the
city of Ankara: Yenimahalle and Kecioren. They were neighboring districts where the
researcher easily visited the participants from both schools in a day.

The school located in Kecioren had 39 teachers; five of them were English
teachers. There were 625 students studying from the fourth to eighth grades in that
school. Girls and boys attended the classes together. The school provided a dual
(morning and afternoon) session for the students.

The school located in Yenimahalle had 130 teachers eight of whom were English
teachers. There were 2,250 students studying from the 5th to 12th grades in that school.
Girls and boys studied in separate classes and they attended the school full day.

Classroom Settings

Since both of the schools were public, they were highly crowded (approximately
30 or more students). Neither of the schools had any technological equipment built in the
classrooms, but the teachers could bring the necessary equipment and tools borrowing
from the relevant office to set in their classrooms according to what they had been taught
about having constructivist classroom settings during the professional development seminar.

Permissions and Regulations

The researcher got approval from the Kent State University Institutional Review Board (IRB) to start the data collection process of the research project.

The researcher selected the participants based on voluntary criterion and had them sign a consent form (see Appendix M) to take part in this research. The participants were provided with thorough information about the research project. In the consent form, the participants were told what they were asked to do during the project and how long the project lasted. At the end of the form, there was the contact information of the principal investigator (the researcher) and co-investigators (the dissertation advisors).

The researcher also applied for the official permission from the Ministry of National Education in Turkey for data collection in the public schools in Ankara. The application was evaluated by the officials to see whether it was prepared in compliance with the procedures, it was applicable, and it was affecting any people and the institutions negatively. When it was approved, a copy of the official document of permission (see Appendix P) was given to the researcher. With this official permission from the Ministry of National Education in Turkey, the researcher was able to do the data collection in the public schools in Ankara.

Design and Method

Research design is the plan, process, a personalized road map (Holly, Arhar, & Kasten, 2009), “and procedures for research that span the decisions from broad
assumptions to detailed methods of data collection and analysis” (Creswell, 2009, p. 3).

In other words, it is about how the study is conducted. A design describes the setup of
the study in terms of what kind of study it is, what components, or data sources will be
created for the purposes of data analysis. According to Creswell (2009), these plans or
proposal to conduct research requires an intersection of philosophy, strategies of inquiry,
and methods.

The research method that is used in a study should be chosen to meet the goals
and objectives of that study. In that regard, the researcher of this study decided to use
qualitative research methods to get a deeper and better understanding of the constructed
meaning (Bogdan & Biklen, 1998; Marshall & Rossman, 1989; Patton, 1990) from the
selected English teachers’ foreign language teaching experiences. As Merriam stated,
“Qualitative researchers are interested in understanding the meaning people have
constructed, that is, how they make sense of their world and the experiences they have in
the world” (2001, p. 6, emphasis original).

The participants’ own experiences, and their perspectives and perceptions about a
particular issue are important for the researcher in qualitative studies. In other words, in
a qualitative work, the main purpose is to search human behaviors within the contexts of
their natural happening (Bogdan & Biklen, 1998). Therefore, in the current study, it was
intended to explore, understand, and interpret how the participants understood the
constructivist best practice and how they applied it into their own practices. Qualitative
methodology rather than quantitative methods was preferred here as the researcher
focused on the subjective meaning of participants’ own perspectives and experiences
instead of focusing on the casual relationships between the variables (Maxwell, 1996). Therefore, “Qualitative data do not profess to be replicable” (Nolan & Meister, 2000, p. 44).

The researcher in this study conducted a qualitative research design in order to explore understandings and descriptions of the participants’ opinions and views. Creswell (2009) mentioned some characteristics of a qualitative research design such as natural settings, research being the instrument, having multiple sources, inductive data analysis, participants’ meanings, and being interpretive. In this regard, the researcher collected data in the natural settings and face-to-face interactions with the participants, rather than sending some instruments. Further, the researcher herself was the instrument examining documents, observing behavior, or interviewing participants.

Regarding the strategies of inquiry or research methodologies in qualitative designs, Creswell (2009) argued that there are five mostly applied ones, even though there are many. These five major qualitative strategies are ethnography, grounded theory, case studies, phenomenological research, and narrative research. Case study was preferred as the qualitative research strategy for this study. The cases were six English teachers working in two public schools in the city of Ankara in Turkey. They were considered and focused individually, one by one, rather than as a focus group.

As a qualitative interviewer, the researcher asked open-ended questions (see Appendices C, D, E, F, G), and encouraged the informants to explain their perspectives on constructivism as a new paradigm in education in general, and in foreign language education and gave information about how they perceived the impacts of this new
paradigm in foreign language teaching and how they applied it (Hatch, 2002). They were also asked to give more specific, concrete examples from their teaching experiences in order for the researcher to better understand their worlds.

The researcher sent an introduction letter to the participants in order to introduce and explain the project, and to remove their concerns (see Appendix H). In that letter, there was a brief description of the study and contact information of both the principal investigator and the co-investigators. Furthermore, the researcher expounded the process of workshop and interviews and their dates briefly. This letter was also an invitation for the first interview. Finally, they were assured their privacy and right to leave the project at any phase, anytime.

Following the introduction letter, the researcher sent four follow-up letters (see Appendices I, J, K, L) in order to thank the participants for their previous interviews, and inform them about the dates for the following interview.

Data Collection Tools

Data collection is a “series of interrelated activities aimed at gathering good information to answer emerging research questions” (Creswell, 2007, p. 118). After the purposeful sampling selection of the participants, the researcher determines the most appropriate data collection methods for the study. According to Creswell (2007), there are four basic types of data collection methods, in general: Observations (non-participant—participant), interviewing (close-ended—open-ended), documents (private—public), and audiovisual materials (such as pictures, photographs, etc.). In this study,
demographic interviews and surveys, interviews, in-class observational field notes, artifacts, and researcher logs were used as data collection sources.

**Pre-Workshop Demographic Interviews and Survey**

In order to get information about the participants, each participant was given a demographic information survey (Appendix N) to fill out at the very beginning of the data collection process. The survey was given to the participants when they got together with the researcher for the pre-workshop interviews. They were asked to fill out the surveys and return them to the researcher at the end of that meeting. This survey consisted of three main groups of questions. In the first part, general information about the participants such as name, age, and gender was required. In the second part, the participants were asked to give information about their own educational background. In the final part, they were requested to write about their teaching experiences such as courses and grades they have previously taught. In addition, there was a participant demographic interview with each participant. These interviews were audio recorded. Since data storage is a critical issue in qualitative studies, especially where there are voluminous data (Creswell, 2007; Patton, 1990), the recorded data were copied to two external hard drives (HP) and one PC (Lenovo all in one) hard drive (2 TB) in the evening of the day they were recorded.

**Interviews**

Another source of data collection for this study was the participant periodic interviews that were intended to obtain profound information or knowledge (J. M. Johnson, 2002). There were different types of interviews such as e-mail, telephone, focus
group, and face-to-face interviews including questions ranging from close-ended to open-ended (Creswell, 2007). In this study, the interviews were semi-structured with open-ended questions and conducted with each participant one on one. Each question was prepared based on the themes found by an examination of constructivist foreign language education and professional development literature. There were five one-hour interviews with each participant. The first set of interviews (see Appendix C for Protocol I) was conducted before the workshop (in the beginning of September 2014), the second one (see Appendix D for Protocol II) was right after the workshop (in the middle of September 2014). The other three sets of interviews with each participant (see Appendices E, F and G for Protocols III, IV, and V) were done during the Fall (in October, November, December 2014) semester.

In the first set of interviews (see Appendix C for the pre-workshop interview), the interviewees were asked to provide some general information about their own educational background and teaching experiences. They were also asked whether they had had an opportunity to join a professional development seminar before. In addition, their current knowledge about constructivism was also asked.

In the second set of interviews (see Appendix D for the after-workshop interview), the participants were asked what they had learned that they did not know before the seminar. In the third and fourth sets of interviews, the interviewees were asked questions about the implementation process, the successes, the challenging problems they experienced, and their approach to overcome such problems.
In the final set of interviews (see Appendices E, F, and G), the participants were asked to give their overall opinions about the whole process. Moreover, they were asked what insights they had gained by participating in a professional development program in foreign language teaching in Turkey. Finally, they were asked whether they thought they have changed as a teacher or not. Each interview included at least one completely open question with no expectations in mind so that some things that the researcher would not anticipate could come up during the interviews. There were five sets of interviews with 30 hours in total. All participant interviews were tape-recorded, and then copied to two external hard drives (HP) and one PC (Lenovo all in one) hard drive (2 TB) for data safety.

As recommended, the recording means should also be good quality (Creswell, 2007). A voice-recording device (Olympus brand and stereo), which was capable of recording up to 30 hours, was used for audio recordings. This main device was supported with two iPhones 4GS (16GB + 32GB memory).

The researcher also sent follow up letters (see Appendices I, J, K, L) to keep in touch, remind of upcoming activities, and keep the interviewees informed. Deciding on semi-structured interviews as one of the data collection methods and developing open-ended questions, the researcher hoped and expected the answers to the questions might be shaped and framed differently based on each participants’ backgrounds and experiences during the process of the study. At the end of the interviews, all conversations were transcribed.
In-Class Observational Fieldnotes and Artifacts

Besides having interviews as primary source of data collection for this study, the researcher did in-class observations as an additional data collection strategy in order to find additional evidence to support the analysis (Erlandson et al., 1993; Patton, 1990). Without the observations, the research might be incomplete, just relying on the participants’ words, but not their actions (Nolan & Meister, 2000; Patton, 1990). In this regard, the researcher observed each participant in her classroom three times during the Fall 2014 semester. Visiting the site for the first time as an outsider, the researcher was introduced by the teacher as a third person to the students, as Creswell (2007) stated.

Doing in-class observations, the researcher had an opportunity to observe the participants in their natural classroom environments to examine if they had changed their teaching styles and course designs, and also to see how effectively they applied constructivist in-class activities in teaching English. Moreover, using in-class observations as another design technique besides interviews also allowed the researcher to find stronger evidence to support the statements and establish trustworthiness.

The researcher designed “an observational protocol [see Appendix O] as a method for recording notes in the field” (Creswell, 2007, p. 134) that included both descriptive and reflective points. During the class observations, the researcher was passive without interacting with the teacher or students but took fieldnotes only. Anything that the researcher saw, felt, thought, noticed relevant and noteworthy to the study was covered in those notes (Creswell, 2007; Patton, 1990). That included the information such as recording date, site, physical conditions, activities, and reflections.
In addition, the researcher used artifacts (Hatch, 2002) from lessons. Some students’ homework assignments as artifacts were gathered. The researcher randomly selected five assignments from each class and then developed a file for them. She put the homework assignments in these files during the semester for additional evidence to see if constructivist things went on in the classrooms.

**Researcher Logs**

The researcher created a researcher log in which she jotted down some rich, detailed, and precise data notes (Schram, 2006) every time she remembered and recalled some information regarding the professional development seminar and the whole data collection process. Each time the researcher taught a day of the workshop, she had some reflections on how it went, and what needed to be done differently. These notes covered some insights about teacher change in the frame of constructivism. In addition, during the observations done at intervals as part of data collection process, the researcher wrote down notes to reflect on the trends. Moreover, the researcher logs included the issues such as what went well in the classes and what sort of changes she noticed. If she observed no changes, then, she wrote notes on why the teachers were not changing and what else could be done to help them move towards change. The challenges confronted by both the participants and the researcher, as their guide, were also written down. In other words, the researcher logs captured the dynamics of the teacher change and the larger picture of this study as if it unfolded in ways that were not predictable.

In this context, the researcher wrote 20 researcher logs, 10 of which were written during the 10-day professional development seminar, and the other 10 during the Fall
Semester 2014. The data that were gathered through researcher logs were in the forms of direct quotes, paraphrases, descriptions of applications and settings, successes, and failures (Creswell, 2007; Schram, 2006). A summary of data collection methods is found in Table 1.

Table 1

Data Collection Methods

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Q 1: How do selected English teachers in Turkey understand constructivism as a new notion in foreign language education?</th>
<th>Q 2: How do they apply constructivism into their teaching?</th>
<th>Q 3: What insights can be gained about doing professional development in foreign language teaching in Turkey?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pre-workshop demographic interview and survey at the beginning of the study</td>
<td>Five, one-hour-long interviews, all of which are tape-recorded-30 hours in total</td>
<td>Five, one-hour-long interviews, all of which are tape-recorded-30 hours in total</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Five, one-hour-long interviews, all of which are tape-recorded-30 hours in total</td>
<td>In-class observational fieldnotes (three times for each participant during the Fall 2014 semester)</td>
<td>In-class observational fieldnotes (three times for each participant during the Fall 2014 semester)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In-class observational fieldnotes (three times for each participant during the Fall 2014 semester)</td>
<td>Artifacts- student generated written work when written work is part of the teacher’s lesson and in-class observational field notes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Researcher log (20 logs in total, 10 of them during the professional development seminar, and the other 10 during the Fall 2014 semester)</td>
<td>Researcher log (20 logs in total, 10 of them during the professional development seminar, and the other 10 during the Fall 2014 semester)</td>
<td>Researcher log (20 logs in total, 10 of them during the professional development seminar, and the other 10 during the Fall 2014 semester)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Treatment

A 10-day professional development seminar (see Appendix A for the details of the seminar plan) was given to the six selected English teachers in order to introduce constructivism and constructivist activities (see Appendix B for the activities), which were done by the researcher during the seminar. This seminar was organized and given in non-traditional ways and settings as constructivism required. In every seminar meeting, a nice, warm, and relaxed atmosphere was provided for the participants to get them engaged in the seminar. This kind of environment caused the participants to get involved with each other collaboratively and collectively. Moreover, such environment was enjoyable for the participants, as well.

On the first day of the professional development seminar, there was a constructivist warm up activity (See Appendix B, Theory 1, Activity 1) to create a warm atmosphere at the very beginning. Then, there was an introduction in order to set the foundations for the seminar, and explanation of the syllabus and reading assignments. In addition, three critical colleague groups of two each were set. In the afternoon, a discussion about the general problems in Turkish Education System was done. The day ended with a reading assignment for the next day.

The article by Barr and Tagg (1995) that was assigned previously was discussed in the critical colleague groups on the second day. Some guiding questions were also posed. In the afternoon, the researcher briefly gave theoretical information to set the parameters for constructivism by providing a metaphor (Can, 2009) of construction (constructing the floors, walls of a building) of constructivism. Some major concepts and
applications of constructivism were explained. The constructivist theorists such as von Glasersfeld, Piaget, Vygotsky, and Dewey and their point of views on this philosophy of education were also explained. Finally, an assignment for the next day was given.

On the third day, the researcher continued explaining briefly the theoretical information and expounded the role of teachers in constructivist classrooms, constructing the walls of the first floor on the foundation (of metaphor). Then, a constructivist activity (See Appendix B, Theory 2, Activity 1) by the researcher was done. In the afternoon session, there were small group discussions on the book *Becoming a Critically Reflective Teacher* by Brookfield (1995) in the critical colleague groups.

On the fourth day, there were whole group discussions on the theme of traditional classrooms versus constructivist classrooms. In the afternoon, the researcher talked about the role of students in the constructivist classrooms followed by a constructivist activity (See Appendix B, Theory 3, Activity 1).

On the fifth day of the seminar, the researcher briefly gave theoretical information about learning in constructivist classrooms and this was followed by a constructivist activity (See Appendix B, Theory 4, Activity 1). Since this was the last day of the week, the participants were free in the afternoon.

The seminar on the sixth day started with small group discussions (critical colleague groups) on English language education in Turkey. During the discussions, the participants tried to find answers to some critical questions. Then, in the afternoon session, the researcher briefly gave theoretical information about assessment in
constructivist classrooms followed by a constructivist activity (See Appendix B, Theory 5, Activity 1) by the researcher.

On the seventh day, to start constructing the second floor of constructivism (of the metaphor), the researcher talked about Stephens and Brown’s (2000) constructivist design model. In the afternoon session, a movie called *Dead Poets Society*, in which a dedicated teacher gave his students the gift of inspiration, was displayed. Then, there were small group discussions on the movie to compare a traditional teacher to a non-traditional (constructivist) one. Finally, a reading assignment for the next day was given.

On the eighth day, working on the second floor of constructivism (of the metaphor), the researcher and the participants designed a constructivist activity altogether based on the theoretical information provided on the previous day. In other words, there was a task on designing a constructivist model. In the afternoon, whole group discussions on John Dewey’s (1938/1997) *Experience and education* are done. During the discussions, some guiding questions were posed to the discussants. Another reading assignment for the next day was given to the participants. The book titled *The Educational Imagination* by Eisner (2002) was divided into three parts and each group was responsible for one of them during the book talk activities, which were done the following day.

The ninth day of the seminar continued with book talks of the small groups on the previously assigned book. The first group talked about the first part, curriculum development and teaching; the second group discussed the second part, dimensions of
curriculum planning and evaluation. And, in the afternoon, the last group had conversations on the third part, educational criticism and connoisseurship.

The final day, which was the 10th day, was set to have whole group discussions on reflections and general ideas on seminar sessions, and then came a wrap-up. Unlike, the previous nine days, the last day of the seminar was one hour long, only.

**Data Analysis**

Data analysis is “the process of moving from raw interviews to evidence-based interpretations” (Rubin & Rubin, 2005, p. 201), or more broadly “the process of systematically searching and arranging the interview transcripts, fieldnotes, and other materials that you accumulate to increase your own understanding of them and to enable you to present what you have discovered to others” (Bogdan & Biklen, 1998, p. 157).

This study did a systematic plan for analyzing and interpreting the data to be able to describe the process of introduction of constructivism to the six selected English teachers and their application of this new notion into foreign language teaching in two public schools in two neighboring administrative districts in Ankara, Turkey. The main objective of the data analysis was to organize, synthesize, and make sense of the data collected to write a description that explained the language teaching processes and settings of each participant. Data analysis was done using an inductive analysis approach to search for patterns of meaning in the data so that reasonable conclusions could be drawn from them. Data were derived and organized mostly from the audio transcripts and the researcher’s notes.
The researcher processed and elaborated the concepts and themes of the data collected through demographic surveys, interviews, in-class observational field notes and artifacts, and researcher logs. Then, they were coded (or labeled) so that the researcher could readily retrieve and examine the data units that referred to the similar subjects (Rubin & Rubin, 2005). After the coding, the data were classified into categories, and analyzed within and across the groups of related items, topics, and subjects. Interpretations about the topic were made, and meaningful conclusions were drawn from the data gathered. As stated, “Interpretation is a process used to explain, to give meaning, to make sense of the many disparate events and ideas that we encounter” (Holly et al., 2009, p. 190, emphasis original). As the interpretation was an ongoing process, there was a continuous analysis in case new patterns and themes could be found to get more meaningful and realistic conclusions. Finally, the researcher showed how these concepts, themes, and patterns proposed answers to the research questions of the study.

**Pre-Workshop Demographic Interviews and Survey**

The researcher assembled the data and checked if they needed any completion or additional data, and reminded herself of the research questions, before the interviews were transcribed (Holly et al., 2009). The researcher read and reread all transcribed data in order to get a general sense of the participants, their teaching experiences, and educational background (Creswell, 2009). During this process, the researcher thought, questioned, speculated, and wrote down some notes. The most common and interesting themes were figured out. These interviews were matched with each participant’s survey, as well. The researcher read each survey, and rewrote the information on a computer file.
altogether. The participants’ answers were evaluated around each question in order to get a partial idea of their demographics.

**Interviews**

The interviews were transcribed first. The researcher read all transcribed data in order to get a general sense of the data and general ideas of the teachers (Creswell, 2009). During this process, the researcher also set down her impressions as she read the data comparatively, questioningly, and speculatively on some notes (Holly et al., 2009). She wrote the ideas and impressions that came to her mind constantly. Further, before the coding stage, the researcher selected the most interesting interview, mostly focusing on the meaning of what it was all about. She read one more interview of another participant. Then, she looked for similar, repeated and consistent words, phrases, and arguments in order to cluster together, categorize, and create some groupings. The researcher gave some abbreviations for the groups and categories that were also considered as the codes (Wiersma & Jurs, 2009). Next, she sorted the data. The color code schemes were also used in coding. The researcher recoded when she believed it was needed (Creswell, 2009). Then, the researcher tried to generate descriptions of the teachers’ applications and change. In other words, the coding was used to generate some themes and categories. Another task that she did was to check whether the themes and categories fit the data. After the data were taken apart (i.e., in categories), she brought them together in a logical way (synthesis) and made meanings and conclusions out of them (interpretation; Holly et al., 2009).
In-Class Observational Fieldnotes and Artifacts

The fieldnotes were typed again in a more organized way before the analysis. The researcher looked for similar, repeated, and consistent applications in order to cluster together, categorize, and create some groupings. She read and reread the notes and took some notes when necessary. In other words, having read the notes multiple times revealed some trends and meaningful results. The researcher tried to generate descriptions of the teachers’ applications and change. Again, after the data were taken apart (i.e., in categories), she brought them together in a logical way (synthesis) and made meaning and conclusions out of them (interpretation; Holly et al., 2009).

The artifacts were analyzed mostly to evaluate if the lesson was taught in a constructivist way and how the theory had been implemented. The researcher checked the file folders that were created for each class. The researcher read and examined these artifacts in order to find out some additional evidence for the research argument. During this process, the researcher took some notes, and checked for emerging themes and patterns in the frame of research questions of the study.

Researcher Logs

The planned 20 researcher logs were put in order chronologically. These notes covered the insights about teacher change in the frame of constructivism. The researcher read the logs many times in order to reveal some trends, patterns, and meaningful results. These logs were matched with the themes generated from the interviews, as well. They were applied when some probable answers to why questions were needed. The researcher
reread the notes to remember what sort of changes in terms of constructivist applications took place in the classes, the good things and the challenges.

**Trustworthiness and Validity**

The quality of quantitative methodology is measured using validity and reliability criteria (Campbell & Stanley, 1963). In qualitative paradigm, however, the quality measuring criteria are different. Trustworthiness is checked for empirical qualitative studies (Lincoln & Guba, 1984; see also Erlandson et al., 1993), which deals with persuasion of readers on the importance and significance of the findings (Lincoln & Guba, 1984). In other words, it shows how and why, and based on what criteria the results of the research is considered trustworthy and reliable. Again, even if the same concepts are used to refer the quality criteria, they may not be the same. For instance, reliability is denoted as replicability and consistency of the study in different locations, time and even conditions in quantitative methodology (Campbell & Stanley, 1963), it represents consistency between the results and data in qualitative approach (Merriam, 2009).

Credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability in qualitative studies are argued by Lincoln and Guba (1984). While discussing credibility, they say “the reconstructions (for the findings and interpretations are also constructions . . .) that have been arrived at via the inquiry are credible to the constructors of the original multiple realities” (italics original, p. 196). Transferability (or applicability) depends on the level or similarity between sent and received contexts. In dependability, as they argued, one is considering both instability and phenomenal factors or design-induced change. Finally,
confirmability deals with the objectivity of the findings and data. In sum, the ways of trustworthiness are vital to be taken into consideration in qualitative research.

In this regard, intensive interviews (i.e., five sets of one-hour-long interviews with each participant) were applied in the study. The researcher conducted 30 hour-long interviews in total to ensure more opportunities to get trustworthy data, build rapport, and find consistencies and inconsistencies in the participants’ responses. To “establish credibility” (Lincoln & Guba, 1984, p. 308), the researcher used peer debriefing in order to avoid the possible biases and misinterpretations. The researcher had two Turkish colleagues with PhDs in reading to read the interview transcriptions to eliminate personal biases and stereotypes. In addition, the researcher used “the most crucial technique for establishing credibility” (p. 314), member checking, to see if the researcher understood the participants correctly and to avoid misinterpretations. For this, the participants were asked to read the transcripts to see if there were any misunderstandings and misinterpretations and checked their answers to complete the missing parts.

For triangulation, different kinds of instruments and methods such as the participant periodic interviews, in-class observational fieldnotes and artifacts, and researcher logs were used to increase the credibility. Students’ homework assignments as the artifacts were used in order to figure out how the selected English teachers understood constructivism as a new notion in education in general and in teaching English in particular, and if they changed their classroom applications accordingly.

The researcher was the instrument in this qualitative study, therefore the researcher’s attributes such as competence, ability, skill, and effort were important
(Patton, 1990). In that regard, the researcher of this study provided a comfortable and warm atmosphere during the professional development seminars and interviews. The researcher tried to make friendships and strengthen the relationships with each participant in order to enhance their motivation, and get their trust and confidence. The researcher also tried to convince them expressing that she herself was one of them. She also indicated that she was an English teacher having graduated from a state university in Turkey and worked in public schools just like them.

As a result, the researcher hoped to see whether using the constructivist methods in foreign language education had provided the teachers with better, more effective and communicative foreign language teaching or not. In other words, the researcher observed if there were any positive changes on the teachers in terms of their professional development (their behaviors, teaching methods, and approaches).

Summary

In this chapter, the research design of the study was presented. The research goals and questions, and the research method of this dissertation were expounded. The research questions of this study were,

1. How do selected English teachers in Turkey understand constructivism as a new notion in foreign language education?
2. How do the teachers apply constructivism into their foreign language teaching?
3. What insights can be gained about doing professional development in foreign language teaching in Turkey?
In order to explore these questions, the participant periodic interviews, in-class observational fieldnotes and artifacts, and researcher logs were used as data collection sources. The researcher did a systematic plan for analysis and interpretations of the data in the study. She organized, synthesized, and made sense of the data to find answers to the research questions. An inductive analysis approach was applied to search for meaningful patterns in the data so that reasonable conclusions could be drawn. The researcher hoped to see if constructivism as a new notion in education could be applied in English teaching in Turkey. In addition, she hoped to learn how the teacher change occurred in terms of applying the constructivist methods in their teachings.
CHAPTER IV
ANALYSIS

The process of data collection and analysis is presented in this chapter. The section describes the participants and the settings of the study first. Brief information about the design and method is given, and then comes the treatment. After the trustworthiness and validity issues are explained, the analyses of three main data sources, namely, the participant periodic interviews, in-class observational fieldnotes and artifacts, and researcher logs are discussed. The summary of the findings is shared with the readers. Finally, the findings are discussed in detail.

All the data gathered are analyzed in order to explore the following three research questions:

1. How do selected English teachers in Turkey understand constructivism as a new notion in foreign language education?
2. How do the teachers apply constructivism into their foreign language teaching?
3. What insights can be gained about doing professional development in foreign language teaching in Turkey?

Participants

Participant Selection

Knowing that “sample selection in qualitative research is usually nonrandom, purposeful, and small” (Merriam, 2001, p. 8), I, as the researcher of this study, selected...
six English teachers with at least a four-year college degree and working in two public schools in two neighboring administrative districts in the city of Ankara, Turkey. I did a nonrandom and purposeful selection to get more detailed information from the participants to better understand the research problem and to be able to get some answers and insights into English teaching in Turkey.

The main criterion in the selection of the teachers was their being English teachers in either public middle or high schools. All of the participants had at least 10 years of experience at a variety of grade levels ranging from the 5th to 11th grades. In the proposal, I had planned to recruit six English teachers preferably working in the same school or in two neighboring schools intending to set three study groups in order for them to have critical conversations and discussions about the constructivism and its applications in teaching during the data collection process. However, once in the field, I noticed that things did not go exactly as had been planned. As a result, I was able to recruit five teachers working in the same school in the Yenimahalle district and only one teacher working in another school in the Kecioren district. Even though the latter teacher seemed to be alone without a peer in that school, I became her critical conversation partner.

Selecting participants from the schools located in two neighboring administrative districts, I was able to reach them easily whenever I needed during the data collection process during which class observations and interviews took place. In addition, the participants could have opportunities for critical conversations and discussions with each other.
It was advantageous for me to work with a group of teachers from Turkey in this study as we shared the same cultural and educational background, which made the research process more meaningful and convenient.

I selected the participants based on voluntary criterion and asked them to sign a consent form (see Appendix M) to take part in this research. I provided them with information about the details of the research project, such as the requirements from the volunteers, the benefits of the project for their professional development, and the length of the study in order to clear the questions in their minds. I ensured that the confidentiality and protection of their personal data was important during and after the process. The contact information of the principal investigator (the researcher) and co-investigators (the dissertation advisors) was placed at the end of the form. I also explained that they were in a position that they could withdraw from the research project at any phase, anytime. In this way, I hoped that the project would be implemented properly and democratically. It was one of the strengths of this study that none of the participants left until the end of the research project. Although participating in such a study might have required extra responsibilities, workload, time, energy, and effort, they agreed to take part in this study only for the sake of friendship and for their professional development. More importantly, they never complained about anything at any phase of the research.

**Pre-Workshop Demographic Interviews and Survey**

The background and demographic information (see Table 2) about the participants was provided in two ways: (a) demographic surveys (see Appendix N), and
(b) pre-workshop interviews (see Appendix C for Interview Protocol I). The survey was given to the participants when I got together with them for the pre-workshop interviews. They were asked to fill out the surveys and return them at the end of that meeting. Then, the same evening, I assembled the data and checked if the surveys needed any completion or additional data. By asking the participants to fill out the survey, I got some general information about the participants such as their names, ages, gender, their own educational background, and their teaching experiences such as the courses they had taught. In addition to the demographic surveys, there were also demographic interviews with each participant. These interviews were audio recorded. Since data storage is a critical issue in qualitative studies, I copied the recorded data to two external hard drives (HP) and one PC (Lenovo all in one) hard drive (2 TB) in the evening of the day they were recorded. Before transcribing the demographic interviews, I reminded myself of the research questions (Holly et al., 2009). I read and reread all transcribed data in order to get a general sense of the participants’ teaching experiences, and educational background. During this process, I thought, questioned, speculated, and wrote down some notes in order to figure out the most common and interesting themes about the participants. I matched the demographic interviews with each participant’s survey, as well. I read each survey, and rewrote the information on a computer file. Finally, I evaluated the participants’ answers around each question in order to get an idea of their demographics.

The background and demographic information of the participants such as their names, gender, ages, level of education, and teaching experiences, and also the grade levels they teach at the time of the study is given in Table 2.
Table 2

Demographic Information of the Participants

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participant</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Age Range</th>
<th>Undergraduate Education (BA)</th>
<th>Graduate Education (MA, PhD)</th>
<th>When and Where English Learned</th>
<th>How Long Teaching English</th>
<th>How long Teaching English at this school</th>
<th>Teaching Grades This Semester</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>P1: Ebrar</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>31-35</td>
<td>Hacettepe University, Faculty of Education</td>
<td>MA</td>
<td>Private Middle School</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>9, 10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P2: Esra</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>36-40</td>
<td>Uludag University, Faculty of Education</td>
<td>Before School b/c Uncle’s Wife was Foreigner</td>
<td></td>
<td>15</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>9, 10, 11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P3: Gamze</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>31-35</td>
<td>Hacettepe University, Faculty of Education</td>
<td>MA, PhD Student</td>
<td>Private English Courses</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5, 6, 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P4: Hale</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>26-30</td>
<td>Selcuk University, Faculty of Education</td>
<td>Super High School</td>
<td></td>
<td>10</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5, 6, 7, 8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P5: Nil</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>36-40</td>
<td>Mustafa Kemal University, Faculty of Education</td>
<td>Anatolian High School</td>
<td></td>
<td>13</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>9, 10, 11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P6: Zeynep</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>36-40</td>
<td>Selcuk University, Faculty of Arts and Sciences</td>
<td>High School Prep Class</td>
<td></td>
<td>15</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5, 6, 7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
In order to protect the participants’ privacy, I used pseudonyms. The first participant is named Ebrar; the second participant is named Esra; the third one is Gamze; the fourth one is Hale; the fifth one is Nil; and the sixth participant is named Zeynep. Although it was not planned, I ended up having all of the participants female.

The age range of all of the participants varies between 25 and 40. The age of one of the teachers is between 25 and 30; the ages of the two participants range between 31 and 35; and the age range of the other three is between 36 and 40. The average of their ages is 35.

All of the participants have at least a four-year college degree: Five of the participants were graduates of Faculty of Education, whereas one of them is a graduate of Faculty of Arts and Sciences. One teacher had an M.A. degree, and another one earned her M.A. degree and currently is pursuing her doctorate. All of them are experienced teachers having experiences ranging from 10 to 15 years in teaching with the average number of teaching experience of 13.3.

Each participant worked at her current school for at least three years, at the time of the research. The average number of years of working at the current school is 4.5. The participant teachers taught the 5th, 6th, 7th, 8th, 9th, 10th, and 11th grades. Three participants taught the 5th, 6th, and 7th grades (P3, P4, and P5); three others taught the 9th and 10th (P1, P2, and P5); two of the teachers taught the 11th grades (P2 and P5); and only one teacher taught the 8th grade (P4).
Ebrar

Ebrar has a four-year college degree. She graduated from the faculty of education. Her age ranged between 31 and 35. She has more than 10 years of teaching experience. This is her third year in this school where she teaches the 9th and 10th grades for 21 credit hours a week this semester. She also holds an M.A. degree. In the pre-workshop interview, she said she earned her M.A. in education management but she did not want to pursue her education in this field. Then, I advised her to get another M.A. degree or continue her doctoral studies in Teaching English as a Foreign Language (TEFL) at Bilkent University which is a private university and where an American system is applied mostly by the American professors.

When Ebrar was asked to give information about the process of learning English as a foreign language, she stated that she started learning English at the age of 11 at a private school. She said:

My father was an important figure in my English learning journey. He thought English to be the future profession. So, he sent me to a private school . . . We had a prep class in that school. As a result of good English education in that private school, I decided to be an English teacher and continued English learning at the university.

Ebrar also talked about her teaching experiences in different schools. She described her experience in an Anatolian teacher training high school in a detailed way to emphasize how teachers have to change or adjust their teaching methods, even if they sometimes do not comply with their own ideas, according to where/what type of schools
in which they work. She said she worked in an Anatolian teacher training high school in Gudul, a suburb of Ankara. She gave some extra information about those types of high schools:

These are the vocational high schools which educate the students as teachers and the Medium of education is English. That’s why, the graduates generally prefer education faculties especially the foreign language departments for their higher education. When they prefer education departments, they are given some extra points in the university entrance exam.

Most of her students entered the foreign language departments of top universities in Turkey. Taking the responsibility to prepare the students for foreign language related departments, she felt obliged to teach mostly grammar, vocabulary, and reading even though she did not personally prefer this type of traditional teaching. However, there are not any speaking, listening, and writing questions in the university entrance exam. This situation made her do teaching for the tests to meet the expectations of the students and the families.

Ebrar also said she conducted a project, called *Teaching Foreign Language Innovatively*, which was supported by the European Union. In that regard, she had a chance to travel to some countries in Europe, and saw the foreign language education systems of those countries. She noticed that the students in the European countries she visited within the project learned and used English very practically and fluently for the reason that their education system is based on non-traditional approaches. In Turkey, however, the students study foreign languages to pass the tests only. As there are not any
speaking, listening, and writing questions in the standardized tests in Turkey, both the students and the families generally think that doing communicative activities and skill based tasks in the lessons are just a waste of time. Therefore, teachers generally have to ignore the skills such as speaking, listening, and writing and focus on grammar and vocabulary teaching. As a result of this situation, some expressions used by Turkish people only can be heard: “I know and understand English but I can’t talk,” or, “I know KPDS English” (The Foreign Language Exam for State Personnel, but it is a multiple choice exam but unlike TOEFL [Test of English as a Foreign Language] it does not include any speaking, listening and writing sections).

When asked why she wanted to participate in this EFL teacher professional development and personal growth research study, she replied,

I am now in a new school environment where I can apply newer, more modern, and innovative teaching techniques. I want to participate in this project as I want to see the advantages, disadvantages and the challenges of this new way of teaching.

Esra

Esra has a four-year college degree. She graduated from the faculty of education. Her age ranged between 36 and 40. She has 15 years of teaching experience. She has been working at her current school for 10 years and teaches the 9th, 10th, and 11th grades for 22 credit hours a week.
When Esra was asked to give information about the process of learning English as a foreign language, she said that she got acquainted with English at her early ages (when she was five) as her uncle’s wife was an English woman. She also said:

I started speaking a little English for the first time when I was five with my uncle’s English wife, but my formal foreign language education started at the middle school . . . Summer times, I had a chance to talk to tourists, as well.

Indeed, I had to study English a lot when I was at the high school as I decided to be an English teacher. In Turkey, if you decide to pursue your higher education in the English departments, you have to do the English tests at the National University Entrance Exam.

Esra was very eager to take part in this research. She expressed that she wanted to take part in this study voluntarily for the sake of her professional development. She is idealistic about her teaching profession. She said that she taught English to some Somalian students voluntarily during her summer break without being paid. Based on her statements, I consider her as helpful, kind, and gracious.

Gamze

Gamze has a four-year college degree. She graduated from the faculty of education. Her age ranged between 31 and 35. She holds an M.A. degree and continues her doctoral program in educational policies. She has more than 10 years of teaching experience. This is her third year at her current school where she teaches the 5th, 6th, and 7th grades for 24 credit hours a week.
Gamze learned English by taking private English courses at the weekends. She attended a regular public middle and high school where she could not learn English that much. As a result, she had to take private English courses three hours a week at the weekends for six years. When she decided to be an English teacher in her late high school years, she studied English more test based to get prepared for the National University Entrance Exam. As a result, it was more test-based grammar and vocabulary learning rather than gaining communicative skills in English.

Gamze has worked as an English teacher in different cities and different types of schools such as public primary and secondary schools thus far. She also worked in an Anatolian teacher training high school in Siirt, a city located in the Southeastern part of Turkey, where I first met with her many years ago. Her participation in the study started with a nice coincidence. I met her coincidentally at a school meeting in Ankara. She said that she was doing her Ph.D. in one of the well-known universities in Ankara. She also got her master’s degree in the education department of the same university. I also mentioned my doctoral program in the USA, and said that I was doing a qualitative research for my dissertation and trying to find English teachers to participate in my project. Then, Gamze said that she did a similar study for her MA thesis and was very much aware of the difficulties of this process. She added that she would be more than happy to take part in the project and give support on every stage of the study. Being a Ph.D. student in Education, she had some knowledge about constructivist approach. I was so happy to meet this old friend who would understand me and notice the possible problems during the study.
Hale

Hale has a four-year college degree. She graduated from the faculty of education. Her age ranged between 26 and 30. This is her third year in this school and she teaches the 5th, 6th, 7th, and 8th grades for 22 credit hours a week this semester.

About her foreign language journey, she said:

I started learning English at a public middle school, I cannot say I had a good foreign language education there, but after finishing the middle school, I went to Super High School, another kind of Anatolian high schools during the first year of which English is taught for almost 40 hours a week . . . So, I can say, I learned English mostly at the High School . . . The quality of teachers were very good in that school.

Hale also said she pursued her higher education in an English Literature Department where the courses are mostly on English Literature where there was almost nothing about teacher education.

Hale has 10 years of teaching experience and worked in different types of schools. She even worked at vocational high schools in ghettos. After I briefly described the project and its goals to her, she expressed that she wanted to be in such a project as she did not have a chance to be in a teacher training seminar like this before. When she was asked what would be the advantages of being in a project like this for the sake of her personal teaching growth, she said that she was not satisfied with her current teaching methods and would like to learn more about teaching effectively. Hale stated that motivation is an important factor for teachers to teach in a better way, one can be
motivated or demotivated depending on the people she or he is working with. She explained why she thought this way by giving an example from her previous experience:

In my previous school, I had a colleague who was not pleased with anything related to her profession. Actually, she did not like teaching at all. I noticed that I was influenced by her attitudes in a negative way day by day. She always made complaining remarks such as “Why should I bother myself working harder? Look! Who cares if you spend more time with students or give much effort in teaching? Do you think you will be awarded and appreciated for your good work? Your salary will not be increased as you are working hard.”

Hale also stated that she believed the importance of having positive-thinking colleagues after that terrible experience, and thought that with the help of this research project, she would have good partners to get more motivated in teaching.

Nil

Nil has a four-year college degree. She graduated from the faculty of education. Her age ranged between 36 and 40. She has more than 10 years of experience in English language teaching. She worked in many different schools and cities in Turkey. In her current school, she works not only as an English teacher but also as the head of the English Department. It is her fourth year in this school where she teaches the 9th, 10th, and 11th grades for 20 credit hours a week.

When Nil was asked about her English learning process, she stated that she started learning English at the 5th grade at an Anatolian Middle and High School when she was 11 years old. She continued her education in the English department of the university.
Nil was not interested in this project very much at the beginning, as she did not want to get more workload and responsibilities. However, two days after I invited her to join the research and talked about the research in a detailed way, she called me back and said that she wanted to join as she recognized that she needed this kind of teacher training seminar for the sake of her professional development. She also stated that by joining this project, she might learn different teaching methods and ideas, and could develop herself.

**Zeynep**

Zeynep has a four-year college degree. She graduated from the faculty of arts and sciences. Her age ranged between 36 and 40. She has 15 years of teaching experience as an English teacher in different schools such as public secondary and Anatolian high schools. On her fourth year at the current school, she teaches the 5th, 6th, and 7th grades for 20 credit hours a week.

About her foreign language learning process, she said:

My English learning adventure . . . It started in a public middle school, three years in the middle school, four at the high school and four more years at the university, 11 years in total . . . I really do not remember what we were taught and how we learned English at the middle school. But, I can say I learned English at the high school, especially during the first year, the prep class.

Zeynep believes that teachers should have the students like the foreign language they are learning. Further, it is important for her to teach English as a second language in an enjoyable way. She worked as an English teacher for five years in the Southeastern region of Turkey, where the students could speak more than one language (Kurdish,
Turkish, Arabic, and Zaza). It was a chance for me to have such an experienced teacher in the group to exchange ideas on the challenges of foreign language teaching. She said she still questions herself on whether she likes her job or not, or whether she is good at teaching or not. After talking to her about what kinds of teaching methods and activities she has done in her classes so far, I started to think she would increase her creativity in teaching with a little help and be a very effective teacher if she uses the constructivist approach. As she talked more and more about her previous experiences, I got more impatient to start working with her in this project to witness what else she could do with a little professional support and the help of a critical colleague group.

**Settings**

Settings included two schools and the classrooms as described in the following sections.

**Schools**

As the sites for this study, I selected two public schools located in two neighboring administrative districts of the city of Ankara: Yenimahalle and Kecioren so that “they can purposefully inform an understanding of the research problem and central phenomenon” (Creswell, 2007, p. 125). The demographic background of those two districts are similar to each other. Selecting two intermediate public schools in two neighboring districts also allowed me to easily visit the participants from both schools in a school day when necessary. I purposefully selected the public schools, as I wanted to observe the applicability of constructivist approach in public schools with poorer quality in terms of teaching English as a foreign language when compared to the private schools.
I also wanted to see if a teacher as the key factor in education can make a difference in his or her teaching in spite of the poor conditions such as having classrooms with 40–45 students when she or he is motivated to change.

The school so-called as Buket Okulu located in Kecioren had 39 teachers; five of them were English teachers. At the time of the study, there were 625 students studying from the 4th to 8th grades in this public middle school. Girls and boys attended the classes together. The school provided a dual (morning and afternoon) session for the students. Morning session started at 7:40 am in the morning and ended at 12:40 pm; afternoon session started at 12:40 pm and ended at 06:20 pm. There were seven class hours a day with 10-minute breaks in between. There were two computer labs with Internet connection, one science lab and one library (MoNE Website, 2014) in the school.

The school so-called as Demet Okulu located in Yenimahalle had 130 teachers, eight of whom were English teachers. It was a very big vocational religious school with a middle and high school in it. At that time, there were 2,250 students studying from the 5th to 12th grades in that school. Girls and boys studied in separate classes in the school. The students attended the school full day, starting at 8:00 am and ending at 03:10 pm. There were eight class hours with 10-minute break intervals; and there was a 50-minute lunch break from 12:00 to 12:50. Besides the classrooms, there was one science lab, one computer lab with Internet connection, one auditorium and a gym, and one library (MoNE Website, 2014) in the school.
Classrooms

Being a public middle school in one of the biggest administrative districts in Ankara, the capital city of Turkey, Buket Okulu had highly crowded classrooms (approximately 30 or more students in each one). The classrooms only have a table and a chair for the teacher and desks in rows for the students, a blackboard and chalks, and a trash can. There are not any visual or other kinds of teaching materials in the classrooms, as teachers go to the classrooms not the students. The teachers could bring the necessary equipment and tools borrowing from the relevant office to set their classrooms according to what they had been taught about having constructivist classroom settings/environment during the professional development seminar.

The classrooms in the vocational religious school, Demet Okulu, had a table and a chair for the teacher, desks in rows for the students, small lockers for the students, and a smart board. When necessary, the teachers could bring the materials such as laptops, projectors, or any other visual or audio materials to the classrooms. With approximately 30 or more students, the classrooms in this school were crowded, too.

Permissions and Regulations

Regarding the permission and regulation issues, I got approval from the Kent State University Institutional Review Board (IRB) in order to be able to start the data collection process of this research project.

I selected the participants based on voluntary criterion and had them sign a consent form (see Appendix M) to take part in this research. I provided them with necessary information about the research project and ensured that the confidentiality and
protection of their personal data was important during and after the process. In the consent form, I informed the participants about what they would be asked to do during the project in a detailed way. At the end of the form, the contact information of the principal investigator (the researcher) and co-investigators (the dissertation advisors) was provided. I also told them that they were in a position that they could withdraw from the research project at any phase, anytime.

Besides the approval from the Kent State University Institutional Review Board, I received an official permission (see Appendix P) from the Ministry of National Education in Turkey to have access to the participants and the research site in Ankara. With this official permission from the Ministry of National Education in Turkey, I was able to do the data collection at the public schools in Ankara. Although it was a time consuming and tiring process, it was necessary for me to get this Ministry-level official document to be able to start the data collection process of this project.

**Design and Method**

The research method for a study is chosen to meet the goals and objectives of that study. In this regard, I decided to use qualitative research methods in the current study to get a deeper and better understanding of the constructed meaning (Bogdan & Biklen, 1998) of the selected English teachers’ own foreign language teaching experiences within the contexts of their natural sites (Bogdan & Biklen, 1998). I intended to explore, understand, and interpret how the participants understood the constructivist best practice and how they applied it into their own practices.
Some characteristics of a qualitative research design are natural settings research being the instrument, having multiple sources, inductive data analysis, participants’ meanings, and being interpretive (Creswell, 2009). In this framework, I went to Turkey like an explorer to collect data in the natural settings and have face-to-face interactions with the participants, rather than sending some instruments to them. Further, I myself was the instrument examining the documents, observing behavior in the natural settings of the participants, and interviewing them.

A case study was preferred as the qualitative research strategy for this study. The cases were six English teachers working in two public schools in the city of Ankara in Turkey. They were considered and focused individually, one by one, rather than as a focus group to improve a narrative in depth for each case later leading to get some answers and insights into English teaching and the idea of creating and maintaining professional communities in Turkey. To achieve this goal, as a qualitative inquirer, I asked open-ended questions (see Appendices C, D, E, F, G) which sometimes required more specific and concrete examples from the participants’ teaching experiences to better understand their worlds and encouraged the informants to explain their perspectives on constructivism as a new paradigm in education in general, and in foreign language education and to give information about how they perceived the impacts of this new paradigm in foreign language teaching and how they applied it (Hatch, 2002).

In order to introduce and explain the project, and remove the concerns of the participants, I sent an introduction letter to them (see Appendix H). In that letter, there was a brief description of the study and contact information of both the principal
investigator and the co-investigators. Furthermore, I expounded the process of workshop and interviews and their dates briefly. This letter was also an invitation for the first interview. Finally, they were assured their privacy and right to leave the project at any phase, anytime. Then, I sent four follow-up letters (see Appendices I, J, K, L) in order to express my gratitude to the participants for the previous interview, and informed them about the dates for the following interview. The dates of the interviews, professional development seminar, in-class observations, and researcher logs are shown in Table 3.

Table 3
Timetable

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Day</th>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Participant (P)</th>
<th>Other</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>25 August, 2014</td>
<td>Monday</td>
<td>First (Pre-Seminar) Interview</td>
<td>P3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26 August, 2014</td>
<td>Tuesday</td>
<td>First (Pre-Seminar) Interview</td>
<td>P1 &amp; P2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27 August, 2014</td>
<td>Wednesday</td>
<td>First (Pre-Seminar) Interview</td>
<td>P5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29 August, 2014</td>
<td>Friday</td>
<td>First (Pre-Seminar) Interview</td>
<td>P4 &amp; P6</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 September, 2014</td>
<td>Monday</td>
<td>First day of the Seminar</td>
<td>P1-P6</td>
<td>First day of Teachers at School Researcher Log</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Researcher Log</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 September, 2014</td>
<td>Tuesday</td>
<td>Second day of the Seminar</td>
<td>P1-P6</td>
<td>Researcher Log</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 September, 2014</td>
<td>Wednesday</td>
<td>Third day of the Seminar</td>
<td>P1-P6</td>
<td>Researcher Log</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 September, 2014</td>
<td>Thursday</td>
<td>Fourth day of the Seminar</td>
<td>P1-P6</td>
<td>Researcher Log</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 September, 2014</td>
<td>Friday</td>
<td>Fifth day of the Seminar</td>
<td>P1-P6</td>
<td>Researcher Log</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8 September, 2014</td>
<td>Monday</td>
<td>Sixth day of the Seminar</td>
<td>P1-P6</td>
<td>Researcher Log</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9 September, 2014</td>
<td>Tuesday</td>
<td>Seventh day of the Seminar</td>
<td>P1-P6</td>
<td>Researcher Log</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 September, 2014</td>
<td>Wednesday</td>
<td>Eight day of the Seminar</td>
<td>P1-P6</td>
<td>Researcher Log</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11 September, 2014</td>
<td>Thursday</td>
<td>Ninth day of the Seminar</td>
<td>P1-P6</td>
<td>Researcher Log</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12 September, 2014</td>
<td>Friday</td>
<td>Tenth day of the Seminar</td>
<td>P1-P6</td>
<td>Researcher Log</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15 September, 2014</td>
<td>Monday</td>
<td>Second (Post-Seminar) Interview</td>
<td>P1</td>
<td>First day of Students at School</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16 September, 2014</td>
<td>Tuesday</td>
<td>Second (Post-Seminar) Interview</td>
<td>P2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(table continues)
Table 3 (continued)

**Timetable**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Day</th>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Participant (P)</th>
<th>Other</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>17 September, 2014</td>
<td>Wednesday</td>
<td>Second (Post-Seminar) Interview</td>
<td>P3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18 September, 2014</td>
<td>Thursday</td>
<td>Second (Post-Seminar) Interview</td>
<td>P5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19 September, 2014</td>
<td>Friday</td>
<td>Second (Post-Seminar) Interview</td>
<td>P4 &amp; P6</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30 September, 2014</td>
<td>Tuesday</td>
<td>Second (Post-Seminar) Interview &amp; First Observation</td>
<td>P3</td>
<td>Researcher Log</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 October, 2014</td>
<td>Wednesday</td>
<td>First Observation</td>
<td>P4</td>
<td>Researcher Log</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 October, 2014</td>
<td>Thursday</td>
<td>First Observation</td>
<td>P5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9 October, 2014</td>
<td>Thursday</td>
<td>First Observation</td>
<td>P6</td>
<td>Researcher Log</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20 October, 2014</td>
<td>Monday</td>
<td>Third Interview</td>
<td>P1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21 October, 2014</td>
<td>Tuesday</td>
<td>First Observation</td>
<td>P1</td>
<td>Researcher Log</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22 October, 2014</td>
<td>Wednesday</td>
<td>Third Interview</td>
<td>P2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23 October, 2014</td>
<td>Thursday</td>
<td>Third Interview</td>
<td>P3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24 October, 2014</td>
<td>Friday</td>
<td>First Observation</td>
<td>P2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27 October, 2014</td>
<td>Monday</td>
<td>Third Interview</td>
<td>P4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30 October, 2014</td>
<td>Thursday</td>
<td>Third Interview</td>
<td>P5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31 October, 2014</td>
<td>Friday</td>
<td>Third Interview</td>
<td>P6</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 November, 2014</td>
<td>Tuesday</td>
<td>Second Observation</td>
<td>P3</td>
<td>Researcher Log</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17 November, 2014</td>
<td>Monday</td>
<td>Second Observation</td>
<td>P4</td>
<td>Researcher Log</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27 November, 2014</td>
<td>Thursday</td>
<td>Second Observation</td>
<td>P5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25 November, 2014</td>
<td>Tuesday</td>
<td>Fourth Interview &amp; Second Observation</td>
<td>P1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27 November, 2014</td>
<td>Thursday</td>
<td>Fourth Interview</td>
<td>P2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28 November, 2014</td>
<td>Friday</td>
<td>Fourth Interview</td>
<td>P3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 December, 2014</td>
<td>Tuesday</td>
<td>Fourth Interview</td>
<td>P4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 December, 2014</td>
<td>Wednesday</td>
<td>Fourth Interview</td>
<td>P5</td>
<td>Researcher Log</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 December, 2014</td>
<td>Friday</td>
<td>Fourth Interview</td>
<td>P6</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9 December, 2014</td>
<td>Tuesday</td>
<td>Second Observation</td>
<td>P6</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15 December, 2014</td>
<td>Monday</td>
<td>Second Observation</td>
<td>P2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17 December, 2014</td>
<td>Wednesday</td>
<td>Third Observation</td>
<td>P4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30 December, 2014</td>
<td>Tuesday</td>
<td>Third Observation</td>
<td>P3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 January, 2015</td>
<td>Monday</td>
<td>Fifth Interview &amp; Third Observation</td>
<td>P1</td>
<td>Researcher Log</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*(table continues)*
A 10-day professional development seminar (see Appendix A for the details of the seminar plan) was given to the six selected English teachers in order to introduce constructivist theory and methodology, and various kinds of constructivist in-class activities (see Appendix B for the activities) some of which were demonstrated during the seminar. I aimed to facilitate and encourage participants’ thinking and learning by providing various resources, information, framework, and guidance with them through the professional development seminar to help them become critically reflective teachers. This seminar was organized and given in non-traditional ways and settings as constructivism required. In other words, this was not like a traditional, teacher-centered seminar; instead, participant contributions through critical conversations and discussions in critical colleague groups were expected. I decided on the general topics and reading
assignments for the seminar in advance, but the particular direction of their study is shaped and framed by their own professional interests, experiences, and needs.

In this context, the seminar was given in the conference hall at the school located in Yenimahalle. It lasted for two weeks starting on September 1, 2014 and ending on September 12, 2014. The morning sessions started at 11:00 am and ended at 12:30 pm. After a one-hour break, the afternoon sessions started at 1:30 pm and ended at 3:00 pm every weekday for two weeks. The only exceptions were the Fridays; the participants were free in the afternoon on Friday, the fifth day of the seminar. The last session of the seminar on the second Friday lasted for one hour only.

The only teacher who worked in the school in Kecioren district came to Yenimahalle to join the seminar. In every seminar meeting, a nice, warm, and relaxed atmosphere was created to build friendship with each participant and to get her trust and confidence. For instance, various homemade food and beverages were prepared and served. Such an informal and enjoyable environment allowed the participants to get engaged in the seminar easily, and involved with each other collaboratively and collectively. It also enhanced the participants’ motivation and strengthened the relationships among them.

On the first day of the professional development seminar, there was a constructivist warm up activity (See Appendix B, Theory 1, Activity 1) to create a warm atmosphere at the very beginning. We played a soft ball game to get to know each other; all of us stood in a circle. I introduced myself first and then threw the ball to another
person. Then, that person did the same thing. It was a simple, but an engaging and entertaining activity, and worked well to warm up at the beginning.

After the activity, there was an introduction in order to set the foundations for the seminar. I introduced the syllabus and gave information about the reading assignments. In addition, three critical colleague groups of two each were set as the researcher planned to benefit from the peer coaching (Fullan, 1993; Little, 1985; Robbins, 1991; Sprague, 1992), which was also a good strategy in educational change (Fullan & Hargreaves, 1991). In the afternoon, a discussion about the general problems in Turkish Education System and the ways to overcome the current problems was done. The day ended with a reading assignment for the next day. The assignment for the following day was the article by Robert Barr and John Tagg named *From Teaching to Learning: A New Paradigm for Undergraduate Education*.

The article by Barr and Tagg (1995) that was assigned the previous day was discussed in the critical colleague groups on the second day. Some guiding questions, such as “Which is more important, good teaching or real learning?” and “What would be the more progressive educational ways that emphasize the learning instead of teaching?” were posed. In the afternoon, I briefly gave theoretical information to set the parameters for constructivism by providing a metaphor (Can, 2009) of construction (constructing the floors, walls of a building) of constructivism. Some major concepts and applications of constructivism were explained. The constructivist theorists such as von Glasersfeld, Piaget, Vygotsky, and Dewey and their point of views on this philosophy of education
were explained briefly. At the end of the day, a reading assignment on becoming a critically reflective teacher by Brookfield (1995) was given for the next day.

On the third day, I continued explaining briefly the theoretical information and expounded the role of teachers in constructivist classrooms, constructing the walls of the first floor on the foundation (of the metaphor). We talked that the teachers in the constructivist classrooms should guide, not direct, student learning, and they should reflect on their teaching.

Then, a constructivist activity called “This is a hold-up” (See Appendix B, Theory 2, Activity 1) was done to present the function and positive and negative forms of imperatives. The participants were involved in the activity and they liked it as it presented language (imperatives) in a realistic and meaningful context.

In the afternoon session, there were small group discussions on the book *Becoming a Critically Reflective Teacher* by Brookfield (1995) in the critical colleague groups. With regard to this book, I guided the participants to share their thoughts about how to get inside the students’ heads as mentioned by Brookfield. Then, I posed the following questions to the discussants: What does it mean to become a critical teacher? How can we explain the idea that being a reflective teacher requires reflective students?

On the fourth day, there were whole group discussions on the theme of traditional classrooms versus constructivist classrooms. In the afternoon, I briefly explained the role of students in constructivist classrooms, constructing the walls of the first floor on the foundation (of the metaphor). In the constructivist classrooms, students should learn how
to learn, reflect on how they learn, ask questions in the classroom, and construct their own understanding of knowledge.

Then, a constructivist activity (See Appendix B, Theory 3, Activity 1) named “Instruction for a Recipe” was presented. With this activity, it was aimed to present the various functions of imperatives. It was also aimed to present language in a real context and enhance cooperative learning.

On the fifth day of the seminar, I talked about learning in constructivist classrooms, constructing the walls of the first floor on the foundation (of the metaphor). Some features of constructivist classrooms mentioned are as follows: Authentic materials are used in the classroom, the lessons build on students’ prior knowledge, constructivist learning is integrated into collaborative and cooperative learning activities, and hands-on activities are integrated into the curriculum.

We did a constructivist activity (See Appendix B, Theory 4, Activity 1) named “The Story of Cevriye Hanim.” The goal of this activity was to teach function and form of “used to” with the third person singular in a meaningful context. The participants enthusiastically participated in the activity, which integrated four skills (listening, speaking, reading, and writing). Since this is the last day of the first week, the participants were free in the afternoon.

The seminar on the sixth day started with critical colleague group discussions on English language education in Turkey. During the discussions, answers to some critical questions were sought. Some of the guiding questions were as follows: What are the main problems you encounter in teaching English in Turkey? What can be the solutions
to these problems? What is the role of teacher education programs in the development of English Language Teaching?

In the afternoon session, I briefly gave theoretical information about assessment in constructivist classrooms, constructing the walls of the first floor on the foundation (of the metaphor). Regarding the assessment and evaluation in the constructivist classrooms, we talked about evaluating students observing them perform. Further, we emphasized the importance of evaluating student progress by examining the thinking process of the student, for example, students and teacher might construct a rubric to guide work.

Then, we talked in detail about using a role-play activity (See Appendix B, Theory 5, Activity 1) and evaluating the students performing a theatre play. Students would perform an original play in the target language, which would make it possible for the students to read an authentic piece and see how the sentence structures/concepts are used in the real context. They would also recognize that the language is not only verbal but it is also related to body language. The teacher would evaluate the students’ performance based on the criteria indicated in the rubric, created by the teacher.

On the seventh day, to start constructing the second floor of constructivism (of the metaphor), I talked about Stephens and Brown’s (2000) constructivist design model. In the afternoon session, a movie called *Dead Poets Society*, in which a dedicated teacher gives his students the gift of inspiration, was played. Then, there were small group discussions on the movie to compare a traditional teacher who uses transmission style in teaching to a non-traditional (constructivist) one who wishes his students to learn to make
their own decisions about their future plans. The day ended with a reading assignment of Dewey’s (1997) *Experience and Education*, for the following day.

On the eighth day, working on the second floor of constructivism (of the metaphor), the participants and I designed a constructivist problem solving activity based on the design model mentioned on the previous day. The task was creating a constructivist lesson on the theme of “Vandalism.”

In the afternoon, whole group discussions on John Dewey’s (1997) *Experience and Education* were done. During the discussions, some guiding questions, such as “What do you think Dewey had in mind in writing this brief book?” “What are the key ideas Dewey describes in this book?” and “How might they relate to current issues in teaching and learning?” were posed to the discussants. Good discussions on Dewey’s philosophy of education took place that day, and the participants found them beneficial for their educational practices.

Another reading assignment was given to the participants. The book titled *The Educational Imagination* by Eisner (2002) was divided into three parts, and each part was assigned to each group to discuss on the following day.

The ninth day of the seminar continued with book talks of the small groups on the previously assigned book. The first group talked about the first part, curriculum development and teaching; the second group discussed the second part, dimensions of curriculum planning and evaluation. And, in the afternoon, the last group had conversations on the third part, educational criticism and connoisseurship.
The final day, which was the 10th day, was set to have whole group discussions on reflections and general ideas on seminar sessions. The session ended with a wrap-up. In whole group discussions, the participants reflected on the seminar sessions and they talked about the most valuable and helpful information for them in the seminar. As their final remarks, they stated if the seminar helped them change in view.

**Trustworthiness and Validity**

Trustworthiness and validity are two important criteria for the quality of qualitative studies. Regarding triangulation in this study, I used different kinds of data collection instruments and methods such as the participant periodic interviews, in-class observational fieldnotes and artifacts, and researcher logs.

In order to ensure more opportunities to get trustworthy data, build rapport, and find consistencies and inconsistencies in the participants’ responses, five sets of one-hour-long intensive interviews with each participant was done in this study. The interviews were 30 hours in total. I provided a comfortable and warm atmosphere during the interviews to build friendships with each participant in order to get their trust and confidence, and have them answer the interview questions more sincerely and openly.

Doing in-class observations gave me an opportunity to see if the informants understood the constructivism as a new notion in English teaching, applied it in practice, and if the application of constructivist methods in the classrooms provided them with better, more effective, and communicative foreign language teaching. Students’ homework assignments as the artifacts were also used in order to figure out if there were
any positive changes on the participants in terms of their professional development (their behaviors, teaching methods and approaches).

To “establish credibility” (Lincoln & Guba, 1984, p. 308), I used peer debriefing in order to avoid the possible biases and misinterpretations. I had two Turkish associate professors with PhDs in reading to read the interview transcripts to eliminate personal biases and stereotypes. They both worked at the same university in Turkey and were at advanced proficiency level in English. I also used “the most crucial technique for establishing credibility” (p. 314), which was member checking to see if the researcher understood the participants correctly and to avoid misinterpretations. For this, I asked the participants to read the transcripts to see if there were any misunderstandings and misinterpretations and check their answers to complete the missing parts.

**Data Analysis**

This study did a systematic plan for analyzing and interpreting the data to be able to describe the process of introduction of constructivism to the selected six English teachers and their application of this new notion into foreign language teaching in two public schools in Ankara, Turkey. The main objective of the data analysis was to organize, synthesize, and make sense of the data collected to write a description that explained the language teaching processes and settings of each participant. Data analysis was done using an inductive analysis approach to search for patterns of meaning in the data so that reasonable conclusions were drawn from them. Data were derived and organized mostly from the audio transcripts and the researcher’s notes.
I processed and elaborated the concepts and themes of the data collected through demographic surveys, interviews, in-class observational fieldnotes and artifacts, and researcher logs. Then, I coded them to be able to readily retrieve and examine the data units that referred to the similar subjects (Rubin & Rubin, 2005). After the coding, I classified the data into categories, and analyzed within and across the groups of related items, topics, and subjects. I tried to make interpretations to explain, to give meaning, to make sense of the many disparate events and ideas that encountered about the research problems (Holly et al., 2009), and draw meaningful conclusions from the data gathered. I not only tried to get the meanings that the participants held, but also made an interpretation of what was seen, heard, and understood. Since the interpretation was an ongoing process, there was a continuous analysis in case new patterns and themes could be found to get more meaningful and realistic conclusions. Finally, I showed how these concepts, themes, and patterns proposed answers to the research questions of the study.

**Interviews**

In this section, the participants’ periodic interviews are summarized first. Then the findings are presented. Finally, a discussion of the interviews is written.

**Summary of Interviews**

One source of data collection for this study was the interviews that were intended to obtain deep information or knowledge (J. M. Johnson, 2002). In this study, the interviews were semi-structured with open-ended questions and conducted with each participant one on one. Each question was prepared based on the themes found by an examination of constructivist foreign language education and professional development
literature. There were five one-hour-long interviews with each participant. In other words, there were face-to-face interviews with six participants separately in five different times. The first set of interviews (see Appendix C for Protocol I) was conducted before the workshop (in the beginning of September 2014), the second one (see Appendix D for Protocol II) was right after the workshop (in the middle of September 2014). The other three sets of interviews with each participant (see Appendices E, F and G for Protocols III, IV, and V) were done during the Fall 2014 Semester (the third set of the interviews was done in October; the fourth one was done in November; and the final one was done during the last week of December).

In the first set of interviews (see Appendix C for the pre-workshop interview), the interviewees were asked to provide some general information about their own educational background and teaching experiences. They were also asked whether they had had an opportunity to join a professional development seminar before or not. In addition, their current knowledge about constructivism was also asked.

In the second set of interviews (see Appendix D for the after-workshop interview), the participants were asked what they learned that they had not known before the seminar. In the third and fourth sets of interviews, the interviewees were asked questions about the implementation process, the successes, the confronting problems they experienced, and their approach to overcome such obstacles.

In the final set of interviews (see Appendices E, F, and G), the participants were asked to give their overall opinions about the whole process. Moreover, they were asked what insights they had gained by participating in a professional development program in
foreign language teaching in Turkey. Finally, they were asked whether they thought they had changed as a teacher or not. Each interview included at least one completely open question with no expectations in mind so that some things that I would not anticipate could come up during the interviews. There were five sets of interviews with 30 hours in total. All participant interviews were tape-recorded, and then copied to two external hard drives (HP) and one PC (Lenovo all in one) hard drive (2 TB) for data safety.

Knowing that the quality of the recording means is important, I used a voice-recording device (Olympus brand and stereo), which was capable of recording up to 30 hours, for audio recordings. This main device was supported with two iPhones 4GS (16GB + 32GB memory).

In order to keep the interviewees informed, keep in touch with, and remind of upcoming activities, I sent follow up letters (see Appendices I, J, K, L) to them. When I decided on using semi-structured interviews as one of the data collection methods and developed open-ended questions, I hoped and expected the answers to the interview questions would be framed differently based on each participant’s background and experiences.

At the end of the interviews, all of the conversations were transcribed. I noticed that there were some questions that were either not properly answered or not answered at all. I wrote down the interviewees’ answers to the interview questions in order to reveal the unanswered ones. In the proposal, I had planned to ask for additional interview appointments from the participants to complete the unanswered questions, but instead, I e-mailed the transcripts to them due to the time restraint. The participants kindly
accepted to read the transcripts, check all their answers, and complete the missing parts. By doing this, I made sure that the data were completed and ready for the analysis.

After transcribing the interviews, I read all transcribed data in order to get a general sense of the data and general ideas of the teachers (Creswell, 2009). During this process, I was writing notes on the margins. I also set down my impressions as I read the data comparatively, questioningly, and speculatively on some notes (Holly et al., 2009). I wrote the ideas, themes, and patterns that came to my mind constantly. Further, before the coding stage, I selected the most interesting interview, mostly focusing on the meaning of what it was all about. I read one more interview of another participant. Then, I looked for similar, repeated and consistent words, phrases, and arguments in order to cluster together, categorize and create some groupings. I gave some abbreviations for the groups and categories that were also considered as the codes (Wiersma & Jurs, 2009). Next, I sorted the data. The color code schemes were also used in coding. I recoded them when necessary (Creswell, 2009). Then, I used coding to generate some themes and categories, and write some descriptions of the teachers’ applications and change. Another task that I did was to check whether these themes and categories fit the data. After the data were taken apart (i.e., in categories), I brought them together in a logical way (synthesis) and made meanings and conclusions out of them (interpretation) (Holly et al., 2009).

Findings of Interviews

Before the teacher development seminar. Before the teacher development seminar, none of the participants used constructivism as a part of their teaching
philosophy application. When I asked the participants what their foreign language
teaching techniques and materials were, I came up with the following themes: “grammar
teaching” \( (n = 3) \), “textbook usage” \( (n = 3) \), “using board” \( (n = 2) \), “vocabulary teaching”
\( (n = 1) \), “speaking” \( (n = 1) \), “using materials” \( (n = 1) \), “reading” \( (n = 1) \), and “writing” \( (n \equiv 1) \); see Table 4).

Table 4

*Approaches and Techniques in Teaching English*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Theme</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Grammar teaching</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Textbook usage</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Using board</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vocabulary teaching</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Speaking</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Using materials</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reading</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Gamze said that she usually taught the grammar and did mechanical drills related
to the grammar topic of that week. As she continued, there was no time left for speaking
or listening activities. She also talked about the obligation of following the pre-designed
curriculum and yearly plans.

Esra usually followed the textbook and did mostly grammar teaching. As she
quoted, “Well, I certainly teach grammar. Without emphasizing the grammar points, I
feel like I leave something incomplete. Without teaching grammar, I think that the
students won’t be able to understand the texts for example.”
Respondents discussed the necessity of teaching vocabulary, speaking, using materials, reading texts, and teaching writing, as well.

**Turkish national education system on language.** The Ministry of National Education (MoNE) in Turkey switched to constructivist approach in 2005. In that regard, the researcher asked the reasons for that change. The participants gave the following answers as reasons: “education not effective” ($n = 3$), “memorization-based education” ($n = 2$), “outdated program” ($n = 2$), “not quality education” ($n = 1$) and “test-based education” ($n = 1$). In other words, all of the participants related the change of the educational system to the features of traditional education (see Table 5).

Table 5

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Theme</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Education not effective</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Memorization-based education</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outdated program</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not quality education</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Test-based education</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The participants indicated that there was not an effective education system in Turkey. They continued to argue that this inefficiency in the education system might have led to the change in 2005. As Zeynep laid out, even though the students in Turkey take English lessons starting at the 5th grade in the middle school and almost until the end of the high school to learn English, they are not able to communicate in the target
language. Moreover, they cannot use and apply what they learn in social interactions. She implied that these could be the reasons for the change.

Ebrar criticized the Turkish National Education System as being memorization-based. Further, the student success is evaluated based on the standard test scores only. She quoted, “Rather than caring real learning, the education system in Turkey relies too much on test scores. They care about the numbers only.”

The system and curriculum were also criticized to be too outdated and not covering contemporary issues. Esra said:

The old/previous system started in the year of 1968. Since then, the education program and even the books stayed same and no change was done until 2005. This is really a long time of period not to change. English as a foreign language was tried to be taught for 37 years with the same old methods.

Gamze paid attention to the quality of education and said that the students used to graduate without being able to learn and speak English language in spite of so many years in schools.

**The problems of national education system in Turkey.** In connection with the previous interview question of why MoNE needed to switch to a better system, the researcher tried to get an overview of educational system, and the problems in foreign language education, in particular in Turkey (see Table 6). When the participants were asked about the problems of National Education, the following issues were mentioned: “evaluation of four skills” \(n = 3\), “memorization-based education” \(n = 3\), “overcrowded classrooms” \(n = 3\) “insufficient materials” \(n = 3\), “unsatisfactory
physical conditions” ($n = 2$), “lack of practice” ($n = 2$), “monitored by administrators and/or inspectors” ($n = 2$), “focus on formalities not teaching” ($n = 1$), “four skills not integrated in teaching English” ($n = 1$), “threatening with grading” ($n = 1$), “curriculum” ($n = 1$), “quality of teacher” ($n = 1$), “insufficient number of teachers” ($n = 1$), “time constraint” ($n = 1$).

Table 6

*The Problems of Turkish National Education System*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Theme</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Evaluation of four skills</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Memorization-based education</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overcrowded classrooms</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Insufficient materials</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unsatisfactory physical conditions</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overcrowded classrooms</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of practice</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monitored by administrators and/or inspectors</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Focus on formalities, not teaching</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Four skills not integrated in teaching English</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Threatening with grading</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Curriculum</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quality of teacher</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Insufficient number of teachers</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time constraint</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In this context, Ebrar criticized the evaluation and assessment system. She stated that not only the grammar and vocabulary but also the four skills (listening, speaking, reading, and writing) should also be evaluated in the exams.

The national education has been criticized to be memory-based. As Esra argued, the education system forces the students to memorize the knowledge rather than acquire
it. So, the Turkish Education System is based highly on memorization of the knowledge rather than gaining them.

Some participants put emphasis on insufficiency of materials and the overcrowded classrooms. Zeynep argued that she wanted to try some interesting activities, but she could not due to the lack of materials. Moreover, the classroom and school settings are not well organized to do effective language teaching.

Gamze complained about the unsatisfactory physical conditions of the classrooms and schools. She said she even could not find a place to keep students’ homework assignments. She wished to have at least a small room with full of English books for the students to be able to do extra readings. However, as she indicated, the big rooms were given to the administrative staff. She quoted, “Recently, they even closed a classroom in order to make it an office for administrative staff. How about we turn the offices into libraries, reading rooms, or a language lab?”

Zeynep stated that one of the problems in Turkish traditional education system is the lack of practice. The students are expected to learn the language right away even though they do not have a chance to practice, except in the classroom settings. Further, there are problems with the curriculum, as well. She argued that as teachers they are imposed to stick with a curriculum that is not designed according to the needs and conditions of the students. Moreover, the teachers are monitored by the administrators and/or inspectors.
Ebrar on the other hand said that the reason for not learning English in Turkey is paying too much attention to the formalities, bureaucratic issues (such as creating the official documents, paperwork, etc.) rather than the teaching and content.

Esra stated that not teaching the four skills in an integrated way is a critical problem in teaching English. Moreover, according to her, threatening students with grading is another problem that diminishes the students’ desire for learning and demotivates them.

Nil pointed out the quality of teachers:

In some popular public schools, located in the centers of the cities, there are generally more experienced but old-fashioned teachers that make students dislike English. Young and new teachers who are aware of the newest teaching methods are generally appointed to the schools in villages or small cities in the farther areas. Newly graduated teachers are generally eager and more motivated to teach in different ways, they are full of energy and idealist and they really desire to make a difference, but the more experienced ones are comparatively tired, and generally don’t want to go beyond the patterns, and generally resist to changes and the new technologies.

Another problem of Turkish National Education System was stated as the insufficient number of teachers at schools, especially the English teachers. Esra expressed that the English classes are sometimes taught by the other teachers who “know” English somehow or English is not taught at all due to the lack of English teachers at schools.
A good education. When the participants were asked, “What does better education mean to you? What can be done for a better foreign language education for the students in Turkey?” the following themes were generated (see Table 7): “integrated four skills” \( n = 3 \), “early age” \( n = 2 \), “teachers’ workload” \( n = 1 \), “priorities” \( n = 1 \), “activity” \( n = 1 \), “designing curriculum and teaching materials” \( n = 1 \), “motivation” \( n = 1 \), and “teacher education” \( n = 1 \).

### Table 7

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ideas on Better Education</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Theme</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Integrated four skills</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Early age</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teachers’ workload</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Priorities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Designing curriculum and teaching materials</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Motivation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher education</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The participants considered the integration of four skills (listening, speaking, reading, and writing) in learning and teaching English as important in teaching English as a foreign language. As Nil stated, the language is something whole and it should not be separated when teaching.

Starting English learning at an early age is vital. Esra gave an example about her nephew who was exposed to English at an early age. Therefore, she said that the younger
the kids start learning a foreign language, the more easily they will grasp the target language.

Ebrar considered a good education the one in which the working hours are fewer; right now, they teach more due to insufficient number of English teachers. She also indicated the importance of the priorities:

In Turkey, if the school building is new, the classrooms are clean, the windows are shining and the desks are in order, then it is considered that it is a very good school. What is being done in the classrooms does not really matter, sometimes. We see that the physical conditions of the buildings are regarded as more important than the quality of education.

Zeynep talked about the importance of designing curriculum based on the learner’s needs and the conditions they have. She also said that the textbooks should be revised and teaching materials should be created based on the curriculum.

Motivation was said to be important. As Hale said: “The students should be motivated and encouraged in learning a foreign language, as well.” She also said that the teacher education at the universities is insufficient, as she did not learn how to approach a student when confronted with a problem, how to do classroom management, and how to solve a problem in the real classrooms.

**Constructivist knowledge and applications before the seminar.** When the participants were asked about their knowledge level of constructivism as a new notion in education, most of them indicated that they are “not knowledgeable at all” (n = 4), and the rest answered “slightly knowledgeable” (n = 2). When the participants were asked,
“Do you think that you apply constructivist teaching methods/models into practice? If so, what kinds of activities are you doing in teaching, and evaluation?” the following themes and subthemes were generated (see Table 8): “not applying” \( (n = 4) \), and “apply some (activity)” \( (n = 3) \) with subthemes of “visual materials” \( (n = 1) \), “games” \( (n = 1) \), and “dialogue” \( (n = 1) \).

Table 8

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Knowledgeable and Apply Constructivist Activities or Not</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Theme</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Knowledge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Application</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The participants in general did not know what exactly constructivism was and how it was applied. Therefore, they were not aware of whether they were doing something considered as constructivist methodology. However, Ebrar indicated that even though she did not know much about constructivism, she tried to use different kinds of visual materials, games, and dialogues in her classes.

**Reason to join the project.** When the participants were asked, “Why did you voluntarily accept to be a part of this research project, what are your expectations from
What can be the benefits of participating in this kind of study for your personal and professional growth?” the following themes were generated (see Table 9): “new method and techniques” ($n = 3$), “beneficial” ($n = 2$), “do better teaching” ($n = 3$), “where to apply activities” ($n = 3$), “more enjoyable class” ($n = 2$), and “more participation” ($n = 1$).

Table 9

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Theme</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>New method and techniques</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do better teaching</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Where to apply activities</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More enjoyable class</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More participation</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Most of the participants joined the project hoping to improve themselves in learning new methods and techniques and their applications. Moreover, they also wanted to know how to teach better, and how to make the English classes more enjoyable and participatory.

**Professional Development Seminar**

In this section, the interview responses and views on before and after professional development seminar were given in the frame of the research question of “How do selected English Teachers in Turkey understand constructivism as a new notion in foreign language education?”
An overview on professional development seminars in Turkey. When the teachers were asked; “As we have mentioned before, there has been a movement towards more progressive education system (constructivist best practice) in Turkey. In this regard, what kinds of professional development activities have been done by the Ministry of Education in order to introduce this new education system to English teachers?” the following themes were created based on the responses (see Table 10): “lack of seminars” ($n = 4$), “seminar crowded” ($n = 1$), “seminar ineffective” ($n = 1$), “undemocratic participation and environment” ($n = 1$), “need for sustained professional development” ($n = 1$), “pessimism of seminar” ($n = 1$).

Table 10

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Theme</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lack of seminars</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seminar crowded</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seminar ineffective</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Undemocratic participation and environment</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Need for sustained professional development</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pessimism of seminar</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The participants in this study are aware of the necessity of teacher development seminars. They complain about the Ministry of National Education (MoNE) for not providing seminars or organizing insufficient seminars.

**Lack of it.** It was implied that due to the lack of teaching development seminars, the teachers could not learn about Constructivism. Hale stated that there were not teacher
development seminars provided by the MoNE: “No, I wasn’t aware of that Constructivism and the change at all. Moreover, I haven’t seen any seminars or other activities.”

_Seminar crowded._ Esra complained about the seminars to being too crowded. Therefore, she claimed, the seminars should be given in small groups: “I took one seminar once, where the examples and activities could only be applied in smaller groups. But, the seminar was too crowded. I believe, those kinds of seminars should be given in smaller groups.”

_Seminar ineffective._ It is also believed that seminars by MoNE are not effective at all. Gamze said that one inspector was sent to the school to inform them about the new developments in teaching. The only thing the inspector did was to open a Power Point file and read, then left, she said. That’s why, Gamze believed, the seminars should be well-organized and effectively presented.

_Undemocratic participation and environment._ Ebrar talked about some problems of a seminar. In one of the seminars organized by MoNE, one of the participants wanted to make a criticism. He criticized the way the teachers were asked to participate in it. Ebrar said that teacher was silenced by the authorities right away. He was a teacher with at least 10 years of experience, and just wanted to say something. She stated that it was not a democratic environment, and there was no tolerance for expressing ideas freely. Hale criticized such seminars as places where they are being forced to join obligatorily and reluctantly.
Need for sustained professional development. It was stated that there was a great need for sustained seminars that provide contemporary and new activities and applications in English education. Further, continuity and follow up of the seminars were also considered important.

Pessimism of professional development. Some statements showed that the participants were pessimistic of the seminars organized by MoNE. This previous experience about seminars made the participants approach the 10-day seminar of this project with some biases at the beginning. For instance, Esra expressed that she did not expect too much from the teacher development seminar. Her expectation was low at the beginning. As she said: “You even surprised me, as I wasn’t expecting the seminar to go that well. I found it much more beneficial than I expected.”

Ten-day professional development seminar. When the participants were asked “I already got feedback about the workshop after each session, but do you think that the workshop met your expectations in general? Did you find it beneficial for your teaching career? If yes, what are the benefits?” and “Do you think your prior knowledge on constructivism gained from our gatherings helped you better understand the issue?” and “Do you think that it has changed you, your view/perspective, and knowledge of the understanding of teaching at all? If so, what do you know now that you did not know before the workshop?” and “What else would you like to say about the professional development seminar?” and “In the end, as a result of this project, do you think that you have changed as a teacher? If yes, how did this change reflect on your teaching applications in the classroom setting?” all of the participants stated that the professional
development seminar was quite beneficial \( n = 6 \) that brought enthusiasm and renewal \( n = 6 \), changed their perspectives \( n = 6 \), understood teaching and learning better \( n = 6 \), understood the importance of professional community \( n = 6 \), helped them see themselves better and critically \( n = 4 \), gained pedagogical insight \( n = 3 \), and informing stakeholders \( n = 3 \), as well. Some recommendations \( n = 2 \) were also given (see Table 11).

Table 11

*Ten-Day Professional Development Seminar*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Theme</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Seminar beneficial</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enthusiasm and renewal</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Change in perspectives</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Understanding teaching and learning better</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional community and critical conversations</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-evaluation/criticism</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pedagogical insight</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Informing stakeholders</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recommendation</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Seminar beneficial.** All of the participants in the project indicated that the teacher development seminar was beneficial for them. Ebrar said that the seminar answered all the questions she had in regard with constructivism. Esra expressed that she did not know anything about constructivism until the seminar. Gamze stated she learned things that she could easily use in practice. Hale uttered she learned the differences between the traditional and constructivist approaches. Nil admitted she did not know
constructivism so far, and had learned that time. Zeynep pointed out that she rediscovered herself and her abilities in this seminar.

**Enthusiasm and renewal.** All of the teachers in this project stated they got enthusiastic, felt recharged and refreshed with the help of the seminar and its applications. For instance, Zeynep said:

> This teacher development seminar has been a turning point for me. I liked the contents, activities, and applications. I was confident that I was a successful teacher, but this seminar fortified my feelings that I will be much more successful in the future.

**Change in perspectives.** All of the participants strongly emphasized that, one way or another, they had changes in their perspectives/views and started looking at themselves more critically with the help of the seminar. For instance, Hale expressed, “It wouldn’t be wrong to say that I acquired so many new ideas that I will use during not only this semester but also the whole teaching life. The traditional teaching perspective/approach that I had before completely changed.”

**Understanding teaching and learning better.** All of the six participants in this project voiced that they had a better understanding of teaching and learning after the teaching development seminar. Gamze said that the students never benefited from the activities unless they were involved in them. She realized that permanent learning occurs when the students learn the things by seeing, listening, doing, and practicing. She admitted that the seminar helped her realize that. Ebrar said that every time she joined the seminar, she learned new concepts, applications, and teaching techniques. Nil told
that she learned that she should not load too much content to students. Rather, teaching well but few things would be better.

**Professional community and critical colleague conversations.** The participants believed in the importance of having a professional (learning) community that existed in a natural way with like-minded people. The researcher asked the participants what they thought of professional (learning) community and whether the critical colleague conversations contributed to their professional development and applications. They indicated that such community allowed them to collaborate, cooperate with colleagues, exchange ideas and experience. They also indicated that they benefited from the critical colleague conversations and community. Ebrar stated:

> The sharing and exchange of techniques and methods of my colleagues helped me a lot during my teaching. For instance, it helped me realize several things that I was neglecting and/or ignoring. I tried to apply some activities that learned from them, and they really were effective/worked. I thought that the problem was the same in general; therefore, the solution should be a joint one. This was how I approached my colleagues’ ideas and activities. The coordination and cooperation enlightened me and guided me. So, you were right, the collaboration was quite important. At the beginning, I never thought that it was going to be that much helpful.

Zeynep found the critical conversations beneficial as well:

> The idea exchange, critical colleague conversations were just like a serum and fresh blood to the body. We did that eagerly, not as a requirement. Sometimes
my application gave my colleague an idea, sometimes I asked them and found solutions.

Self-evaluation/criticism. The teacher development seminar helped the participants know themselves better, see their weaknesses and mistakes. Esra admitted:

This project and seminar made me notice my capacity. It made me re-think about how far I could go and endure with problems. I got some ideas on what kind of activities I could do. I also realized the mistakes I have done so far.

Pedagogical insights. The participants indicated that some pedagogical insights \((n = 2)\) were also gained from the teacher development seminar. Esra stated that she learned how to look and approach empathetically to the students. She said:

In any problem, somehow I was blaming the students. Rather, we, as the teachers should look at ourselves first and try to find the source of the problem on us. I learned how important doing empathy was. When we look at the issues from the students’ perspectives, rather than teachers,’ things look way different than before.

Informing stakeholders. One of the findings of the interviews was the role of stakeholders in applying new educational approaches and techniques. For instance, Zeynep thought being in contact with the families, explaining to them the new notion, getting their support was important. Gamze criticized the MoNE for not taking into considerations the stakeholders of teachers when it switched to Constructivism. Moreover, she wanted all the stakeholders to be informed about the change in advance in order to be on the same page with the new system.
**Recommendations.** One recommendation was given regarding the current seminar. Ebrar stated that it would be better to have the reading materials in advance to have more time to read, as the seminar was quite full and dense. Sometimes she had difficulty completing the assignments given one day before.

**Evidence/Planning application.** The participants started to plan and generate some ideas right after the seminar (see Table 12). In one sense, they provided some statement evidence that shows that they learned the constructivist approach. When the teachers were asked, “Where do you think you go from here? How did this workshop inform ideas for your future teaching career?” the following themes were generated: “chain drilling” ($n = 1$), “role play” ($n = 1$), “less content, much focus” ($n = 1$), “topics from real life” ($n = 1$), “constructivist environment” ($n = 1$), and “more enjoyable” ($n = 1$).

Table 12

_Evidence/Planning Application_

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Theme</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Chain drilling</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Role play</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Less content, much focus</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Topics from real life</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Constructivist environment</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More enjoyable</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Chain drilling. Gamze stated that she planned to do an engaging activity/chain drilling on illnesses thinking that by doing even small things, a teacher can make a difference.

Role play. Gamze gave another example showing that she planned to apply what she learned in the seminar in her future teaching. She explained the students could role-play in health issues, one student pretending like a doctor and the other as a patient, and asking questions to figure out the illness.

Less content, much focus. The teachers were convinced that loading students with too much with content was not a good way of teaching according to the principles of constructivism. Nil admitted that she was loading the students with content and trying to catch up with the standard curriculum. However, after the seminar, she said she felt more relaxed and flexible. She hoped to teach one thing at a time, but make the students really learn it.

Topics from real life. For some participants, the relevance of the subject matter to real life and real life applications was considerable. Esra articulated the issue with an example: “It is better to give real life examples during the class. For example, while teaching measures, we can say let’s measure this board, let’s see how wide and long the desks are.”

Constructivist environment. The importance of having more relaxing and enjoyable learning and teaching environment was expressed. Ebrar indicated that even with the teachers’ little, simple, and creative efforts, one could establish a constructivist environment.
**Enjoyable class to overcome boredom.** The participants also mentioned the lack of excitement/motivation due to things being same/routine \((n = 4)\). After the teacher development seminar, the participants began comparing and questioning their prior teaching applications. They expressed how boring their classes were not only for the students but also for themselves, as well, especially when it is grammar teaching. It was implied that with the applications of the new approach, the students would no longer be reluctant to learn English.

**Constructivism**

Under this title, the findings of the interviews answering the dissertation research question of “How do they apply constructivism into their teaching?” are presented. In addition, these findings also provide answers to the question of “How do selected English Teachers in Turkey understand constructivism as a new notion in foreign language education?”

Replies of teachers to the question of “How can you describe your understanding of constructivism after the workshop?” were analyzed and the following themes revealed (see Table 13): “active student” \((n = 2)\), “real life connection” \((n = 2)\), “everybody is different” \((n = 2)\), “student-centered” \((n = 2)\), “free classroom setting” \((n = 2)\), “process-based assessment” \((n = 2)\), “well-prepared and creative teacher” \((n = 2)\).
Table 13

Defining Constructivism

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Theme</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Active student</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Real life connection</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Everybody is different</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student-centered</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Free classroom setting</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Process-based evaluation</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Well-prepared and creative teacher</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Gamze laid emphasis on activeness of students and stated that students should learn by joining and being active in the class. Nil considered constructivism as reformist approach where student is at the center, who talks, does, and applies. Esra understood constructivism as an approach where individuals are not seen as one type, but a different and diverse world. She also considered it as more humanitarian and human-based approach.

It is also indicated that the classroom atmosphere is more democratic and free. As Zeynep said: “Student could contentedly affirm his or her point of view by feeling comfortable in an unoppressed classroom environment just like in constructivism.”

Hale indicated that she learned the evaluation of the students should be a process that continues the whole semester, rather than relying only a couple of testing at the end. In other words, the evaluation of the students should be process-based, rather than outcome based.
In addition, the participants have presented their opinions on the great roles of the teacher, such as creating a Constructivist learning environment, getting well prepared, and being creative. As Ebrar said:

*I believe that in the core of the constructivist education stands the teacher, who has the responsibility to provide an environment that would trigger and attract the attention of the student. The teacher has to work more and get prepared well. This can only be achieved by the creativeness and explorative manners, and by allocating more time and energy on her students’ learning.*

**Application of constructivism.** When the participants were asked, “Do you think you can apply the theoretical knowledge you have gained about constructivist applications in the professional development seminar into practice in your real teaching settings?” and “So far, do you think what I have been talking about constructivist teaching methods are utopia or they can really be applied in the classrooms in Turkey? In other words, are they applicable and practical, and financially and material wise affordable? Why or why not?” and “Can you please compare your current teaching style to your teaching before the workshop? What are the differences you notice?” and also “What else would you like to say about the constructivist applications in your own teaching in general?” and “Have your students noticed any change on your teaching approach and applications?” the following subthemes were generated under the main themes of “before” (n = 3) and “after” (n = 10). The subthemes are “traditional” (n = 4), “delighted and successful” (n = 3), “comply with teaching view” (n = 2), “active
student" \((n = 2)\), “interactive” \((n = 1)\), “interesting” \((n = 1)\), “entertaining” \((n = 1)\), “enduring/patient” \((n = 1)\), and “daily life connection” \((n = 1)\).

The teachers considered their teaching styles as “traditional” before the teaching development seminar. However, they do not think they are traditional anymore after the seminar and the application in their classrooms (see Table 14).

Table 14

**Teaching Style Before/After Seminar**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Theme</th>
<th>Subtheme</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Before Traditional</td>
<td></td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>After Constructivist</td>
<td>Delighted and successful</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Comply w/teaching view</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Active student</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Interactive</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Interesting</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Entertaining</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Enduring/Patient</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Daily life connection</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Zeynep claimed she “experienced that almost all activities could be exercised and applied in the classroom. Even if the teacher does not possess the capacity to do some activities, the teacher can get help and support from the students.” Gamze stated she experienced constructivist methods to be applicable in some classes whereas she had also difficulty in applying in some others. She said: “Each class is unique in terms of application.” Esra, on the other hand, expressed that she tried to apply what she
learned from the seminar, but she was not able to apply some of them, as things in reality went differently. Hale admitted that she had a happier and better semester than ever. She said that this was the best one in her professional career.

Some participants articulated that constructivist methods matched their teaching methods. For instance, Ebrar said she did not have any difficulty in implementing the new approach as it fit to her way of teaching. Zeynep also expressed that constructivist applications had just complied with her characteristic and view of teaching.

The participants have also pointed out the essence of active student, interactive, interesting, and entertaining and being patient. Zeynep stated, “I have no more boring classes now. The class teaching occurs in an entertaining atmosphere. Moreover, my classes are interactive, not one speaks and others listen.” Nil stated that she has more real life connections than before which makes the students learn and understand better. Esra said that she could not show much patience to students previously. The teachers also indicated that they believed their students realized the change on their teaching styles and applications.

**Techniques of constructivism applied.** When the participants were asked, “What are the constructivist methods/models you are currently using in teaching and evaluation that you did not know/use before? Can you give some examples?” the following themes were generated (see Table 15): “dialogue” \((n = 4)\), “group study” \((n = 4)\), “reading passages” \((n = 3)\), “game” \((n = 3)\), “role play” \((n = 3)\), “listening” \((n = 2)\), “singing” \((n = 2)\), “speaking” \((n = 2)\), “chain drilling” \((n = 2)\).
Table 15

*Techniques Applied*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Theme</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dialogue</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group study</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reading passages</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Game</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Role-play</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Listening</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Singing</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Speaking</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chain drilling</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Some teachers have remarked the importance of dialogue applications. Hale mentioned that she was using the activity of dialogues for her students who liked and performed successfully. The teachers also emphasized group studies that they applied. Ebrar indicated that group studies were also a handful that she could successfully apply. She said she was quite democratic not to force and insist the students to join the groups. She also did reading activities by getting the students involved. Esra presented the class just like playing a game. She said she brought some objects, put them on the table and covered with a blanket, and called some volunteers to touch one of the objects without looking what it is. Then, questions and answers followed in order to figure out the object. Zeynep expressed that she used role-play effectively:

For instance, once in my girl’s class we were learning the pronouns. One of the students used some handmade materials to be a boy, and changed her voice
pretending like a boy. While mentioning the masculine pronoun, we were saying “he,” “him,” etc.

Nil said she applied listening activities together with singing. She said she made them listen several times and then asked them questions.

Teachers stated that they did speaking activities as well. Ebrar found the way of speaking English without mentioning any Turkish word in the class, and made the students mandatorily speak in English. She said it worked and made the students speak in English. Hale applied chain drilling in her constructivist teaching. She said that she threw an eraser to a student and asked a question. Then, the student named someone else, threw it to that student, and asked questions.

**Evaluation.** When the teachers were asked, “Have you used any kinds of new (i.e., constructivist) evaluation and assessment methods? If yes, what methods have you used for students’ assessment?” these themes were generated (see Table 16): “peer reviews” \( n = 3 \), “reading” \( n = 3 \), “performance homework” \( n = 2 \), “project” \( n = 2 \), “listening” \( n = 1 \), “homework” \( n = 1 \) and “speaking” \( n = 1 \).

Most of the participants answered that they tried to apply Constructivist evaluation techniques whereas one teacher replied that she did not. Gamze said: “Indeed, I don’t think I applied some new things in evaluation. I was doing test and performance evaluation only.” Zeynep said she had her students peer reviewed each other’s work and she gave project homework. Esra said she added reading section to the tests. Hale gave performance homework. Nil told that she evaluated the students verbally. She applied a speaking test:
Table 16

*Constructivist Evaluation and Assessment*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Theme</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Peer reviews</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reading</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Performance homework</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Project</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Listening</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Homework</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Speaking</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

For the speaking test, I used an extra class hour. I gave 80 scores to rest of the test whereas I gave 20 scores to the speaking section. I did the speaking test just like how they were doing the listening activity in the class.

**Challenges/Problems.** After the participants were treated with a 10-day teacher development seminar, they tried to apply what they learned in their real classroom settings. In application they experienced several challenges/problems and overcame with some of them. First, the challenges are presented and then some solutions they used (see Table 17).

When the participants were asked, “Have you had any difficulties and/or problems after you started using constructivist best practice in teaching? If yes, can we talk about those problems in detail? What are the challenges you have experienced so far? Are these challenges from the school administration, or from the inspectors?” and “If you look back on the process, what are the challenges you have faced and how have you overcome those problems, if any?” the following seven themes were created:
Table 17

Challenges/Problems Experienced

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Theme</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Insufficient class hours</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evaluation</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student resistance</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Less control in class</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Crowded classrooms</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Technical problems</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parent reaction</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Curriculum and textbook</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Colleague reaction</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

“insufficient class hours” \( (n = 3) \), “evaluation” \( (n = 3) \), “student resistance” \( (n = 2) \),
“less control in class” \( (n = 2) \), “crowded classrooms” \( (n = 2) \), “technical problems” \( (n = 2) \),
“parent reaction” \( (n = 2) \), “curriculum and textbook” \( (n = 2) \), and “colleague reaction” \( (n = 1) \)

**Insufficient class hours.** Time limitation in constructivist applications was considered an issue by the participants. Zeynep considered the time limitation as the worst obstacle. Hale said that if one wants to do constructivist activities, it requires much more time to complete the activity. Ebrar said that as a dedicated teacher, she had to continue even after class hours due to the time constrained.

**Evaluation as a challenge.** Most of the participants saw and experienced the student evaluation system as a challenge. As Hale indicated,

Evaluation is the very end of the teaching process. You cannot totally get disconnected from it. The system does not allow you. Because, if I do a lot of
speaking with the students, does it matter? No, because there is not a place for speaking in the evaluation system. If something is not in the evaluation, then whatever you do does not exist and will be ignored.

Hale also stated that the evaluation is based on some test results, only. It should be process-based.

**Student resistance.** Some participants indicated that since students got used to the traditional system, some did not realize the importance of what they were doing in terms of constructivist application. Esra said that some students were resisting at the beginning, but they got used to and were convinced that they were helping them learn English after a while.

**Less control in class.** Two of the teachers have mentioned some problems related to classroom management in terms of controlling and setting discipline. Esra stated that even though she likes to apply constructivist techniques, sometimes she had difficulty in setting discipline and controlling students during group studies.

**Crowded classes.** Some teachers expressed that having overcrowded classes is a challenge for them. For instance, Esra mentioned:

Especially the classes are overcrowded. Boys’ classes are 30-40 or more. My only problem is the overcrowdedness of the classrooms. In such classes, I can only deal with and/or interact with 10-15 students effectively and efficiently. The rest may have been neglected that in turn may make them less focused on the topic. Plus, such conditions may sometimes distract the topic and class.
**Lack of technical devices.** Nil said that the lack of technical devices and support made her carry her laptop and loudspeakers and other materials with her all the time. She had to put up with those entire burdens in order to run the class with those new applications. It was truly tiresome for her.

**Parent reaction.** Parents should be taken into consideration. As Gamze pointed out, one can occasionally get reactions from parents because they have anxiety about standardized tests. For instance, some constructivist applications may be seen as games and waste of time rather than English teaching.

**Curriculum and textbooks.** Some teachers felt a dilemma between applying Constructivist techniques and at the same time complying and catching up with the standard curriculum and textbooks. As indicated:

> While conducting constructivist applications, I sometimes have difficulty in trying to follow the curriculum and catch up with the units of the textbook. As everyone knows that standardized tests are prepared based on the textbooks and grammar. Further, when inspector comes, she or he asks questions on the one type curriculum.

**Colleague reaction.** The participants have also uttered views on the reactions coming from the colleagues. As quoted: “People around you can constitute impediments to you time to time. They even try to thwart and demotivate you rather than support and encourage/motivate.” This participant continued to explain some reasons of that reaction: First, those teachers may not want to change their traditional styles, therefore feel threatened by the new approach. Second, trying to do
constructivist applications requires the teachers dedicate more time and effort than before, but someone outside may perceive this as too much effort and time as show off to the administration; “but I don’t have such intent. I only try to apply constructivist methods and achieve my teaching goals.”

**Overcoming challenges.** Responses by the participants to the question of “As a constructivist educator yourself now, what have you done to overcome these problems?” have the following themes (see Table 18): “explanation & persuasion” \((n = 4)\), “perseverance” \((n = 4)\), “extra time and effort” \((n = 4)\), “material support” \((n = 3)\), “alignment to the curriculum/textbook” \((n = 2)\), “valuing student” \((n = 2)\), and “ignorance” \((n = 1)\).

Table 18

**Overcoming Challenges**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Theme</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Explanation and persuasion</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perseverance</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extra time and effort</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Material support</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alignment to the curriculum/textbook</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Valuing student</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ignorance</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Explanation and persuasion.** Some teachers have declared to get over the challenges/problems by persuasion. As Zeynep expressed, the stakeholders can be a problem during the application, but they can be also overcome by explanation and
persuasion. She said that she talked to the families, explained it to them and convinced them.

**Perseverance.** Teachers used perseverance and consistency in overcoming some problems. Ebrar and Nil claimed that the teachers should not give up easily. Both of them insisted to continue with the Constructivist applications patiently to achieve the goal.

**Extra time and effort.** Most of the participants complained about the time limitation for the English classes. But they could also found ways to overcome this problem. For instance Zeynep said that she get over with the problem with her own extra efforts and time. She said that, sometimes even if the class ends, she continued.

**Material support.** Some participants provided extra materials and devices in order to overcome the lack of materials and devices problem in their institution. Zeynep expressed that for the role-plays she was bringing some relevant materials. Sometimes, she was having the students bring their own materials such as costumes. Nil said that she was bringing her own technological devices from her house in order to fill the gap.

**Alignment to the curriculum/textbook.** The teachers also aligned and adjusted their Constructivist applications to the curriculum and textbook in order to handle some challenges. Ebrar said that since there was no escape from the standard curriculum and textbook, the best way was to run the class activities in balance in order to save some time for the curriculum requirement. Nil expressed that until the seminar she thought that the issue was something as either/or. But, she realized and did alignment and adjustments to the standard curriculum and schedule.
**Valuing student.** Gamze stated that the approach is critically important in order to control and make them respect the teacher. She said that if someone valued the students they value that person, as well. She added that she was able to get along very well with the problematic students in the school.

**Ignorance.** One participant also used ‘ignorance’ in addition to explanations and persuasion. Zeynep said,

When I talked to the families, they were convinced and respected and even supported. However, when I did try to explain to some colleagues, they did not seem to be convinced. For those ones, I just used the ‘ignorance,’ and imagined that they were not there.

**Insights gained.** When the participants were asked, “What insights do you think you gained by participating in a professional development program in foreign language teaching in Turkey?” the following themes were generated (see Table 19): “teacher key person” \((n = 3)\), “no excuse” \((n = 1)\), “compliance with constructivism” \((n = 1)\), “good for less active and unexplored” \((n = 1)\), “permanent learning” \((n = 1)\), and “effective even after class” \((n = 1)\). In addition, I also asked, “What do you think about the importance and the strengths of learning community?”

**Teacher key person.** The participants in this project indicated that the key person in teaching and switching into a new system is the teacher. Esra emphasized that MoNE cannot be successful in a new educational system unless the teachers are convinced and involved, as they are the implementers.
Table 19

*Insights Gained*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Theme</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Teacher key person</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No excuse</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Compliance with constructivism</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Good for less active and unexplored</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Permanent learning</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Effective even after class</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*No excuses.* The participants expressed that after their experience, they revealed that there are no excuses for teachers in terms of putting some techniques into practice. Zeynep claimed that nothing can prevent a teacher to profess her job. She continued that teaching can be done in any circumstance and context no matter what the conditions are, as long as the teacher wants.

*Compliance with constructivism.* The teachers talked about the compliance of teaching English applying constructivist approach, which is student-centered, relevant with real and daily life, and where students learn by experiencing. Ebrar said that she is convinced that teaching English as a second language is complying with constructivist approach, or vice versa, and should be used no matter what, as it was clear that traditional methods did not work for years.

*Good for less active and unexplored.* Teachers argued that the traditional system is good for a particular group of students, usually the more hardworking ones. On the
contrary, constructivism is good for every pupil in the class in terms of getting them engaged and revealing their unexplored skills and abilities.

Permanente learning. The teachers stated that they noticed how the constructivist applications affected the students in a positive way, and made them learn permanently. Zeynep said, “If the student forgets quickly what is taught, then learning does not exist. What I experienced was, the students could even remember the issues of prior couple weeks. That is what I call learning, a permanent learning.”

Seminar effect continued. The effects of constructivist seminar and applications may exceed the classroom borders, or even the school borders. As indicated:

When you do and apply a constructivist activity, its effects extends/continues after the class as well. For instance, when a class does not a have teacher for some reasons, my classes were offering the on-duty-teacher to sing English songs that we learned in the class. In another class, my students tell her teacher that they learned English songs (Twinkle Twinkle Little Star and Jingle Bells) in the English class, and asked for permission to sing them. When I heard these and other effects, I was so so happy.

Discussion of Interviews

The interview data from the six English teachers working in two public schools in Turkey revealed some interesting and notable findings. With the qualitative analysis of the interviews, I tried to get some answers to research questions of this dissertation.

The first interview was done before the teacher development seminar, whereas the rest of the interviews were done in four different intervals after the seminar. In the first
interview, it was intended to get the demographic information of the participants, and to figure out what they already know about constructivism. The second interview was done right after the seminar in order to get the participants’ reflections and opinions about the 10-day seminar. Different than the first and second interviews, the third, fourth, and fifth interviews were conducted after the teachers started to apply what they have learned in the seminar in their classroom settings in order to understand how they apply constructivism into their teaching, to get opinions about their experiences and the difficulties they face and how they overcome these problems. And also, some insights about doing professional development in foreign language teaching in Turkey were gained.

As a result of the first interviews, it was seen that most of the participants did not have satisfactory knowledge and were not well-informed about constructivism. Some heard the term of constructivism, but was not really sure what it was about. Furthermore, most of them were not even aware that the Turkish National Education System was switched to constructivism back in 2005. In this context, the MoNE was considered as the responsible party that did not provide the stakeholders, such as the administrators, teachers, students, and parents with the necessary information about the system change. It was thought that the teachers as the key persons and the primary implementers of the system should have been informed and trained via teacher development seminars. If MoNE organized some, they were either ineffective or inefficient. The inappropriate implementations in the teacher development seminars organized by MoNE made the participants have prejudices and negative perceptions about them.
In this regard, in the second interviews, it was said by some of the participants that they liked the seminar being democratic and voluntary based. However, they also said that due to the prejudice they had towards the seminar, at the beginning, they had low expectations about the seminar. The teachers voluntarily joined the project in order to improve themselves, learn new teaching skills, and enrich their understanding of constructivism and its applications. Based on the responses of all participants, they found the teacher development seminar very beneficial and helpful in many ways. For some teachers, the seminar was a turning point, and it made them more enthusiastic in their teachings. It was also indicated that the seminar was so effective that it changed their views, perspectives, and teaching styles. It also helped some teachers look at their professional life, see their mistakes, and reflect on their mistakes. They said that they had an opportunity to learn about constructivism. Even the ones who had some previous knowledge about it said that they gained knowledge on constructivism as a theory and also its practical applications. One of the strengths of the seminar, according to their statements, is its being presented in a constructivist way. In other words, you practiced what you said, they said, and this was a distinctive feature of this seminar from the ones held by the MoNE. They learned the foundations of constructivism so well that they even shared some of their plans including some tentative teaching techniques for the coming semester.

In the rest of the interviews, the participants expressed that they were successful in applying what they learned during the teacher development seminar. They used constructivist activities such as creating dialogues and stories, pair work, group work, and
role plays which allow students to actively participate in the learning process, and construct new knowledge by themselves individually or in groups. However, one teacher said that she could apply only some of the constructivist techniques in her classes. Although she was the first who volunteered to join the project, and was the most eager and enthusiastic about the project, she considered herself partially successful. According to her, things in real life may not go as smoothly as planned on paper and expected. For instance, she had difficulty in classroom management during the group work as the classes were overcrowded. The physical settings of the classrooms were not appropriate for the constructivist activities. This shows that besides the qualifications of teachers, design of the physical settings of the classrooms is also important for the effective application of constructivism. In Turkey, although the education system has been changed into constructivism, the physical conditions of the schools and the classrooms have not been designed according to what constructivism required. Therefore, it was inevitable for the teachers to have had difficulties in the applying constructivism.

In the interviews, the participants talked about some other challenges and difficulties they experienced. For instance, most of the teachers complained about the time restraint due to the curriculum they have to follow. The content of the curriculum is very dense, and the teachers are required to include all topics in the curriculum. They also stated that because of the fact that there are still nationwide standardized tests to enter the secondary and higher education in Turkey, students and families regard the constructivist in-class activities as time consuming.
Some participants also said that they could not use the constructivist evaluation techniques effectively. When MoNE changed the traditional system into constructivism, the evaluation aspect was ignored. Whereas teaching is expected to be process based, the evaluation is still outcome based. In this context, the participants said they gave some extra project and performance assignments to the students, and they evaluated all in-class listening, speaking, and writing activities as a part of the evaluation.

As expressed, the teachers got more tired than before, spent more time on class preparations than before, but were happier and enjoyed what they were doing, and believed it was worth it. Their belief in the necessity and the importance of constructivism as a new notion in teaching is very important for the success of application of the new curriculum.

In the interviews, the participants also stated the importance of strong belief in the necessity of constructivism to get motivated to apply it. Due to such obstacles and challenges, it was thought that it was not easy to apply constructivism in Turkey context, but was not impossible, either. If teachers really believe in the philosophy of constructivism, the importance and the necessity of using constructivist approach for more effective education, and permanent learning, they can find alternative ways to reach their goals. Teacher development seminars have a big role to get the teachers to believe in the importance of constructivism. Beside this, creating professional communities where teachers have critical conversations and exchange ideas with each other is also considered important and beneficial by the participants. It was also expressed that it was
necessary to have like-minded colleagues to collaborate, cooperate, and discuss to get motivated, to overcome the challenges and exchange ideas on teaching.

Teachers are key factors in teaching and implementing the change. It would not be wrong to claim that if teachers are convinced and motivated enough to implement the new approach, they will do it no matter what the conditions are. It was perceived that to motivate the teachers to change themselves and their teaching styles, it is very important to provide well organized teacher development seminars, which would also provide a basis for creating the professional communities where like-minded teachers get together, have critical conversations, exchange ideas, and talk about the problems and how to overcome them.

**In-Class Observational Fieldnotes and Artifacts**

In this section, a summary of in-class observational fieldnotes and artifacts is made. Findings of in-class observational fieldnotes and artifacts for each participant are presented. The section ends with a discussion of in-class observational fieldnotes and artifacts.

**Summary of In-Class Observational Fieldnotes and Artifacts**

Besides the interviews as a primary source of data collection for this study, I did in-class observations as an additional data collection strategy in order to find additional stronger evidence to support the analysis (Patton, 1990), and the assertions and to establish trustworthiness. Doing in-class observations in two public schools gave me an opportunity to observe the six selected participants in their natural classroom settings in order to examine if they changed their teaching styles and course designs and to see how
effectively they applied constructivist in-class activities in teaching English in Turkey. Without the observations, the research might have been incomplete, just relying on the participants’ words, but not their actions (Patton, 1990).

During the Fall 2014 semester, I observed each participant in her classroom three times. I informed all of the participants before my visits. During the class observations, I took detailed notes including descriptive and reflective points, such as the recording date and time, physical conditions of the schools and the classrooms, activities that took place during the observations, and the reflections. I wrote almost anything that I saw, felt, thought, and noticed relevant and remarkable on the observational fieldnotes sheet.

Then, I typed these notes in a more organized way before the analysis. I looked for similar, repeated, and consistent applications in order to cluster together, categorize, and create some groupings. I read and reread the notes and took some more notes whenever necessary. My having read the notes multiple times revealed some trends and meaningful results. I tried to generate descriptions of the teachers’ applications and change. Again, after the data were taken apart in categories, I brought them together in a logical way and made meaning and conclusions out of them (Holly et al., 2009).

In addition, I also used artifacts (Hatch, 2002) from lessons. I gathered some students’ homework assignments as artifacts. I randomly selected five assignments from each class and then developed a file for them. I put the homework assignments in these files during the semester for additional evidence to see if constructivist things went on in the classrooms.
The artifacts were analyzed mostly to evaluate how the theory was implemented in the classrooms and if the lesson was taught in a constructivist way. I checked all file folders for each class, and read and examined them in order to find out any additional evidence for the research argument. During this process, I took some notes, and checked for emerging themes and patterns. After the data were taken apart, I brought them together in a logical way in order to make meaningful conclusions out of them.

Findings of In-class Observational Fieldnotes and Artifacts: Ebrar

First observation—21 October, 2014. In the classroom, a detailed reading activity was done, and comparing and contrasting strategy was applied. The text was about the Japanese Education System. The class started with a general discussion on the content of the reading text. Almost all students joined the in-class discussions. As a teaching method, Ebrar used group work, which supported the cooperative learning. She made meaningful real life connections asking the students to make a comparison between the Turkish and Japanese Educational Systems. Instead of having the role of instructor, she acted like a guide. She was able to manage the active participation of all students. She let her students to be creative. With the encouragement of their teacher, the students used different visuals to demonstrate the similarities and differences between the systems in the classroom. For example, one student used Venn diagrams; another student put the differences in a circle representing Japanese flag, and the similarities in a crescent shape representing Turkish flag. In the reading activity that she did in the classroom, she asked her students to guess the meanings from the context, and comprehend the reading text by
using the comparing and contrasting strategy. It was observed that she successfully applied some constructivist activities in her class.

**Second observation—25 November, 2014.** The name of the unit was “Sports Activities.” The students were supposed to learn the usage of frequency adverbs, such as sometimes, usually, generally, and always to express how often they do things in their daily lives. Ebrar did not teach the grammar structure using the traditional methods, rather she preferred using different and various participatory activities and educational games. One student came to the board, had a famous sportsman in mind, and the rest asked as many questions as possible to guess who this famous person was. I observed that her using these kinds of educational games helped the students actively participate in the activities and get more involved in the class. Almost all of the students were awake from the beginning of the class until the end although it was the first class in the morning.

**Third observation—5 January, 2015.** In this class, Ebrar displayed a movie called “Slum Dog Millionaire.” She also used some visuals, such as a poster of the movie, and a map of India in order to create a better and more constructivist learning environment. By asking some guiding questions time to time during the movie, she managed to keep the students alert and active during the activity. She asked, “Who wants to be a millionaire?” before starting the movie to get the students’ attention. Some other questions were also asked during the movie to get the students’ attention back as it was a long movie. For example, she stopped the movie and asked, “Have you noticed something important/interesting here?” and “What did he/she imply here?” Some time later, she stopped the movie, and asked the students, “What do you think will happen at
the end?” and told them to write down the answers to this question in one or two sentences. At the end, she asked the students if the movie ended as they had expected and wanted them to compare their guesses with the end of the movie. Before ending the class that day, she asked the students an inspiring question leading critical thinking: “Do you think that the things go this way in the real life, as well?” It was an interactive class; almost all students paid attention to the movie, and had good conversations while answering the questions. During the conversations, one student said, “I was wondering if the life is as just as in the movie.”

**The findings of three observations.** At the end of these three observations, it was seen that Ebrar used methods, techniques, and materials that constructivism requires. Based on the observations, it can be said that she had interactive classes and good communications with her students. It was also seen that almost all of the students actively and enthusiastically participated in the classroom activities and they seemed very happy in her classes. She convinced me that she did not change her ideas in mind only, but she also changed her applications and teaching style. As a result, it can be said that her applying mostly the constructivist ways of teaching in her classes is an indicator that she learned, believed, internalized, and applied what she learned about constructivism.

**The findings of five artifacts.** The artifacts from Ebrar’s classroom (see Table 20) included a biography of a famous actor, life story of a celebrity, poster of a book introduction, a dialogue between a doctor and patient, and half-grammar half-dictionary book created in English.
Table 20

*The Artifacts From Ebrar’s Classroom*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No</th>
<th>Artifact</th>
<th>Explanation</th>
<th>Evaluation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Biography</td>
<td>A student wrote a biography of her favorite actor.</td>
<td>Traditional</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Life story</td>
<td>A group study on writing a life story of a celebrity. The study was presented in the class using different activities.</td>
<td>Constructivist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Poster</td>
<td>A book was read extensively, and a poster was prepared to introduce the book to the class.</td>
<td>Constructivist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Written dialogue</td>
<td>A dialogue between a doctor and patient was written, and it was performed in the class.</td>
<td>Constructivist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Half-grammar half-dictionary book</td>
<td>30 pages long half-grammar half-dictionary book was created.</td>
<td>Constructivist</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Based on the artifacts, it was seen that Ebrar was mostly constructivist except the first artifact that was about writing a biography of a person the students admired. One student introduced her favorite actor using his photos and described him using adjectives. Even though she allowed them to select the people themselves, the overall application was traditional. However, the second artifact was an assignment on writing a life story of a celebrity. This assignment was prepared by a group of students cooperatively and collaboratively. The students decided on the celebrity first, and then provided a chronological life story of him and his family members. They also presented their assignment in the classroom. During the presentation, the students worked in a good coordination; they played some of his famous songs, and also used his posters as visuals. The activity included speaking, listening, and group study. The third artifact was a
constructivist product of a reading activity. The student selected one of the books offered by the teacher, read it, prepared a poster to introduce the book to her classmates and show why she liked the book. Then, she prepared some other activities related to the book, such as a multiple-choice test that had 10 questions, and a word puzzle. The fourth artifact was writing a dialogue between a doctor and patient. It was performed in the class, as well. In this study, the writing and speaking skills in the target language were integrated. The final artifact was a student created half-grammar half-dictionary book of 30 colorful pages, which was very creative and productive. Ebrar guided, inspired, and motivated the students to be creative and productive.

Findings of In-Class Observational Fieldnotes and Artifacts: Esra

First observation—24 October, 2014. Esra introduced the text titled “Hey Jamie.” It was about two young students talking about their summer plans. She asked the students to read the text silently first, and then they did the textbook exercises one by one. The techniques she used were mostly traditional. For example, to get students’ attention, she used asking and answering questions strategy, which is a teacher-centered way. As the lesson was planned in a traditional way, she had difficulty motivating the students in the topic. Most of the students were busy with some unrelated things during the activity. Not every student got involved in the activity of answering the questions about the text. Only five or six students answered the questions. This might be because she did not use any visual materials, such as maps, posters, video clips, photographs, PowerPoint presentations, and so forth.
Towards the end of the class, she asked her students to work in pairs and write a phone conversation between the two characters of the reading passage. She also said they would act it out in the classroom the following week. This activity was engaging. Using a pair work activity allowed the students to work collaboratively, and they had a more interactive class environment.

**Second observation—15 December, 2014.** In this class, Esra revised the usage of “verb to be.” She started the class with a song, called “Big Big Girl.” I observed that she motivated all students using the song and got them involved in the activity enthusiastically. The students had a fun class activity. She used the song to enhance students’ listening skill. They also had a chance to practice stress, intonation, and pronunciation. As the words of the song were easy, they all could do this practice easily. Students also sang the song, and this made them active participants. This activity was also important as it gave an opportunity to the students to be exposed to the target language listening to an authentic song. Singing the song all together at the end of the class left a glimpse of smile on their faces. As the lyrics of the song were easy, all students learned it easily, did the required activities, and sang it all together at the end. In this lesson, Esra applied the constructivist principles more when compared with the previous lesson.

**Third observation—15 January, 2015.** The name of the unit was “My Home.” In this class, the students learned the parts and sections of a house. Esra started the class with a warm-up activity, which worked well to get students’ attention at the beginning of the class. She put some real objects on the table, covered them with a fabric tablecloth,
and asked the students to come to the table, touch the objects and guess what they were. Here, the students had a chance to learn the new vocabulary by touching and feeling in a fun way.

Then, Esra drew a house with its sections on the board. In order to describe the sections of a house, such as basement, first floor, and attic, she used some real objects. Using real objects is an important aspect of constructivist approach. Interestingly, she pasted some of the objects (using tape) on the related sections of the house she drew on the board. This was a good activity but instead of her doing it, she could have asked the students to come to the board, and stick the objects where they belonged.

Esra told the students to work in pairs by asking and answering questions to each other about their own houses. By doing this, she provided the students with a realistic and relevant context where they could make meaningful connections between their real lives and what they had been learning in the classroom.

**The findings of three observations.** At the end of these three observations, it was seen that Esra did more teacher-centered activities in her first lesson. It was seen that she could not get rid of old traditional teaching habits completely, and used them from time to time in her teaching. This was just the first observation, and I think it is normal that she might not have internalized some new techniques, yet. I noticed that when traditional teaching techniques are used in the classrooms, and when teaching is not supported by a variety of different kinds of audiovisual teaching materials, it is hard to motivate the students and get them engaged in the topic.
In the second and third lessons, she used more constructivist methods and teaching techniques. It can be said that she has made much progress in terms of putting new things into practice since the first lesson. She used the audiovisual materials and the real objects effectively. She used an authentic song in order to enhance the listening skills of the students and to practice stress, intonation, and pronunciation. All students enjoyed the activity. Here, I witnessed that teaching and learning do not have to be boring, and should not be regarded as loading information/knowledge only, students can learn, maybe more effectively, while they are enjoying, too.

**The findings of five artifacts.** The artifacts from Esra’s classroom included a dialogue that took place in a restaurant, poster about one’s dream house, poster of a family tree, an invitation card for a music festival, and a biography of a classmate (see Table 21).

There were assignments and products that were constructivist, though not all. The first artifact was about food and beverages. Two students created a dialogue in which a story took place in a restaurant. The conversations in the dialogue included the language taught in the classroom, such as “would like/would not like,” “do you mind if,” and “likes/dislikes.” In the second artifact, Esra had her students revise the new vocabulary in a real context; it was about the parts and sections of their “dream house.” One student drew her dream house and its sections on a pink cardboard. She even used some real photos of her family, and pasted them to their rooms. She presented it in the classroom interactively. The third artifact showed that Esra had the students make connections between the topics they learned in the classroom and their real lives. The students were
Table 21

*The Artifacts from Esra’s Classroom*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No</th>
<th>Artifact</th>
<th>Explanation</th>
<th>Evaluation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Dialogue</td>
<td>A dialogue about a story which took place in a restaurant was written. The structures of “would like/would not like,” “do you mind if,” and “likes/dislikes” were used in it.</td>
<td>Traditional</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Poster</td>
<td>A dream house with its sections was drawn on a cardboard. The student used real photos of her family, and pasted them to their rooms.</td>
<td>Constructivist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Poster</td>
<td>A family tree was created by a student; she used real photos of her family members to create the family tree.</td>
<td>Constructivist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Invitation card</td>
<td>An invitation card for a music festival was created.</td>
<td>Constructivist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Biography</td>
<td>In order to write a biography of a classmate, one student prepared a questionnaire and gathered data about her friend.</td>
<td>Constructivist</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

supposed to create a family tree for this assignment. One student used some real photos of her family members in her assignment. She also introduced the family members one by one providing their demographic information in speech bubbles. The fourth artifact was preparing an invitation card for any kinds of social occasions. One student decided on creating an invitation card for a music festival and decorated his card using his creativity; he even found an interesting slogan for the event. Some necessary information, such as the date, venue, and dressing code, was also included in the card. The last artifact was a biography of a classmate titled, “The Best Friend.” One student prepared a questionnaire with some questions to ask her friend. She asked the questions to her friend to get detailed information about her; the conversation was in English.
Using the information gathered, she wrote the biography in which she used some structures such as “like/dislike, love/hate,” “descriptive adjectives,” as well. In her assignment, the student used speaking, listening, and writing skills.

Findings of In-Class Observational Fieldnotes and Artifacts: Gamze

First observation—30 September, 2014. The topic of the lesson was the food and drinks. In the beginning of the lesson, Gamze used teaching methods, such as asking and answering questions, instructing, and demonstration, which are all teacher centered methods. She raised the students’ attention to the listening text just by saying, “Today, our topic is about food and drinks.” Then, she asked them to listen to the text carefully and answer the following questions: “Where do you think the story is happening? Were they at a breakfast, lunch, or dinner? What are the names of food and drinks mentioned in the text?” As observed, the language was not presented in a real context; rather, the necessary structures and words were presented in a decontextualized way.

Later in the same class, she used a kinesthetic in-class activity, which kept almost all students awake and energetic till the end of the class. There were 36 students in the classroom. Gamze asked the students to name some food and drinks and wrote the names next to the numbers on the board (1. Apple, 2. Pizza, 3. Orange juice, 4. Pasta . . . 35. Cheese, 36. Coffee). Then, one student, number 35, stood up and said: “I like ‘Cheese,’ but I don’t like ‘Apples.’” Then, whoever was ‘Apple,’ number 1, stood up and said: “I like ‘Apples,’ but I don’t like ‘Orange juice.’” What was important here was all students being alert to hear when their names were called. The student who did not hear his or her name called was eliminated and his or her name was erased from the board. In this
activity, all students had a chance to speak up and they all listened to their friends carefully not to be eliminated. They both practiced and revised the ‘likes/dislikes’ structures, and the names of the food and drinks they learned in the class in an enjoyable way.

Regarding the assignment for the following week, Gamze gave two choices to the students, and did not force them to do a certain thing in a certain way, which is one of the important aspects of constructivist approach. For the first choice, the students were required to ask their parents some questions such as “What do you like eating and drinking for breakfast/lunch/dinner?” “How often do you eat out?” and so forth, write a dialogue based on their conversations with the parents, and act it out in the classroom. This assignment allowed the students to naturally apply what they learned in the classroom context into the real life, and also encouraged students’ creativity and imagination. The second choice was writing a dialogue about the food and drinks they like/don’t like and act it out in pairs in the classroom, which supported cooperative learning.

**Second observation—4 November, 2014.** Gamze started the class just by saying, “Today’s topic is comparatives, as you remember we started this topic last week.” She gave brief information about the plan for the class to get students’ attention to the topic. In the beginning of the class, they revised what was done the previous week. The students came to the board and wrote the comparative forms of the adjectives. Then, they made sentences using the comparative forms of the adjectives. She taught the grammar structure without contextualizing it.
Regarding students’ evaluations, instead of using constructivist evaluation techniques such as self-evaluation, peer-evaluation, portfolio, she used traditional evaluation techniques such as written exams. As far as I recognized when looking at an example written exam, she could not make considerable changes on the written exam style, either. There was a grammar part (fill in the blanks questions), vocabulary part (match the words with the definitions), some multiple-choice questions, and a short reading passage with four questions to be answered according to the text. When I talked to her after the class about this issue, she stated that the written exams were still mandatory. Due to this reason, she said she could not change the style in the written exam, but instead, she evaluated all in-class presentations of the students and their performances in the speaking activities, their written in-class activities and some other homework assignments. By doing this, she tried to include the language skills, such as speaking, listening, reading, and writing skills in the evaluation process.

Gamze gave performance assignments to the students. She prepared a rubric (the steps and criteria) as we discussed in the teacher development seminar. Then, she gave clear instructions to the students and provided them with detailed evaluation criteria. She gave five topics to the students to select one among them. Her providing options and alternative topics with the students could be regarded as democratic and constructivist. However, some of the topics, one of which was “write 20 sentences with visuals after explaining the five rules of comparatives” were still traditional; she could have designed the topics by considering the constructivist principles.
Third observation—30 December, 2014. In the third observation, it was seen that rather than using traditional methods, Gamze preferred more modern constructivist ones in teaching. She tried to apply what we did in the professional development seminar after our conversations with her between the classes. Every time I visited, I noticed that she was much more confident and creative on applying new ways.

In her teaching in this class, Gamze made a meaningful connection between the topic and the real lives of the students while presenting the topic, “Saving the Planet and Clean Environment.” She did a group work activity, which allowed the students to actively participate in the learning process. In this activity, the students were supported to learn cooperatively. During the group work, however, she could not redesign the students’ desks as they were too big to move; the classroom was very small and it got noisy during the activity.

The findings of three observations. At the end of these three observations, it was seen that when she was supported and motivated, and necessary conditions were created, Gamze was able to apply the constructivist ways in teaching. By applying constructivist teaching methods, such as pair work and group work, she was able to create interactive and cooperative learning environment. However, no matter how hard she tried and wanted to apply these new ways in teaching, it was seen that she could not get rid of her old teaching habits completely and used traditional teacher-centered methods time to time. For example, she just gave verbal explanations and information to the students to get their attention at the beginning of one of her classes instead of starting the
class telling a joke, giving real life examples, using video clips, or some posters and pictures, or real objects, and so forth.

I observed that the classrooms were not designed according to what the constructivist system required. This could be the reason for her not being able to apply constructivist principles at all times. In other words, there are some necessary constructivist conditions, such as the physical settings of the classrooms and schools, the number of the students in the classrooms, and the sufficient amount of teaching materials in the classrooms, and so forth. When these conditions are not met in the schools, it gets harder for the teachers to get rid of their old teaching habits and apply the new ones.

In addition, there are still outcome based standardized tests that are done nationwide to enter secondary and higher education in Turkey. When the MoNE changed the system in 2000, the evaluation and assessment aspect of the education system remained the same. Whereas the new system requires using constructivist methods in teaching, the evaluation is still expected to be done in traditional ways, namely written exams three times a semester. Based on the in-class observations, I can say that this was a big challenge that prevented teachers from applying constructivist principles effectively and efficiently in evaluation.

**The findings of five artifacts.** The artifacts from Gamze’s classroom included a cardboard about geographic shapes, another cardboard about environment protection, project on protecting environment, brochure for the city of Ankara, and diorama about leopards (see Table 22).
Table 22

*The Artifacts From Gamze’s Classroom*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No</th>
<th>Artifact</th>
<th>Explanation</th>
<th>Evaluation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Cardboard</td>
<td>For the performance assignment, one student wrote the definitions of some geographic shapes, and pasted some pictures on a cardboard. But, the information was copied and pasted directly from a web page.</td>
<td>Traditional</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Cardboard</td>
<td>A student wrote 20 suggestion sentences about what to do to protect the environment in this performance assignment.</td>
<td>Traditional</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Project</td>
<td>A group of students made an invention that was constructed out of some recycled materials in their houses. In addition, they wrote a brief report about the purpose of the project and presented it in the classroom.</td>
<td>Constructivist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Brochure</td>
<td>A group of students created a tourist brochure for the city of Ankara. Some members of the group drew the pictures, some designed the brochure, and some others wrote the introduction and explanations.</td>
<td>Constructivist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Diorama</td>
<td>A group of students created a diorama about a leopard and its habitat as a project. One group member gathered the necessary information, one student created the diorama, another one wrote the brief report, and they all presented it in the classroom.</td>
<td>Constructivist</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It was seen that some of the artifacts were constructivist and some were done in a traditional way. For the first artifact, Gamze asked her students to prepare a performance assignment about the geographical shapes. One student wrote the definitions of some geographic shapes, and pasted some real pictures of them on a cardboard. It was apparent that the student spent some time on preparing this assignment, but it was still a traditional one as the information was copied and pasted directly from a web page. The
topic of the second artifact was well determined, but it was traditional, as well. The students were asked to write 20 suggestion sentences on protecting the environment. In this context, one student wrote 20 sentences using the language “should/should not,” “had better/had better not” about how to protect the environment and in his performance assignment. Comparatively, however, even though the third artifact was also about protecting environment, it was constructively applied. A group of students made an invention that was constructed out of some recycled materials in their houses. In addition, they wrote a brief report about the purpose of the project and presented it in the classroom. This project allowed the students to use different language skills, such as speaking, listening, and writing, and enhanced their creativity. The fourth artifact was also a constructivist product as the students worked in groups. It was about preparing a tourist brochure. A group of students created a tourist guide for the city of Ankara. Some members of the group drew the pictures, some designed the brochure, and some others wrote the introduction and explanations.

In the fifth artifact, Gamze asked her students to create a diorama about an animal and its habitat as a project. A group of students created a diorama about a leopard and its habitat. One member of the group gathered the necessary information about leopards, one student created the diorama using a shoebox, another one wrote a brief report about their project, and they presented it in the classroom. It was a group work activity, which enhanced students’ creativity and imagination, and also let the students learn by doing and using the speaking, reading, writing, and listening skills in English.
Findings of In-Class Observational Fieldnotes and Artifacts: Hale

First observation—1 October, 2014. In this class, the students were supposed to learn how to ask and answer questions related to the directions. Hale started the class making meaningful connections with the previous knowledge. She repeated some language taught before, “How many? There is/There are” to make a smooth transition to the current topic, which was asking and giving directions. In other words, she guided the students from what they previously knew to what they are to learn in this class.

Then, Hale gave the students a worksheet with a small map and some multiple-choice questions related to the map. She used a teacher-centered, asking and answering strategy in this activity. Later, she asked the students to work in pairs and give directions from their houses to the school. In this activity, the students worked in pairs, and created a dialogue together.

Second observation—17 November, 2014. In this class, the students were supposed to learn the names of the seven regions in Turkey. Hale started the class using a map of Turkey with the regions on it. Using a visual at the beginning of the class got all students’ attention. She asked the students to match the names of the regions with the regions on the board. Running this activity in a competition format made the students stay alert and enthusiastic during the activity. Then, the students pasted the names of the cities on the region where they belonged. Teaching the names of the regions this way rather than making the students memorize them seemed very enjoyable and entertaining. Using some constructivist kinesthetic activities, the teacher got all students involved in the class.
Hale gave an assignment and asked the students to create “a vocabulary box” using some recycled items in their houses. Instead of asking the students to keep a vocabulary notebook as done in the traditional approach, she wanted them to write the new words they learn in each unit on a piece of paper, and put those words in their boxes. She planned to do different vocabulary activities in teaching time to time, in the beginning, in the middle, or even at the end of the lesson using the words in the boxes, which was an outcome of constructivist way of thinking to enhance students’ creativity and imagination.

**Third observation—17 December, 2014.** In this class, the students were supposed to learn some body parts and health problems. Hale started the class with a song related to the body parts; by doing this she got students’ attention and motivated them in the topic. The song was well chosen; the lyrics were related to the body parts. In order to teach vocabulary and enhance the learners’ listening abilities, she used some authentic audiovisual materials. On her laptop, she played another song that was called “Skeleton Dance.” This song was engaging, the students sang the song altogether, and did the body movements. This activity let the students use all of their senses, such as seeing and hearing, and also move their bodies while dancing.

At the end of the class, Hale asked the students to work in pairs and write a short dialogue on the health problems, such as toothache, headache, and fever. She said that they would perform it in the class and wear some accessories if wished. One pair volunteered to role-play. One student even used a scarf on her head indicating that she
had a headache. In this class, she took different types of learners, such as visual, auditory, and kinesthetic into consideration.

**The findings of three observations.** At the end of these three observations, it was seen that although Hale used some teacher-centered activities and had controlling and transmitting roles in teaching from time to time, she mostly applied constructivist, student-centered activities in teaching.

In one class, Hale started teaching making meaningful connections with the knowledge from the previous classes, which was an important aspect of constructivism, to reveal the background knowledge of the students first and construct the new knowledge on it. In terms of vocabulary teaching, she aimed her students to learn the new words and use them in social contexts when necessary instead of imposing the students to memorize the new words to pass the tests only. In the activities she did in the classroom, she included almost all students with different learning styles, such as visual, auditory, and kinesthetic. It was observed that when she used the constructivist, participatory, and engaging activities in teaching, the students enjoyed the class, actively participated in the activities, and seemed more eager to learn. In short, it can be said that she was quite traditional at the very beginning; however, she has changed a lot and used constructivist activities, despite of requiring much more time and effort, to enhance students’ language learning.

Hale used music effectively in her teaching as we talked during the teacher development seminar. In the seminar, we discussed using music in teaching in order to motivate the students at the beginning, to stir up in the middle, to get their attention at the
end of the class, or using it as a background during the class. She provided authentic auditory materials to enhance the students’ listening abilities in the target language.

**The findings of five artifacts.** The artifacts from Hale’s classroom included a cardboard having 20 sentences on it, dialogue between a police officer and citizen, 100-page dictionary, poster of a city in Turkey, and doll dressed in Turkish folkloric clothes (see Table 23).

Table 23

*The Artifacts From Hale’s Classroom*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No</th>
<th>Artifact</th>
<th>Explanation</th>
<th>Evaluation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Cardboard</td>
<td>One student wrote 20 sentences on attitudes of a good and bad citizen.</td>
<td>Traditional</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Dialogue</td>
<td>A student wrote a dialogue between a police officer and a citizen. The officer warned the citizen who violated the traffic rules.</td>
<td>Traditional</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>100-page dictionary</td>
<td>A student created a 100-page dictionary by using pictures and giving the definitions of the words in it.</td>
<td>Constructivist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Poster</td>
<td>A student introduced one city in Turkey. She did a presentation about it and pretended as if she was the mayor of that city.</td>
<td>Constructivist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Doll</td>
<td>One pair of students used a water bottle as if it was a doll and dressed it up according to Turkish folkloric culture. In their presentation, they gave brief information about Turkey and Turkish culture.</td>
<td>Constructivist</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In the artifacts, the signs of both traditional and constructivist techniques were noticed. Two of them were traditional. In the first artifact, the students were asked to write 20 sentences on attitudes of a good and bad citizen. One student wrote the
sentences on a cardboard. In the second one, a student wrote a dialogue between a police officer and a citizen. The officer warned the citizen who violated the traffic rules by using “must/must not, should/should not” structures. The third artifact aimed vocabulary teaching. The student created his own 100-page dictionary by pasting pictures and giving the definitions of the words in it. He did this in a creative way. In the fourth artifact, the student introduced one city in Turkey. While she was doing her presentation in the classroom, she pretended as if she was the mayor of the city. In her presentation, she gave some general information about the city first, then, provided some specific information about the historical and touristic places, agricultural products of the city. She used some visuals, such as maps and brochures as well. This activity let the student use all four skills. The final artifact also indicated some constructivist evidence letting the students do a pair work, and using visual materials. Hale paired the students, wanted each pair to pick a country, and dress up a baby doll or anything else they would think of to introduce and present country and its culture. One pair of students used a water bottle and drew a face on it, and dressed it up according to Turkish folkloric culture. They did a brief presentation about Turkey, and Turkish culture including the information, such as the country name, flag, the nationality, the special food of the country, and the language spoken in that country. The students used their creativity. Their presentation was engaging, as well.

Findings of In-Cass Observational Fieldnotes and Artifacts: Nil

First observation—2 October, 2014. Nil started the lesson with a vocabulary game in which the students were supposed to write a story. Some students voluntarily
came to the board, and each student wrote a sentence to create a story. At the end, they had a funny story, and one student read it aloud. This activity got all students’ attention and helped to create a warm atmosphere at the beginning of the class. Then, she did a listening activity to revise the new vocabulary; for this, she used an authentic song. The students enjoyed the activities related to the song and sang it altogether at the end. Then, at the end of the class, she gave a task to the students and asked them to form groups. In their groups, they acted out as club members, set a club such as music club, fashion club, and even a horse riding club. They named and found a slogan for their club, and created a logo for it. As the activity was presented in a realistic and meaningful context, all group members did the task. Even the shy and uninterested students took part in the activity; it also enhanced students’ imagination and creativity, and allowed all students to work collaboratively; one student found the slogan, another one designed the logo, and so forth. Designing such activities, Nil showed she supported collaborative construction of knowledge in teaching.

Second observation—27 November, 2014. Nil started the class with a video clip, in which some high school students had a conversation about their likes and dislikes. This video attracted the students’ attention. In this class, she strengthened her teaching with audio-visual materials. Then, she did a speaking activity in which she asked her students to work in pairs, and talk about their favorite books, movies, authors, actors, and actresses. During the speaking activity, she had a role of a guide and facilitator; walked around the desks to see if the students were doing the task, and needed any help. At the end of the class, she did another in-class activity. She asked her students to write a short
paragraph on a piece of paper about what they liked and disliked in their school. When the students were done, she asked them to exchange their writings with each other for peer check. In this class, she integrated all four skills of teaching English, and the teacher herself was very active and interactive with the students.

**Third observation—9 January, 2015.** To get the students’ attention, Nil asked a few warm up questions relevant to the reading text in the textbook. The text was about famous artists in the world. She asked her students to read each paragraph of the reading text in the groups of fours. Each group was responsible for the paragraph to read, to present the content to the rest of the class. This reminded me of the book talk activity we did in the seminar. She followed almost each step we did in the seminar. She asked a voluntary student to have the role of a famous person she liked. The rest of the students asked her some questions in order to find out who she was. The students got involved in the activity and enjoyed it. In this class, I once more witnessed that she was able to create an interactive warm class environment one way or another.

**The findings of three observations.** At the end of these three observations, it was seen that Nil used activities that required active participation of the students. I was convinced that she believed the importance of using constructivist approach for real and permanent learning. She used a variety of groupings and let her students construct the new knowledge by themselves in a cooperative way. In her classes, she had a role as a guide and facilitator and let her students participate in the learning process actively. In reading, writing, listening, and speaking activities, she mostly used authentic materials.
Nil wanted to change the design of the desks for the group works, but the classrooms were very crowded with 30 or more students and the desks were too big and heavy to move, so she decided not to move the desks, instead asked the students turn back to the other members of their groups.

**The findings of five artifacts.** The artifacts from Nil’s classroom included an assignment on writing comparative sentences, a real life story, poster to introduce an imaginary social club, booklet designed as a menu to introduce books, and dialogue between a famous artist and an interviewer (see Table 24).

The artifacts indicated that the applications of Nil were usually constructivist, except one. The first artifact was preparing an assignment about the usage of comparative forms of the adjectives. The student provided the grammatical rules first, made sentences using the comparatives (i.e., Mount Everest is higher than Mount Ararat), and underlined the comparative forms of the adjectives in each sentence. She also drew pictures related to the sentences. The second artifact was a writing assignment. Nil asked her students to write a story about a real event that they never forgot. One student wrote a story of how she was influenced by one of her English teachers in a negative way and how that teacher caused her dislike English. Then, she told the story in the classroom. The third one was a group activity. The students were required to set social clubs. One group decided to set a swimming club. They prepared a poster in which there was a picture of swimming pool, a board, and the signs showing the directions, such as café, and telephones. They also included the contact information on the poster. One student drew the pictures, one named the club and found a slogan for it, and another one
The Artifacts From Nil’s Classroom

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No</th>
<th>Artifact</th>
<th>Explanation</th>
<th>Evaluation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Comparative sentences</td>
<td>A student prepared a homework assignment on the usage of comparative forms of the adjectives. She provided the grammatical rules first, wrote comparative sentences, and drew some pictures related to the sentences.</td>
<td>Traditional</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Story</td>
<td>One student wrote a story of how she was influenced by one of her English teachers in a negative way and how that teacher caused her dislike English.</td>
<td>Constructivist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Poster</td>
<td>A group of students prepared a poster to introduce their imaginary swimming club. One student drew the pictures on the poster, one named the club and found a slogan for it, and another one wrote the regulatory rules of their clubs.</td>
<td>Constructivist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Booklet</td>
<td>A student created a booklet for the activity titled as “Feed your Brain!” She designed it as a menu, and included the names of three books and some information about the books, such as the main characters, setting, and summary.</td>
<td>Constructivist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Dialogue</td>
<td>A pair work activity. Two students wrote a dialogue between Picasso and an interviewer. The interviewer asked some questions to Picasso to get to know him better.</td>
<td>Constructivist</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

wrote the regulatory rules of their clubs. They were also required to do a presentation on their club activities as a part of the project. The fourth artifact was on an activity titled “Feed your Brain!” There was a booklet one side of which included a menu with the names of three books to feed the brain. On the other side of the booklet, there was some information about the books, such as the main characters, setting, and summary. This activity was done in a creative and productive way.
In the final artifact, which was a pair work activity, two students wrote a dialogue between Picasso and an interviewer. The dialogue was written in an interview format in which the interviewer asked some questions to Picasso to get to know him better. Then, they performed it in the classroom. What was interesting about the interview was having some questions such as “When were you born? and When did you die?” The assignment let the students work cooperatively, and included almost all language skills.

Findings of In-Class Observational Fieldnotes and Artifacts: Zeynep

First observation—9 October, 2014. Zeynep started the class with a warm-up activity, ball throwing. In this activity, it was aimed to have the students practice asking and answering the simple questions to learn more about each other. She crumbled a piece of paper and used it as a ball; she stood up and said “my name is Zeynep,” and threw the ball at a student asking “what is your name?” Then, the student who caught the ball stood up and said “My name is Ertan,” and then he threw the ball at another friend asking the same question. After they asked the names, they did the same activity to ask some other questions. By doing this activity at the beginning of a morning class, she got all students warmed up and energized. As the whole class joined the activity, it was helpful to engage even the shy students in the learning process.

Then, Zeynep put the students in pairs and asked them to choose a country, draw that country’s flag, and put the country name and nationality on a piece of cardboard. While the students were working in their groups, she walked around the desks and checked if the students were busy with what was required and if they needed any help and guidance. When the students were done with the task, one student from each group
stood up and showed the cardboard to the rest of the classmates, and the other student said: “We are from Spain; we are Spanish and this is our flag.” As an assignment for the following week, Zeynep asked her students to work with their partners and do more research on the country to do a short presentation on the country and its culture. Almost all students did join the activities done in the classroom.

Second observation—9 December, 2014. Zeynep started the class in a traditional way. They did a reading activity. The reading text was about a student from England introducing herself to her friend living in Turkey. The text was in an e-mail format. As she did mechanical drills, and used asking and answering strategy, which is teacher-centered, she could not get the students engaged in the activity.

Then, Zeynep asked her students to write an e-mail to their imaginary e-friend from one of the English speaking countries. In the e-mail, they were expected to introduce themselves to their friends. Some students even gave information about their family members. Instead of asking the students to write a paragraph about themselves, she provided a meaningful context for the writing activity.

Third observation—8 January, 2015. Zeynep wrote the word “stationery” on the board, and then asked the students “What kind of materials do you usually see in a stationery?” She wrote the answers from the students on the board (pen, pencil, book, notebook, eraser, pencil sharpener, scissors, paper, pencil case, book case, etc.). Then, she asked her students to draw some stationery items on separate pieces of paper in order to use them in the role-play activity they would be doing. When they were done with drawing, coloring, and cutting the items, the students were asked to write a dialogue in
pairs imagining that they were in a stationary where one of the pairs would be a customer, and the other be a stationer. Some time later, she asked for volunteers to role-play. Two students came to the board and performed their dialogue. Before starting their performance, they created a stationary using the stationary objects they created, and also some real objects. Doing the performance in a stationary they created made the activity look like more realistic. Just two pairs had a chance to perform; some other volunteers could not perform as time did not allow them to do so. In this class, Zeynep used some methods, such as pair work, role-play that made the learning process more enjoyable for the students. Moreover, the students were active participants in learning; they learned by doing, drawing, coloring, cutting, and performing. They got involved in the activities from the very beginning till the end.

**The findings of three observations.** At the end of these three observations, it was seen that Zeynep mostly used the constructivist approach in teaching even though she sometimes applied the traditional ways. It was observed that she got well prepared for her classes; used a variety of different materials in teaching.

Using a variety of different participatory activities in teaching, Zeynep was successful to get even the shy students, who were generally hesitant to speak up in the classroom, participated in the learning process in an enjoyable way. She also used groupings such as pair work, and group work in teaching, which is important in constructivist approach as it supports the cooperative learning and encourages the students’ imagination and creativity.
Based on these three observations, I can say that she changed herself and her teaching style, and she confidently applied constructivist methods in teaching. She convinced me that she believed in the necessity of using constructivist methods for better foreign language teaching.

**The findings of five artifacts.** The artifacts from Zeynep’s classroom included a cardboard of a dream house, an e-mail message to an imaginary e-friend, a cardboard of a family tree, poster to introduce Nasreddin Hodja and his anecdotes, and recipe to make a cake (see Table 25).

Table 25

*The Artifacts From Zeynep’s Classroom*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No</th>
<th>Artifact</th>
<th>Explanation</th>
<th>Evaluation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Cardboard</td>
<td>A student drew and described her dream house on a cardboard.</td>
<td>Traditional</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>E-mail message</td>
<td>One student wrote an e-mail to an imaginary e-friend from one of the English speaking countries, and introduced herself and her family to that friend in a meaningful context.</td>
<td>Constructivist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Cardboard</td>
<td>A student drew a family tree and placed the real photos of her family members on the branches and their ages on the leaves of the tree. Each member introduced herself/himself in a speech bubble.</td>
<td>Constructivist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Poster</td>
<td>A student put some information about Nasreddin Hodja on the poster she created. She wrote four of his anecdotes adding some pictures depicting the events.</td>
<td>Constructivist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Recipe</td>
<td>A student gave a recipe for a cake. She prepared the necessary ingredients first, and then made the cake following the directions on the box.</td>
<td>Constructivist</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The artifacts showed that Zeynep’s in-class applications were mostly constructivist. In the first artifact, a student drew her dream house on a cardboard. Then, she described it using necessary language properly. Even though the assignment was given in a real context, it was done in a traditional way. The second artifact was an e-mail to an imaginary e-friend from one of the English speaking countries. In her e-mail, one student introduced herself and her family to that friend. Zeynep provided a meaningful context for the students instead of asking the students to write a paragraph about themselves. The third artifact was a student’s homework assignment on introducing family members. The student drew a family tree and placed the real photos of her family members on the branches and their ages on the leaves of the tree. Each member introduced herself/himself in a speech bubble. The assignment was given in a real context; and the student did it in a creative way. The fourth artifact was a performance assignment about Nasreddin Hodja and his anecdotes. Nasreddin Hodja was a man with great sense of humor and had an answer to the problems and dilemmas of his time. He is believed to have lived in Central Asia in the 13th century. His jokes are part of Turkish culture and they all teach an important lesson. One student prepared this assignment in a creative way. She put some information about Nasreddin Hodja on the poster she created, first. Then, she wrote four of his anecdotes adding some pictures depicting the events. She also presented her project in the classroom. At the end of her presentation, she asked her friends the lesson taught in each anecdote. Giving an assignment like this was a sign that the teacher aimed to increase students’ critical thinking. In the fifth artifact, the student made a cake at home. First, she prepared the
necessary ingredients for the cake. Then, she made the cake following the directions on
the box step by step. In this activity, the student used the language (use and functions of
imperatives) she learned in the classroom context in the real life. While she was making
the cake, one friend took her pictures at each step.

**Discussion of In-Class Observational Fieldnotes and Artifacts**

Based on the observations of the participants in their classrooms, it was observed
that the participants mostly used the constructivist teaching methods, such as pair work,
group work, writing dialogues and stories, role-play activities, in-class presentations, and
authentic materials. However, it was also witnessed that the participants could not get rid
of their old habits completely, and applied traditional teaching methods and activities in
teaching time to time.

When they used constructivist teaching methods, the students were engaged in the
activities and had an active and participatory role in their own learning process. Using
constructivist teaching methods also enhanced students’ imagination and creativity.
Further, using authentic materials got the students more involved, enjoyed, and learned.
This finding supports the literature. For instance, Laba (2014) found that the ESL
students had much interest in using authentic materials that also helped them learn better.
But, when traditional teacher-centered methods, such as instructing, asking and
answering, reading texts, and doing mechanical drills, were used by the teachers, it was
seen that the students got bored, did some unrelated things in the classroom, and did not
participate in the activities. It was observed that even classroom management got harder
when traditional ways of teaching applied.
It was seen that for successful and effective teaching and learning, applying constructivist teaching methods is important. For this, besides constructivist curriculum development, creating constructivist conditions is also important. It was observed that designing the physical conditions of the classrooms according to what constructivism requires is essential for effective teaching and learning processes. In this context, interactive learning environments that allow student-student and teacher-students interactions should be created. And the classrooms should be supported and enriched with a variety of different kinds of teaching materials.

According to my notes that I took during the data collection process, when the teachers are trained well on constructivist education system, and convinced that this is really important for better education, they were very successful in applying it in their classrooms. During the observations, I saw that the teachers were able to successfully apply constructivist methods in teaching after the professional development seminar.

Day by day, the teachers tried to get rid of traditional applications and started using constructivist activities in the classrooms. According to the results of the interviews and classroom observations, I saw that teacher motivation and eagerness alone is not enough to be able to apply the constructivist approach completely. There are some other important factors that prevent the teachers from applying them efficiently such as overcrowded classrooms, dense content of the curriculum, the shortage of technical and teaching materials, and the physical condition of the classrooms. Due to the overcrowded classrooms in the public schools, the teachers have difficulty in interacting with students individually, doing a variety of groupings, and having active learning and teaching
processes. The teachers had difficulty in applying the constructivist activities as it should be as they had to follow and catch up with the dense standard curriculum in a certain time limit. The lack of teaching and technical materials at schools made it difficult for teachers to create effective foreign language teaching and learning environment. Thus, the teachers put more effort and spent more time to provide such necessary materials in their in-class activities. The physical condition of the classrooms was another critical issue in the constructivist applications. Unless the necessary physical conditions, for instance the design and the mobility of the desks, are set in the classrooms, it will be harder for the teachers to do constructivist activities in teaching, such as group studies, whole class activities, and book talk activities.

Another most important factor that causes the collapse of the whole system is the evaluation and assessment system. The current evaluation and the assessment system in Turkey is still outcome-based. For, constructivist approach is a process-based system and requires process-based evaluation. For this reason, teachers have a dilemma between these two systems. Due to the nationwide standardized tests to enter the secondary and higher education, parents want their children to get prepared for these tests. This situation causes the teachers to feel a great pressure on them. From this point of view, the constructivist education system which was expected to be successful in foreign language education seems not to have reached the overall goal because of the reasons overcrowded classrooms, dense content of the curriculum, the shortage of technical and teaching materials, and the physical condition of the classrooms, and inconsistency of evaluation system.
The artifacts showed that the teachers in this project tried and used constructivist ways and techniques in their classes. However, knowingly or unknowingly, they also used the traditional ways and techniques occasionally. In general, the following arguments were drawn:

− The teachers had the students do a variety of groupings, such as pair work and group work.
− The teachers inspired and motivated the students to enhance their creativity, imagination and productivity.
− The teachers had the students make meaningful connections between what was learned in the classroom and their real lives.
− The teachers had the students do writing and reading activities in meaningful contexts.
− The teachers had the students use the language skills such as speaking, listening, reading, and writing in an integrated way in learning English.
− The teachers had the students learn the language contextualizing the knowledge in a holistic way rather than abstracting it.
− The teachers considered multiple intelligences, in other words, they took different types of learners, such as visual, auditory, and kinesthetic learners into consideration.
− The teachers used traditional ways and methods but very occasionally.

In conclusion, the analysis and findings of the artifacts supported the findings of interviews and in-class observational fieldnotes.
Researcher Logs

In this section, a summary of the researcher logs is given. Here, I have presented the interesting excerpts from my real notes. The findings of 20 researcher logs are presented, the first 10 of which are written during the teacher development seminar and the rest of which are written after the seminar during the semester. The section ends with a discussion of researcher logs.

Summary of Researcher Logs

I created a researcher log in which I jotted down some rich, detailed, and precise data notes (Schram, 2006) every time I remembered and recalled some information regarding the professional development seminar and the whole data collection process. These notes covered some insights about teacher change in the frame of constructivism. In addition, during the observations done at intervals as part of data collection process, I wrote down some notes to reflect on the trends. Moreover, every evening after the seminar, I had some reflections about how it went, what went well in the classes, what should be done differently the next time, and what sort of changes I noticed that day. When I did not see any changes, I wrote notes on why the teachers were not changing and what else could be done to help them move towards in terms of teacher change. The challenges confronted by both the participants and researcher, as their guide, were also written down.

In other words, the researcher logs captured the dynamics of the teacher change and the larger picture of this study as if it unfolded in ways that were not predictable. In this context, I wrote 20 researcher logs 10 of which were during the 10-day professional
development seminar, and the other 10 of which were written during the Fall Semester 2014. The data I gathered through researcher logs were in various forms such as direct quotes, paraphrases, descriptions, successes, and failures. The dates for the researcher logs are given in Table 26.

Table 26

*Researcher Log Dates*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Day</th>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Explanation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>During the Seminar</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 September, 2014</td>
<td>Monday</td>
<td>Researcher Log 1</td>
<td>First day of the Seminar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 September, 2014</td>
<td>Tuesday</td>
<td>Researcher Log 2</td>
<td>Second day of the Seminar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 September, 2014</td>
<td>Wednesday</td>
<td>Researcher Log 3</td>
<td>Third day of the Seminar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 September, 2014</td>
<td>Thursday</td>
<td>Researcher Log 4</td>
<td>Fourth day of the Seminar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 September, 2014</td>
<td>Friday</td>
<td>Researcher Log 5</td>
<td>Fifth day of the Seminar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8 September, 2014</td>
<td>Monday</td>
<td>Researcher Log 6</td>
<td>Sixth day of the Seminar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9 September, 2014</td>
<td>Tuesday</td>
<td>Researcher Log 7</td>
<td>Seventh day of the Seminar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 September, 2014</td>
<td>Wednesday</td>
<td>Researcher Log 8</td>
<td>Eight day of the Seminar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11 September, 2014</td>
<td>Thursday</td>
<td>Researcher Log 9</td>
<td>Ninth day of the Seminar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12 September, 2014</td>
<td>Friday</td>
<td>Researcher Log 10</td>
<td>Tenth day of the Seminar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>During the Semester</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30 September, 2014</td>
<td>Tuesday</td>
<td>Researcher Log 11</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>01 October, 2014</td>
<td>Wednesday</td>
<td>Researcher Log 12</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>09 October, 2014</td>
<td>Thursday</td>
<td>Researcher Log 13</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21 October, 2014</td>
<td>Tuesday</td>
<td>Researcher Log 14</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 November, 2014</td>
<td>Tuesday</td>
<td>Researcher Log 15</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17 November, 2014</td>
<td>Monday</td>
<td>Researcher Log 16</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 December, 2014</td>
<td>Wednesday</td>
<td>Researcher Log 17</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 January, 2015</td>
<td>Monday</td>
<td>Researcher Log 18</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8 January, 2015</td>
<td>Thursday</td>
<td>Researcher Log 19</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14 January, 2015</td>
<td>Wednesday</td>
<td>Researcher Log 20</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

I put the planned 20 researcher logs in order chronologically. These notes covered some insights about teacher change in the frame of constructivism. I read the
logs many times in order to reveal some trends, patterns, and meaningful results. Then, I matched them with the themes generated from the interviews, as well. When some probable answers to why questions were needed, I applied them again and again. I reread the notes to remember what sort of changes in terms of constructivist applications took place in the classes, the good things and the challenges.

**Findings of Researcher Logs: During the Seminar**

**Day 1—1 September, 2014.** The seminar started really well. To be honest, I was a little bit concerned about their reactions of the participants. However, at the end of the day, I felt I had a successful day.

**Day 2—2 September, 2014.** Today, we started the theoretical perspectives of von Glasersfeld, Piaget, Vygotsky, and Dewey. I noticed that the participants were very interested while we were talking about the constructivist theories. Indeed, I was expecting them to be a little bit bored with these theories. They seemed to have hunger for the theories as probably they have not read about them since their graduation.

**Day 3—3 September, 2014.** Today, I noticed that the more the participants learned the more they enjoyed the seminar. I can feel that they liked the content of the seminar and the way it was given.

**Day 4—4 September, 2014.** This was the fourth day of the seminar. Some whole group discussions on the theme of traditional classrooms versus constructivist classrooms took place. At the end of the discussions, one of the participants expressed that the teachers should avoid using traditional teacher-centered methods, and obsolete techniques in teaching, and create a classroom environment where there were more
student-student and teacher-student interactions and where the students could freely express their ideas and feelings. She also added that such an environment would increase and expand students’ critical thinking and creativity. Actually, she summarized the whole discussions took place in today’s session in a very concise and precise way. It was nice for me to see the participants get the focal points and internalize them.

**Day 5—5 September, 2014.** Today’s topic was the Theories of Intelligence (H. Gardner, 1983) that points out that there are different linguistic abilities of each individual. Therefore, teachers should be aware of taking into account the learners’ differences. I tried to perform “The Story of Cevriye Hanim.” Even though I am not that good at performing, I tried to get well prepared for the activity; the participants enjoyed the activity and got the point. One participant said that she had seen role-plays before, but she was not aware of using them for many purposes such as introducing the language through a meaningful context, to improve students’ fluency in language skills, and to introduce even the forms and functions of the grammar structures in real context. At the beginning I was a bit concerned not to be able to perform well, but as I understood from the reactions, it went well.

**Day 6—8 September, 2014.** Today, we talked about the problems related to the Turkish education system, and foreign language education in Turkey. We also talked about some possible solutions for those problems. The participants stated that they felt better as they noticed that there were other like-minded colleagues around having the same problems, as well. More important, they admitted that for the first time they believed those problems could be overcome with some small changes and applications.
Today, everyone shared their own experiences on the difficulties they experienced in teaching English.

In the afternoon, we discussed about the evaluation and assessment in constructivism. The participants were convinced that each student should be evaluated individually, in other words, individual differences, such as background knowledge of the students, their learning styles and skills should be taken into consideration during the evaluation and assessment process. One participant said that students should not be evaluated and assessed with the standardized outcome-based tests, rather, longitudinal process-based evaluation system should be preferred to get more valid, and just results.

**Day 7—9 September, 2014.** Today we had the movie, “Dead Poets Society.” The movie session was enjoyable. The room settings were adjusted according to the activity. I pasted the poster of the movie on the entrance door, and the walls and put the cover on the screen of the computer. The movie itself was not an action movie and not that attractive. However, when presented in a constructivist way for a different purpose, it was engaging. The movie activity influenced the participants more than I expected. There was one thing I did not think of: the timing. Since I paused it to ask a question or add a comment time to time, the movie took more time than I put on the schedule. When I asked the participants if they wanted to continue watching the movie or not, they all insisted on watching it. One participant said although she watched the movie before, it looked more meaningful to see it again in this context with the colleagues.

**Day 8—10 September, 2014.** We talked about John Dewey’s theoretical perspective today. I started the session with a video clip on Dewey’s bio and some of his
arguments. Starting with an audio-visual material helped the participants pay more attention on Dewey and his approach. Some of the teachers had heard about Dewey before, but they were not fully aware of his theories. When I told the participants that Dewey was invited to Turkey by the first President of the New Turkish Republic, and helped establish a better education system with his recommendations, they got surprised. After I said this, they even got more engaged in his arguments.

**Day 9—11 September, 2014.** Today, we had a book talk activity of The Educational Imagination by Eisner (2002). The participants did not experience such a book talk activity before. Therefore, they were curious about what it was like and how it was applied. They discussed the important points of the book. It was obvious that they got prepared well. Towards the end of the activity, one of the participants said: “I found this activity beneficial, and I think we can apply such an activity in our classes. We read only one third of the book but learned the whole book.” Further, another participant stated that she found the discussion points very interesting and important.

**Day 10—12 September, 2014.** Today was the last day of the seminar. The teachers were a bit tired, however, interestingly still energetic. I think they are ready, hopeful, and eager to go to their classes with new information in mind.

It is true that overall seminar was like taking a graduate level course. Therefore, the reading assignments might be hard for some of the participants to read as they had some other workload and responsibilities. However, they still did all the requirements on time. At the beginning, I thought about sending the reading materials to them in advance, however, I did not as they were in summer vacation.
Findings of Researcher Logs: During the Semester

30 September, 2014. I noticed something interesting during the class observation today. The teacher said that the students did not have to open their textbooks as they were going to do a listening activity. At this point, I heard some students ask: “Teacher, when will we open our books?” “When will we start doing the exercises in the book?” “Why don’t we use our textbooks?” I found these kinds of reactions quite normal since the textbook is regarded as the main teaching material in the traditional system. Therefore, the students should be informed about the new way of teaching and its applications.

01 October, 2014. There was an enjoyable music activity in one of the classes I visited. The song was well chosen and the lesson was well planned; the lyrics were related to the topic, and the music was engaging. All students loved it. I noticed that there are some important points that need to be taken into consideration while choosing a song to use in classroom teaching: The appropriateness of language level of the lyrics, the song being relevant to students’ interests and ages, and the suitability of the words to students’ culture. Otherwise, one may not reach the intended goals.

09 October, 2014. The teacher used different techniques and various kinds of activities in teaching. She did a well-planned group work. Almost everything went well during the activity; the only disadvantage was the noise in the classroom. The students could hardly hear each other. The classroom was not large enough, the desks were too big and heavy to move, and the classroom was crowded with more than 30 students. If the teachers had their own classrooms, they would not have to change the design of the
classroom again and again for every group work activity. I noticed the importance of physical conditions of learning environment in constructivist education once again.

**21 October, 2014.** The teacher did a group study today. She did a good job of managing the classroom. Actually, it is not easy for the teachers in Turkey to do group work in the classrooms as students might perceive working in groups as an opportunity for them to chat with friends instead of focusing on what is required. It was not the case for today’s class. To avoid such a problem, the teacher walked among the groups, guided the students, and asked if they had any questions. As a result, all students seemed engaged in the task and did what was required.

I remember, once the same teacher said to me that students might sometimes consider doing participatory activities and using educational games in the classrooms as just playing. So, she thinks that it is necessary to give explanatory information to the students on such notions, as they are comparatively new in our system. To her, the students should be reminded that using such applications is a part of the teaching and learning process.

**4 November, 2014.** I jotted down this short note during one classroom observation when I once more recognized that teachers should be tactful and considerate as we deal with the most sensitive creatures in the world. The topic was “comparative forms of adjectives.” When the teacher asked her students to give some examples using the comparative forms of the adjectives, one student gave an example from the classroom and said, “Ahmet is shorter than Mehmet.” I noticed that Ahmet got offended. As a
teenager at the 7th grade, he was very emotional. I think, we, as teachers should consider every single detail while planning the lessons.

17 November, 2014. I once more saw that when traditional ways, teacher-centered methods and techniques, and mechanical drills are mostly used in teaching, the students get bored, distracted, and uninterested. Of course, it is always easier to use pre-designed curriculum, pre-prepared lesson plans, pre-planned activities, pre-canned teaching materials, and standardized tests. However, the constructivist approach requires the teachers to create their own materials, spend more time and effort on getting prepared for the lessons, and do extracurricular activities; in short, it requires commitment and devotion. It seems harder, but important to get the students engaged in the learning process enthusiastically, enjoy learning, and get better results in education.

3 December, 2014. As there is a standardized national test at the end of 8th grade to enter high schools in Turkey, the parents expect the teachers to do more grammar and vocabulary exercises and teach more test-based. Therefore, the teachers feel much pressure on their shoulders; they have a tendency to teach for the tests, and do more mechanical exercises in teaching. As a result of this situation, it was seen that one teacher might do teaching in a constructivist way in one class (generally in the 5th, 6th, and 7th grades) whereas the same teacher might teach traditionally in another class (in 8th grades). Unless the evaluation system is changed and adjusted in accordance with the constructivist approach, it is hard to overcome this problem.

5 January, 2015. I noticed that one of the participants, Zeynep, had great theatrical and musical talents, and she used them effectively in her teaching. In most of
her classes, she had her students role play, and sing songs individually or in a choir.

Zeynep and her partner Hale influenced each other in a positive way during the semester. They created their own teaching materials, and prepared some extra activities together. Once, Hale mentioned that she was doing her job more enthusiastically that year as she had Zeynep as a partner. She also said:

> Zeynep and I inspired and motivated each other this semester. This is very important for me to have such a partner as I had a colleague in my previous school last year; she demotivated and affected me in a negative way.

**8 January, 2015.** They organized an end-of-semester program in which they had many different activities. The students sang songs in a choir, performed the play of Cinderella, and played some games in a contest format, all of which were done in English. Everything went well; all teachers and the students at school watched the program and enjoyed it. It was a great success as these kinds of activities in English are generally done in private schools in Turkey. More importantly, this program was organized with the efforts of two teachers only despite of the insufficiencies. They did fund raising activities for the program with the support from the families; they used the fund to rent or buy the necessary materials, such as the microphones, costumes, and some other accessories. Since this was an extracurricular activity, they spent extra time and effort for this program besides their regular workload and responsibilities. Their success was highly appreciated by their colleagues, students, and the parents.

**14 January, 2015.** The effect of the seminar continued even after the data collection was done with the participants. It was amazing to hear that two of the
participants gave seminars on constructivism to the teachers working in one of the administrative districts in Ankara.

One day, I received a phone call from Ebrar. She was so happy with what she experienced recently. She said she was asked to give a seminar to the teachers about constructivist education, and she accepted to do it. She also said that she gave a one-day seminar; she mostly applied what she gained during the teacher development seminar. She also said it went very well and received incredible feedback from the participants at the end of the day.

Interestingly, I learned that Zeynep was also asked to give a one-day seminar on constructivism to a large group of teachers in Ankara. She was incredibly happy when we got together to talk about her experience. She said that she used some audio-visual materials from the professional development seminar, told jokes, and shared some memories from her own learning experiences to create an interactive atmosphere during her seminar. She did her presentation as a stand-up show using her theatrical talents. All participants actively participated in the activities she did and enjoyed the whole seminar. She added that she got a lot of positive feedback from the teachers. Finally, she sincerely expressed that she felt lucky to be part of this project and seminar, as she so much improved herself and changed in terms of her profession.

Discussion of the Researcher Logs

In this section, a discussion of researcher logs is presented.

Teachers should have their own classes. The teachers would not like to design the desks and the classes again and again for each activity knowing that one or two hours
later they will be in another ‘strange’ class. Some teachers wanted to adjust the desks according to the activity she had planned, however, it was really difficult for them to change the class design, and caused wasting time. Further, the desks were supposed to be put back to their previous locations when the class was over. Designing the desks might cause noise, and it would disturb the other classes. As the teachers have to change the design of the desks again and again for every group studies, they might get tired of doing this all the time, and they might avoid doing group studies after a while. Therefore, it would be better for the teachers to have their own classes.

**Teachers should not hesitate to do group studies.** The group studies might be perceived as noisy and cozy by some people that in turn might influence the teacher’s approach. However, it should be noted that it is quite normal that the class would be a bit noisier than a regular one. The groups of the students could be managed by being in frequent contact with them. If the teachers give clear instructions and detailed information and explanations on what the students were expected to do during the group studies, the students can get more focused on the task. Otherwise, Turkish students might think the group studies are good opportunities to chat with classmates.

**Teachers can succeed despite the insufficiencies.** The teachers could achieve their goals in terms of constructivist applications regardless of the insufficiencies. For instance, two of the participants did a great and comprehensive activity at the end of the semester, which had never been done in their school before. The administration did not support them financially as the school did not have a budget for such activities. So, the teachers talked to the families about this issue and encouraged them to prepare some stuff
so that they could sell in the school for fundraising in order to spend the money for the necessary materials (i.e., costumes) for the program. Besides their regular workload, they spent many hours with the students after classes and even on the weekends. They brought some of the necessary materials from their houses for the end of semester program. As a result, it can be said that when a teacher really wants to do something, he or she can overcome the obstacles they face. But, to achieve the overall goal, though, requires commitment and devotion.

**Teachers may be affected by the standardized testing system.** Teachers sometimes have to change their teaching styles depending on the conditions. Whereas they could do teaching more creatively and productively in a constructivist way in the 5th, 6th, and 7th grades, they might have to gear down to more traditional ways in the 8th grades due to the national standardized entrance tests. Therefore, the evaluation and assessment system should be redesigned according to the constructivist principles.

**Teachers may be affected by the family concerns and feel more pressure on their shoulders.** Because the families are used to the traditional methods and concerned about the national standardized entrance tests, they expect more test-based teaching from the teachers. This situation causes more pressure on teachers’ shoulders and may affect them negatively. As a result, they may avoid spending time on speaking, listening, and writing activities and hesitate doing some other constructivist activities due to the time constraint. Therefore, the teachers should talk to the families about the new system, its importance, and the necessity of the new applications in a detailed way to reduce their concerns.
**The importance of professional community.** Professional community helps establish collegiality and collaborative exchange among the like-minded professionals. The teachers in this project stated that they had seen the benefits of professional community by experience and realized its importance. They collaborated, cooperated, exchanged, and discussed issues related to constructivist teaching and applications. In that regard, critical colleague conversations contributed to their professional development.

**Teachers should know their students individually.** The teachers should know their students individually and be aware of their learning styles. While planning the lessons, designing in-class activities, applying constructivist methods, and preparing the evaluation techniques, they should consider the individual differences.

In conclusion, based on the analysis results, it can be said that the findings of the researcher logs supported the findings of the interviews, in-class observations, and artifacts.

**Summary of Findings**

Three different data sets, the participant periodic interviews, in-class observational fieldnotes and artifacts, and researcher logs were analyzed in order to find some answers to the research questions of this dissertation. The 30-hour interview data were collected from five face-to-face interviews with six participants separately, in different times. For the observational fieldnotes, I visited the teachers in their classroom settings three times each, 18 times in total. I also jotted down 20 researcher logs every time I remembered and recalled some information regarding the professional
development seminar, and the whole data collection process. Finally, I collected some artifacts from the students. I randomly selected five students’ assignments from each teacher’s class, 30 in total, in order to search for additional evidence to see if constructivist things went on in the classrooms. I followed several steps, ways, and methods (Corbin & Strauss, 2007; Creswell, 2009; Holly et al., 2009; Wiersma & Jurs, 2009) during the analysis of the data sources.

Even though these are separate data sets, they are interrelated and associated with each other. Further, almost all of the analyses findings from the data sets are supporting each other and are in a compliance with each other.

Some of the key points revealed from the current study are summarized as in the following:

− The teachers were not aware of and knowledgeable about the new system (constructivism) as the MoNE did not provide any appropriate professional development seminars.

− The participants in this project stated that they learned constructivism and its applications from the teacher development seminar, and applied them in their classes. Even though they used constructivist ways in teaching, they occasionally used traditional techniques, as well.

− There were also challenges the teachers experienced during their constructivist applications such as time constraint, dense content of the curriculum, overcrowded classrooms, the shortage of technical and teaching materials, the physical condition of the classrooms, and inconsistency of evaluation system.
− The classroom settings were considered to be important for constructivist applications. For instance, the immobility and abundance of the desks was an obstacle to conduct a group study properly. Therefore, the teachers should have their own classes so that they could design it according to the constructivist standards and not to change in every new class.

− An important finding of the study was that the teacher was the key person in applying and implementing a new system. Nothing else was as much important as the teacher herself. The teachers could achieve their goals, which was applying constructivist approach, in spite of all insufficiencies.

− The teachers were happier with the constructivist approach. Based on their statements, not only the students but also the teachers were getting bored with the traditional applications.

− The teacher development seminar helped the teachers change in their views and approach. It should be noted that having the free will to make the decision in participating such a seminar is important. Moreover, the teaching way and approach during the seminar was also critical, as trying to give the constructivist principles in a traditional way may end up with failure. A well-prepared teacher development seminar (based on constructivist criteria) with sufficient consulting and mutual collaboration may help the teacher change as well as internalize the new system. Another critical outcome regarding the teacher development seminar is having a ‘follow-up’ and consultation service to the participants.
− The analysis findings showed that such a seminar might help a teacher change truly that the effect of it may still continue even after the seminar and semester.

− This study revealed that professional community and critical conversations were important in the development of the teachers. The participants benefited during the seminar and semester. Until the current project, they had not had helpful mechanisms in their institutions.

− Holistic approach is necessary for the change to happen. Even if only one part is not changed and accorded appropriately, the transition to constructivism may be incomplete. For instance, the standardized testing system was one of the reasons of failure of MoNE in trying to switch from traditional system to constructivism since 2005. The constructivist evaluation can be hardly applied in a traditional evaluation system.

− Stakeholders should be taken into consideration. For instance, the families and their children might be concerned of some national standardized tests, which in turn might put more pressure on the shoulders of the teachers. Therefore, the stakeholders such as students, families, and even administrators should be informed, explained to, and convinced about the new approach and applications.

**Discussion of the Research Questions**

A discussion of the research questions is presented in this section.
Research Question One

How do selected English Teachers in Turkey understand constructivism as a new notion in foreign language education? The interview data showed that the participants were not knowledgeable before the teacher development seminar. The level of knowledge on constructivism and its applications was increased through the professional development seminar. The seminar was so effective, the teachers got enthusiastic and eager to teach. In other words, their statements showed how willing they were to try and apply the new ways and techniques they learned. They even shared what they were planning to apply in terms of techniques and approaches. The findings under this question gave us an idea of whether the 10-day development seminar was successful in terms of teaching the participants about constructivism. However, learning in theory does not mean that it can be applied thoroughly in the real context. Things that are theoretically perfect may not be put into practice the same as in application in real life settings as shown in several studies in Turkey (Aykac, 2007a, 2007b; Aykac & Ulubey, 2012; Donmez, 2010; Karavas-Doukas, 1995). All participants in this project on the contrary claimed that they learned how to apply constructivism in foreign language education and benefitted a lot from the seminar, and even more importantly, they stated they applied and changed; their statements were verified and supported with the results of other data, such as in-class observational fieldnotes and artifacts, and researcher logs. The findings of this study supported the literature. For instance, Lou (2008) claimed that her instructions on non-traditional teaching methods helped teachers change and improve in their profession and her treatment of constructivist training to the participants made
them change and apply the new methods successfully. Another study (Noom-ura, 2013) revealed that professional development seminars could be effective means in increasing the quality level of teachers and enhancing their teaching skills. Baciu and Savu (1996) also indicated that language awareness workshops were helpful for teachers to implement a new curriculum successfully.

Research Question Two

How do they apply constructivism into their teaching? The data collected through interviews, observational fieldnotes and artifacts, and the researcher logs showed that most of the participants were able to apply different constructivist methods and techniques in their classroom settings successfully.

The observational fieldnotes that I took during the classroom observations mostly supported the statements of the participants. The researcher logs that I noted when I recalled anytime regarding the project provided additional support to what I found as a result of the analyses of the interviews and observational fieldnotes and artifacts. The teachers in this project tried to be or acted like “a facilitator of exploration and a provider of experiences” (Prater, 2001, p. 45) in their classrooms. When the participants used constructivist teaching methods, the students were engaged in the activities and had an active and participatory role in their own learning process. Using constructivist teaching methods also enhanced students’ imagination and creativity. These findings support the studies in the literature. For instance, Al Muhaimeed (2013) found that teaching via constructivist method helped students increase their English reading comprehension and suggested the constructivist practices a better way for English language teaching.
Nikitina’s (2010) study showed that the students who had an opportunity to engage in teamwork in their visual project implementation liked the activity and considered it beneficial for their learning. Even some other studies (Hisar, 2006; Yildiz, 2006) found that constructivist language teaching applications were more effective and successful than the traditional language teaching methods.

Even though the teachers were successful in many ways in applying what they learned in the professional development seminar in terms of constructivist applications, the implementations of them were not flawless. There were many challenges and obstacles that sometimes prevented them from applying the constructivist approach such as overcrowded classrooms, dense content of the curriculum, and the shortage of technical and teaching materials. These findings comply with the challenges argued in the studies (Aykac, 2007a, 2007b; Aykac & Ulubey, 2012; Buyukduman, 2005; Er, 2006; Ersen-Yanik, 2008; Kirkgoz, 2009; Sad, 2010; Seckin, 2011) that affected the constructivist implementation. Even the teachers themselves had a gradual process of change in their applications. Most of the teachers’ first attempts, applications, and approach were more traditional compared to their succeeding ones. This finding supports the argument of the literature by some scholars (Duffy & Roehler, 1986; Guskey, 1986; Nolan & Meister, 2000) that expecting and getting teachers to change is not easy, and it is a slow process.
Research Question Three

What insights can be gained about doing professional development in foreign language teaching in Turkey? This project provided valuable insights by doing professional development in foreign language teaching in the context of Turkey.

First and foremost, the teacher is the key person in foreign language education. This finding is consistent with the argument of Geringer (2003) that the teachers are the most important actors compared to the other variables (i.e., motivation and classroom sizes). In that regard, if a new approach is applied, or a change is planned, again the teacher is the most critical factor of the change. In other words, if a new approach/system is to be applied and implemented, the teachers are the primary implementers of that new system. Even during the policy planning, the views of the teachers as the primary enforcers should be taken into consideration. The findings supported the study (Hargreaves et al., 2001) in the literature that without teachers, a change cannot be accomplished.

After the policy is ready to apply, the teachers should be the very first group of stakeholders to train and convince regarding the new approach. In that regard, professional development seminars can be valuable tools to introduce and explain the new notion, convince the teachers, and motivate them to apply the new system in practice.

A holistic approach is necessary if a successful change is planned (Aykac, 2007a). Negligence of some steps or processes may lead to a failure. For instance, if everything is changed, but the evaluation system is not, then there will be distractions and
incompatibility. As indicated in the literature, the evaluation also should be based on constructivist approach (Aykac, 2007a, 2007b; Aykac & Ulubey, 2012; Chakrakodi, 2010; Eisner, 2002; Hargreaves et al., 2001; Tillema & Smith, 2007). Due to the lack of such evaluation system in Turkey (Aykac & Ulubey, 2012), the participants of this project were affected negatively and had difficulty during their applications and felt the pressure by the families. The teachers communicated with them to handle this issue. These findings supported the argument and findings of Hargreaves and her colleagues (2001).

If everything is perfect but the physical conditions of the classrooms and schools are not designed according to what the new approach requires, the teachers will have difficulties in applying it (Aykac, 2007a, 2007b; Aykac & Ulubey, 2012). The findings of this study support the literature. Further, teachers in this study had difficulty in applying some group studies due to overcrowded classrooms. This finding is consistent with the studies (Aykac, 2007a, 2007b; Green, 2008) in the literature, as well. Therefore, the number of students in a classroom should be reduced in order to have a better learning environment.

One other insight gained is that one way of application and/or activity may not work in another context. In this regard, all materials and activities should be adjusted and aligned according to where and in which conditions they are applied. “One size fits all” is against the principles of constructivism. This finding supports the findings of the studies (Aykac, 2007a, 2007b; Aykac & Ulubey, 2012) in the literature that MoNE’s insufficient implementation and misapplication of so-called constructivism without
considering individual and institutional background, cultural and regional differences may end up with unsuccessful attempts in terms of change in the national system.

Using authentic materials helped students get more involved in the class activities and learn enjoyably. This finding supports Laba’s (2014) finding. She found that the ESL students had much interest in using authentic materials, which also helped them learn better. Authentic materials are “examples of language produced by native speakers for some real purposes of their own rather than . . . [the] language produced and designed solely for the classroom” (Cook, 1981, p. 1; cited in Laba, 2014, p. 3).

Summary

The process of data analysis was presented in this chapter. The section described the participants and the settings of the study first. Brief information about the design and method was given next. Then came the treatment. After the trustworthiness and validity issues were explained, the analysis of participant periodic interviews, in-class observational fieldnotes and artifacts, and the researcher logs were presented. A summary of the findings was shared with the readers. Finally, the findings were discussed in this chapter with regards to the research questions.
CHAPTER V
DISCUSSION, IMPLICATIONS, AND CONCLUSION

There are three main sections in this chapter: Discussion, implications, and conclusion. In the discussion part, the researcher discusses the findings of the study by comparing them with the previous studies in the literature. What has been learned about the professional development in the context of Turkey is given in the implications section. Finally, the conclusion section provides the summary of the current chapter and the whole study, the limitations and questions for further studies.

Discussion

After giving a 10-day seminar about constructivist approach and its principles, I collected data in order to observe the teacher change. More specifically, I tried to explore the following research questions:

1. How do selected English teachers in Turkey understand constructivism as a new notion in foreign language education?
2. How do the teachers apply constructivism into their foreign language teaching?
3. What insights can be gained about doing professional development in foreign language teaching in Turkey?

I conducted a qualitative study to examine understandings and descriptions of the participants’ opinions/views and applications of this new notion. The research took place at two public schools located in two neighboring administrative districts in Ankara, Turkey with the participation of six English teachers.
The Ministry of National Education (MoNE) in Turkey made an educational reform by changing the traditional/behavioral system to a constructivist approach in 2005; however, the new education system has not been applied as successfully as planned on paper (Aykac, 2007a, 2007b; Aykac & Ulubey, 2012; Donmez, 2010; Er, 2006; Sahenk-Erkan, 2013; Topkaya & Kucuk, 2010). The findings of the current study revealed that the change was only on the official documents, not in practice.

The findings of this study also revealed several important issues regarding teacher development seminars, teacher change, constructivist applications, and challenges as presented below.

**Teachers Were Not Aware of the New System**

First and foremost, the teachers were not informed and trained well, timely, properly, nor convinced on the new notion of constructivism. Most of the teachers, as the primary implementers, in this project stated that they were not aware of the change in the education system made by the MoNE. As expressed in some studies (Bamgbose, 2003; Donmez, 2010; Topkaya & Kucuk, 2010), any changes in the curriculum and the education system cannot be applied successfully if the teachers do not believe in them.

**Teachers are Key Persons**

Supporting the literature, one of the outcomes of this study was the teachers were the key persons and the primary implementers of an education system (Cakiroglu & Cakiroglu, 2003; Garet et al., 2001; Geringer, 2003; Kirkgoz, 2009; Nolan & Meister, 2000). They were the key factors in accomplishing educational goals and improving the quality of education in Turkey (Yilmaz, 2009). In spite of all challenges, the teachers in
this project succeeded to apply constructivist principles. Contrary to some literature, whereas the findings indicated constructivist ways were not applied due to some challenges the teachers faced (Donmez, 2010; Ersen-Yanik, 2008; Seckin, 2011), the teachers in this study accomplished their goals regardless of the obstacles they had.

In that regard, the teachers should be given much importance. For instance, the MoNE should organize professional development seminars in order to introduce the change to the teachers as the primary stakeholders, make them believe in the necessity and the importance of change, and convince them that the change is vital (Fullan, 2001).

**Time Constraint, Lack of Materials, Overcrowded Classes**

This study revealed that there were some problems, such as time constraints, lack of materials, and overcrowded classrooms, that might affect the constructivist applications in the public schools in Turkey. Studies in the literature (Aykac, 2007a; Aykac & Ulubey, 2012; Buyukduman, 2005) showed that the public schools had such problems that might be obstacles in the implementation of constructivism.

**Teacher Change**

All of the data sources in this dissertation showed that the teacher development seminar given to six teachers in Turkey was effective. The participants changed in their views of approach and mostly applied constructivist methods and techniques in their classes. The findings of the current study on teacher change supported the literature (Lou, 2008; Noom-ura, 2013).

The participants indicated they were reborn in terms of being a teacher and noticed their weaknesses and mistakes. This finding was parallel with Richards and
Farrell’s (2005) argument that teacher development had a goal, which was to help teachers understand their teaching and themselves as teachers.

**Evaluation System Still Traditional**

One of the findings of this project was that the evaluation system was still traditional which, in turn, affected the constructivist applications of the participants. This was also a reason of the failure in switching to constructivist approach by MoNE (Aykac, 2007a, 2007b; Aykac & Ulubey, 2012). When the MoNE changed the education system, the evaluation aspect was ignored. Whereas the learning and teaching in the new system was process-based, the evaluation system was still outcome-based. Teachers were still required to do traditional written exams at least three times a semester. There were also nationwide standardized tests for the students to enter secondary and higher education. Due to this reality, teachers had a dilemma on how to do teaching and how to evaluate what had been learned by the students.

**Holistic Approach Necessary**

In order to have a proper change, there should be a holistic approach (Aykac, 2007a, 2007b; Aykac & Ulubey, 2012). In other words, after the change was announced and proceeded, even a single gap may influence the change in a negative way. For example, the MoNE made a systemic change in the national education system in Turkey in 2005, but did not prepare the textbooks and some other teaching materials accordingly, which was one of the critical challenges for the teachers.
Teacher Development Seminar

The current project was successful overall in terms of managing teacher change. In that regard, one of the outcomes of this study was that a well-prepared teacher development seminar (based on constructivist criteria) with sufficient consulting and mutual collaboration might help the teacher change as well as internalize the new system. This finding supported the arguments in the literature (Geringer, 2003; Guskey, 2002; Hargreaves & Fullan, 1992). Once the teacher was trained, persuaded, and motivated, that teacher could implement anything in spite of several obstacles and challenges. The participants indicated that they rarely had seminars before, but none of them left positive impacts on them. The main reasons for this seminar being effective, as expressed, were the continuing consultation, cooperation, and follow up with/by the researcher. The participants wanted to reach someone easily when they needed or got stuck in application. Topkaya and Kucuk (2010) indicated that such development seminars and platforms where teachers could get together; share and exchange experiences and implementations of the new program were necessary. Such seminars might be good for them to see how to overcome probable problems during the application of a new program.

Choice Matters

One of the things gained in this study was that the choice matters in attending the professional development seminars. In other words, when the participants were forced to participate in seminars, or when they were not given choices for when and where to join them, it backfired in one sense, and things did not go as planned. As expressed by one of
the teachers in this project, the feeling of being free and voluntary to participate in the seminar was an important factor for her participation. Instead of forcing them, they should be convinced in the benefits of such seminars. Otherwise, the seminars might not have a positive influence on the participants.

Everyone was Bored

The teachers in this project indicated that before applying the constructivist principles in their classes, they were teaching by using traditional ways, thus their classes were boring. After applying constructivist methods, techniques, and using constructivist teaching materials, the teachers noticed that the students were happier and enjoyed learning, and participated in the learning process more actively. The teachers started using the new techniques and methods they learned during the seminar. When the teachers got positive improvement and feedback, they got more motivated and excited, and were willing to continue with those new teaching activities.

Everyone was Happy

As the participants expressed, with the non-traditional ways of teaching, the students got more excited and eager in the English lessons more than before. Further, the teachers were happier than before, as well. Even, the families were glad to see their children enjoying learning English and getting involved in extracurricular activities related to English.

The teachers stated that their students were unenthusiastic in the classes at the very beginning due to their not being able to learn and understand English as a foreign language. However, when the teachers used constructivist methods and techniques, they
got involved and started to enjoy the English classes. These findings of the current study supported some studies (Hisar, 2006; Yildiz, 2006) in the literature in which it was stated that the constructivist methodology was much better in terms of teaching English, getting students involved, and having more enjoyable classes.

**Helps Every Level of Student**

Another development achieved by the teachers in this study was, for the very first time, they experienced great improvement on getting the lowest graded, least participating, and unwilling students involved in the activities. Those students improved greatly. As admitted, “To be honest, I wasn’t expecting this performance from that child.” Probably, with the traditional system, this student would have been blamed for educational failure or unfairly labeled as a problem and incapable of learning. However, with the help of this project, the teachers whose perspectives and approach to teaching and learning changed, and as a result who became critically reflective on their own teachings proved that with the constructivist approach and adequate teaching, any kinds of students could be unfolded and explored and given the chance to reveal their skills and abilities.

**Constructivism More Effective in Teaching**

Another finding of this project was that constructivist approach and its applications were more effective than traditional ways and methods in teaching English. The teachers in this project stated that some of their activities helped students get interested and enthusiastic in the classes and got them involved in in-class activities. This finding supports the studies (Hisar, 2006; Yildiz, 2006) in the literature that showed
constructivist methods of using various techniques and materials made the students get very interested and enthusiastic. Further, these students were more successful in learning English compared to the students who were taught in traditional ways.

Motivation

The literature indicates that students learn when they were motivated with the need and desire (von Glasersfeld, 1995). Motivation not only helped foreign language learning, but was also essential for learning (Can, 2007; Cetinkaya, 2005; Demirel, 2003; von Glasersfeld, 1995). The findings of this study supported the literature. In some classes, the students were so motivated, they did not want to finish and leave the class.

When students experienced the need to use the language, one way or another they used it. For instance, when teachers consistently spoke English without a single word of Turkish, the students started to understand and speak as well, as they needed to articulate and tell something to their teachers.

Seminar Effect Continued

It was realized that the effects of the teacher development seminar continued even after the data collection process was over. For example, two of the participants, Ebrar and Zeynep, were offered to give seminars on constructivism to the teachers in a district in Ankara. They accepted to give the seminar willingly and confidently. They accomplished their job more successfully than they had anticipated. They were surprised at themselves and their own abilities of the way of handling such a seminar.

When I got a phone call from them, they were so astounded to tell me about their experience of giving a seminar. They admitted that the teacher development seminar was
quite helpful and constructive. Further, the collaborative and deliberative discussions that they had both during and after the seminar with the researcher and other colleagues were inspirational that in turn contributed to their successes a lot. Ebrar said,

I was applauded, praised and appreciated very much! I don’t know, but somehow I was able to answer every question posed to me about the applications of constructivism. I think, I internalized the knowledge I gained during the seminar, and the whole project process.

Zeynep said,

You should have seen me on the stage. My presentation was like a stand up show. The teachers were enjoying, and also learning. They did not let me go for a long time after the seminar. You should have seen what they wrote on the anonymous feedback papers. Thank you for everything!

**Professional Community and Critical Conversation Groups**

One prominent finding and outcome of this project was the establishment of a professional community and critical conversation groups during the teacher development seminar and data collection process in Fall 2014 semester. Such professional interactions improved knowledge and skills, and classroom practices (Garet et al., 2001). The participants realized how important to value opportunities to work together, make reflections, exchange ideas, and share strategies in such professional communities were (Guskey, 2003). They also saw that collective wisdom helps more than individual ones in terms of teaching practices and student learning, and intellectual improvement (Birchak et al., 1998; Grossman et al., 2000).
The professional community that was formed for the project sustained even after the project was over. Most recently, I was informed that the professional community meetings were being held periodically. Further, it grew with the participation of new members. This sustainability indicated that the participants saw, experienced, and believed in the benefits of such communities and having critical conversations with the like-minded professionals.

Helping start a professional community was a great success of this project; as such communities do not exist in the national education system in Turkey. Some professional gatherings do exist, however, only procedurally (and as a formality) and do not function the way they should do. The public school teachers come together just one time in a semester or two to carry out the formality.

There are some teachers’ associations, networks, and professional community activities for private school teachers in Turkey. INGED (English Language Education Association)\(^3\) in Turkey is one of these kinds of associations.

Some universities have their own applications, as well. For instance, Gazi University in Ankara does some professional development and professional community activities in the frame of PAEDEIA (Pedagogical Action for a European Dimension in Educators’ Induction Approaches)\(^4\) in cooperation with some institutions from other

\(^3\) Official website of INGED is, [www.inged.org.tr](http://www.inged.org.tr)
\(^4\) Official website for PAEDEIA is [http://www.paedeia.net/INDUCTION/ProgramsPaedeiaCafe.aspx](http://www.paedeia.net/INDUCTION/ProgramsPaedeiaCafe.aspx)
countries. This program has also virtual environment (i.e., Facebook Group PAEDEIA Café).

There are some real and virtual professional communities and forums for teachers of English as a foreign language formed by some individual attempts and efforts. Only the registered members can get access to such organizations. However, countrywide, professional community activities have not been established and institutionalized professionally for public school teachers in Turkey, yet. In this context, professional development programs can be offered within the universities to train the public school teachers on-the-job in cooperation with the MoNE. Some incentives can be provided in order to motivate and encourage the teachers to take part in such programs. For instance, The National Writing Project\(^5\) at Kent State University offers additional credit hours at Kent State for teachers that participate in the professional development activities of Invitational Summer Institute. Again, similar attractive workshops and symposia are provided at the Professional Development & Outreach of Kent State. From this program, the alums had also formed writing project groups\(^6\) where they have been meeting regularly as professional communities.

Another option can be enhancing the functions of the General Directorate of Teacher Training and Development within the Ministry of National Education. This directorate already has subdivisions in each city in Turkey. For now, these divisions only

\(^{5}\) Official website of National Writing Project Website at Kent State University is, [https://nwp-ksu.org/invitational-summer-institutes/](https://nwp-ksu.org/invitational-summer-institutes/)

\(^{6}\) For more information see Facebook, [https://www.facebook.com/writingproject](https://www.facebook.com/writingproject); Twitter, [https://twitter.com/writingproject](https://twitter.com/writingproject); Google, [https://plus.google.com/+NWProj](https://plus.google.com/+NWProj)
deal with the bureaucratic routines rather than implementing teacher development activities and establishing professional communities for teachers on-the-job. To make these divisions active to function in this way, MoNE can assign some experts, teacher trainers, and academicians from universities, or the inspectors to guide the teachers in the field and train them about the new applications. Time to time, some professionals from abroad (i.e., US) could also be invited and consulted with, just like Ataturk invited John Dewey to Turkey.

The participation in such professional community activities should be voluntary; persuasion rather than imposition should be preferred. MoNE can offer various means and incentives to enhance participation and attract teachers to join such professional communities. All expenses including travel, food, and accommodation of the participants can be covered by the MoNE. The teachers taking part in professional communities can be promoted, or paid for the extra hours they spend in such activities.

**Policy Implications and Recommendations**

Some policy implications and recommendations can be presented as follows:

− The teacher is the main and key person in such a policy change in education. Therefore, if a new system is to be planned to put into practice, the teachers should be informed, trained, and convinced first on the new approach; its features and applications. In other words, the MoNE should invest on the teachers first, rather than technology, building, and other logistics.

− All stakeholders should be included in the equation. Even though the teacher is the key factor in applying the new system, the other stakeholders should also
be considered. For instance, the resistance from the administration may matter. In that regard, the administrators should also be informed about the new application through seminars and convinced. Moreover, the families should be given information on this issue to avoid some possible misunderstandings and misperceptions. And yet, the students should be carefully handled and approached with sensitivity, as they are delicate creatures; not robots. Transition to a new application may not be easy for them, either.

− Teachers should be included in seminar planning and organization. The professional development seminars organized by the MoNE are not considered as satisfying by the participants. One reason can be not having practitioners, such as teachers in the organizing committee. Therefore, as one of the participants indicated, it may be better to involve the teachers while planning such seminars. Their comments and ideas on the content and organization of the seminars should be taken into consideration in order to get more effective and efficient results.

− MoNE should also organize online teacher development seminars if necessary for the accessibility of the teachers working in the distant parts of the country.

− The physical condition of professional development seminar rooms is important. The seminar room setting should be designed according to constructivist principles. A relaxed, friendly and warm environment may make the participants feel better. Further, some beverages and food may help them feel like home. The participants of the project expressed the importance of
home like room settings. In addition, the design and physical conditions of the seminar room are also critical. For instance, the seminar room should be equipped with the necessary technical devices and materials; the chairs should be easily moved and designed according to the activities, such as group studies and whole class activities. In short, the setting of the seminar room should be designed to make necessary adjustments according to the objectives of the seminar activities.

− The quality of teaching methods applied in the professional development seminars is critical. The seminar should be planned and presented based on constructivist methods. In other words, the seminar should be given using the ways that constructivism requires; constructivist principles should be applied instead of just telling and transmitting the content to the participants. While planning and organizing such seminars, the quality of the way the seminars are given should be taken into consideration.

− Follow up with the participants after the seminar is necessary. The presenter of the seminars can be in a continuing contact, collaboration, and deliberation with the participants even after the seminar. The findings of the current study showed that it was helpful and beneficial for the participants to keep in touch with the researcher after the professional development seminar. The researcher could easily be reached whenever needed. The researcher observed the participant teachers in their classrooms, provided counseling and feedback for them. This is an ideal expectation. However, in reality and in the context of
Turkey where there is a centralized education system with approximately one million teachers registered to MoNE\(^7\), it is not easy to expect such an application nationwide. One of the alternative ways could be assigning teacher trainers or curriculum development experts in the related divisions of education departments in each city. So, the teachers could easily reach them to consult with any questions, problems, and challenges.

– The teacher development approach of National Writing Project\(^8\), which is to train some teachers in a school and have them train others, can be a good model for the MoNE. As mentioned in the previous section, two of the teachers (Ebrar and Zeynep), who were participants of the current project, learned, applied, and also taught constructivism.

– Since one of the noteworthy findings of this study was the importance and necessity of creating professional communities and the positive impacts of such professional communities and critical conversation groups on the participants, another alternative way could be setting professional community organizations within the education departments in every city so that the like-minded professionals get together to exchange ideas periodically. When it is not possible to do these kinds of organizations physically, technology could be used to connect the teachers virtually. Virtual environments such as

\(^7\) Official Website is www.sgb.meb.gov.tr
\(^8\) National Writing Project Website: https://nwp-ksu.org/invitational-summer-institutes/
Facebook, LinkedIn, and Google could be established and used in order to start professional communities and help teachers get accessed to them more easily and conveniently. For instance, members of the National Writing Project formed writing project groups that have been functioning as a professional community for years on Facebook, Twitter, and Google\(^9\) where they share ideas, experiences, reports, videos, grants and projects, and follow events and activities. In this regard, the teachers in Turkey should be supported by providing such necessary environment, devices and Internet (free of charge) at the public schools; for, without the infrastructure, even gatherings in virtual environment would be problematic especially for the teachers working in the public schools in remote parts of the country.

- The physical conditions of the schools and classrooms are also important. Schools and classrooms should be provided with necessary equipment in the frame of constructivist approach. Classrooms should be equipped with the necessary technical devices and teaching materials; schools should have a language lab, computer lab, and library full of authentic reading materials. More importantly, the labs and the library should be actively used by the teachers and students. The participants indicated that even though they used some alternative ways to fill the gap of the insufficiency of materials, they still

\(^{9}\) For more information see Facebook, https://www.facebook.com/writingproject; Twitter, https://twitter.com/writingproject; Google, https://plus.google.com/+NWPorg
experienced several difficulties. For instance, just because there was not a place reserved for English teaching materials and devices, the teachers had to carry their own laptops and some other items from one class to another with them.

- MoNE should prepare a variety of different kinds of teaching materials, such as audio-visuals, and these materials should be shared by the teachers via Internet, as well.

- Some of the participants complained about the overcrowded classes, where they had difficulty in applying constructivist methods and activities. It is important to have reasonable number of students in the classrooms for more effective and efficient results in students’ learning.

- The content of the curriculum should be revised, and adjusted according to constructivist approach, activities, and evaluation. The density of the curriculum should be reduced as the constructivist activities and evaluation techniques require more time and work than traditional ones do.

- The evaluation and assessment system should be revised; instead of outcome-based tests, process-based evaluation techniques, such as self-evaluation, peer evaluation, presentations and projects, and portfolios should be preferred.

- It should not be forgotten that change takes time, and learning is a long-term process. So, getting good results from this new application and achieving the overall goals in education require time and patience.
The real reasons of inappropriate implementation of the new system should be clarified to prevent the misinterpretation and misevaluation. The statements of the participants in this project showed that there has been almost no change in the educational applications and problems since 2005, when a systemic switch was done towards constructivism. In other words, the expected benefits and advantages of constructivism did not show up, yet. Therefore, the new system should be analyzed, and the problems should be diagnosed, and solved accordingly.

Conclusion

Turkey made an education reform in 2005, accepted and applied a new approach, namely, the constructivism. In this context, the MoNE prepared a new curriculum based on constructivist principles. All teachers working in the public schools throughout the country used the same curriculum that was designed and controlled by the Ministry of National Education. The new curriculum looked perfect on the paper. However, for some reasons, not many changes in practice have been observed in terms of constructivist teaching and learning. First of all, the teachers as the key implementers of this new approach were not trained on constructivism as a new notion in education and prepared well for the change. Second, although a switch into constructivist education was done by The MoNE, the evaluation and assessment system as an important aspect of the whole education system was not changed accordingly, and stayed same. Third, the physical conditions of the schools and classrooms were not designed according to the constructivist principles.
This study examined the drawbacks of the traditional education system and offered constructivism as a new notion in teaching English as a foreign language in Turkey. A 10-day professional development seminar was given to six English teachers working in two public schools in Ankara, and the impacts of the seminar on teachers’ change were observed.

Different types of data sources, such as interviews, observational fieldnotes and artifacts, and researcher logs, were used and analyzed in order to get some answers to the research questions of this dissertation. The findings showed that the teacher development seminar that was given as a treatment for 10 days made the participants change in their approach, views, and in their classroom applications. The findings from each data set were in compliance with each other. This can be considered as one of the strengths of the study in terms of trustworthiness, as it looked at the issue from different data perspectives.

The teachers were successful in applying the new approach in practice despite the fact that they faced several challenges and obstacles in their applications in their schools. The main problems they experienced were insufficiency of materials, time constraint due to the dense content of the curriculum, the overcrowded classrooms with 30 or more students, the physical conditions of the classrooms and schools, and the evaluation system. However, since the participants had internalized the principles of constructivism really well, these obstacles did not prevent them from applying the constructivist teaching methods and techniques. They were all dedicated teachers, and spent much more time, energy, and effort for their teaching activities in this new approach. At the end, they got
tired, but thought it was worth it as they witnessed the students to be happier, to be more eager to learn, and to enjoy learning English.

The study revealed that the teacher was the most important key person in implementing the new educational system and policy change. In that regard, the teachers should be trained, motivated, and convinced in the importance of applying the constructivism as a new notion in teaching English through well-planned and well-organized teacher development seminars. They should also be provided with on-going support with the help of professional communities and study groups.

Limitations

No study is exempt from weaknesses. Even though the researcher was careful and planned the study to reduce the limitations that might exist during the research, there were some limitations that she could not control. Some of them are as follows:

− This study is limited to six English teachers working in two public schools in the city of Ankara. This qualitative study was based on their subjective evaluations, understandings and perceptions of the issue. Therefore, it does not represent the other cities or the whole country.
− This study was limited to female teachers, only. It did not reflect the male views and actions. It was not intended to select the participants as females; however, the participant selection process developed that way.
− This study sees the issue from six public school English teachers’ points of view. It would have been even better if some other data had been collected
from the students, administrators, and families to look at the issue from multi-angle perspectives.

- The instrument in this study was the researcher herself. Therefore, she might have had biases and prejudices of which even she might not be aware while observing and exploring. However, she applied some techniques (i.e., peer debriefing) to reduce the bias effect.

- Since the researcher was a non-participant observer, the teachers’ behaviors might have been influenced with the feeling of being watched. As one teacher indicated that the researcher’s presence affected her, but in a positive way. She argued that being watched made her be prepared well for the class and more focused in teaching. In fact, even though this might be positive impact, from another point of view, it is a negativity, as well, as this situation brings another question in mind: Would the teacher behave differently when she knew that she was not being watched?

**Questions for Future Studies**

This study explored certain questions. However, there are also other questions yet to be explored:

- How would the teachers in the whole country be trained in constructivist approach in a constructivist way?

- Would the teacher development seminar be more effective when the group of participants in the class were more than six?
- How would the study differ if conducted in the other cities or regions in Turkey?

- Which is more important in terms of effective and efficient teaching: A constructivist teacher in traditional education system, or a traditional teacher in constructivist education system?

- How would the results of the same study come up if the participants were all males or the group included both male and female teachers? Put differently, would gender make a difference in terms of teacher change and insight?

- Would the results differ if some other stakeholders, such as administrators and students in the schools were included in the research?

**Summary**

This chapter provided discussion, policy implications and recommendations, and the conclusion of the dissertation. The limitations and some future questions for further studies were also given. The target group of this study was six English teachers working in two public schools in the city of Ankara in Turkey. There were three research questions in this study. The first question asked the level of knowledge and understanding of the participants about constructivism; the second research question explored the constructivist applications of the participants, and the final research question aimed to find out what insights were gained about doing professional development in foreign language teaching in the context of Turkey. In order to find answers to these questions, the researcher used multiple data sources such as interviews, observational fieldnotes and artifacts, and researcher logs. Using multiple sources of data in order to
answer the same questions was one of the strengths of this study. The study provided noteworthy findings regarding professional development seminars in the context of Turkey and teacher change.

The researcher conducted an interview with each participant to get an overview about their knowledge of constructivism and its applications before she did a treatment seminar that lasted for 10 days. All of the participants attended the seminar for 10 days, which was another strength of the study. It was found that most of the participants did not know anything about constructivism before the professional development seminar. Their teaching style was based mostly on traditional approach.

After the treatment, the researcher conducted post-seminar interviews to get the participants’ ideas on the seminar. The statements showed that the participants benefited from the seminar a lot, learned constructivism in both theory and practice, and felt that they changed in terms of their teaching views and applications. The researcher conducted three more interviews with each participant during the Fall 2014 semester.

The researcher visited the participants three times in their schools to observe their teaching styles to find more evidence for the impact of the teacher development seminar and change. She wrote observational field notes in the classrooms to see if constructivist methods were used in teaching. It was observed that the teaching styles, in-class applications of the participants supported the idea that the participants changed although they could not get rid of their old teaching habits completely. The participants were mostly successful in applying what they had learned in the seminar in to practice. For further and stronger evidence to find out if constructivist things went on in the
classrooms, the researcher collected five artifacts from each class. The results from the analysis of the artifacts also supported the findings of interviews and observational fieldnotes.

The researcher also wrote 20 researcher logs to further explore the research questions of the dissertation. These data analysis findings also provided evidence that the teacher development seminar was effective and the teachers in the project changed in mind, teaching, and in-class applications.

Things in reality for the teachers did not come up without any challenges and problems. However, those obstacles could not prevent the participants from achieving their teaching goals. Indeed, the participants handling the problems successfully was also an indication that they internalized, applied, and believed in the importance applying constructivism in teaching English as a foreign language.

In conclusion, the findings of this study revealed that the teacher development seminar had a positive effect on six selected English teachers working in two public schools in the city of Ankara in Turkey in changing their teaching views, approach, and applications. The impact was so substantial that the professional community that was formed during the seminar has been continuing since the end of this project, with the participation of new members. Yet, this project showed how these dedicated teachers could reach their idealistic (constructivist) goals in spite of many insufficiencies.
APPENDIX A

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT WORKSHOP PLAN
Appendix A

Professional Development Workshop Plan

Syllabus—Description, Assumptions, and Goals

Participants begin to explore the new concept “constructivism” in education by reading and discussing foundational and current theories in this area.

In this workshop, the participants, who are six public school English teachers, get together to study and share their original reflections under the guidance of the researcher. During the seminar, we proceed with the same kind of focused discussion of readings and issues, and the same informed give-and-take, which one would find in a typical seminar. This is not like a traditional seminar which is mostly teacher-centered; instead participant contributions through critical conversations and discussions in their small groups (critical colleagues) are required. There are also whole group discussions as an important component of the 10-day seminar. In the seminar, the researcher’s role is to facilitate and encourage participants’ thinking and learning by providing the resources, information, framework and guidance to help them become critically reflective and knowledgeable teachers.

The general topics and reading assignments for the seminar are already decided in advance (see the schedule), but the particular direction of their study is decided by their own professional interests, experiences, and needs.

The main goal of this workshop is to introduce the participants constructivism as a new notion in foreign language education. It also aims to help them acquire a foundation in curriculum and teaching studies and engage with others in careful consideration of relevant theories and strategies.

The participants have the opportunity to be actively engaged and critically reflective about the readings, group discussions and their own work. Regular participation in large group and small group discussions and activities is expected.

Reading Materials:


Schedule

DAY 1
Morning: 11:00-12:30

- A constructivist activity by the researcher: Warmers and Icebreakers for a Warm Beginning (See Appendix B, Theory 1, Activity 1)
- Introductions
- Foundations for Seminar/Seminar Overview
Explaining the syllabus, the reading assignments, setting the small groups/critical colleague groups10 (participants will be working in their small groups of two while doing the in-class activities, and during the critical professional conversations and the book-talks/readings11)

**Afternoon: 13:30-15:00**

- Small group discussions (critical colleague groups)
  Theme: Education in Turkey
  Guiding Questions:
  ✓ What are the problems in Turkish education system today? How can we overcome these problems? What would you do for a better education for your students if you had a magic wand? What does it mean a better education? Why is it so difficult to get good education? What should be done for more effective teaching/learning?
- Assignment for the next day: Reading article by Robert Barr and John Tagg named *A New Paradigm for Education.*

**DAY 2**

**Morning: 11:00-12:30**

- Small group discussions (critical colleague groups). The article assigned one day before will be discussed in critical colleague groups. This article outlines a paradigm shift—from instruction to learning, by Robert Barr and John Tagg named *A New Paradigm for Education.*
  Guiding Questions:
  ✓ Is there a need for a paradigm shift in education in Turkey? Why is it necessary to make a change from instruction to learning? Which is more important, good teaching or real learning? How can we get the students to the center in the classrooms? Would it be possible to have student-centered classrooms with traditional methods? What would be the more progressive educational ways that emphasize the learning instead of teaching?

---

10 Reflections on critical colleagues (reflections from the participants will be required after each small group activity):
- What is/are the purpose(s) of critical colleague groups in this workshop?
- What have been the strengths of this learning community?
- What have been the roles of different members?
- What has been your role?
- What have you learned from the process of critical colleagueship?
- Where has the critical component come into your work?
- Where has the colleagueship come into your work?

11 Reflections on readings (reflections from the participants will be required after each book-talks/readings):
- What have been the most important contributions to your understanding of foreign language teaching in this workshop?
- What do you know now (that matters!) that you did not know in the beginning of the workshop? Where and how have you learned it?

Of what value do you now see in each of the major readings (Barr & Tagg, Brookfield, Dewey, and Eisner)?
Afternoon: 13:30-15:00

- There will be no group discussions in the afternoon session. The researcher will briefly give theoretical information about:
  Setting the parameters for constructivism\(^{12}\)
  Foundation (What is constructivism?)
  von Glasersfeld: Knowledge
  Piaget: Cognitive aspect
  Vygotsky: Social aspect
  Dewey: Experiential learning
- What/how do constructivist classrooms\(^{13}\) look like?

DAY 3

Morning: 11:00-12:30

- There will be no group discussions in the morning session. The researcher will briefly give theoretical information about:
  The 1st Floor: Constructing the walls (Teachers-Students-Learning-Assessment) on the foundation Teachers\(^{14}\) in constructivist classrooms

---

\(^{12}\) The metaphor of construction (foundation, floors, walls, etc.) of constructivism is taken from Can (2009)'s website.

\(^{13}\) Constructivist Classrooms (Reinfried, 2000, cited in Can, 2009)
  - Action Oriented
  - Learner Oriented
  - Holistic Language Learning
  - Process Oriented Awareness

Constructivist Classrooms (Reinfried, 2000, cited in Can, 2009)
  - Intercultural Awareness (Creativity- Learner Oriented)
  - Language Awareness
  - Content Awareness
  - Learner Autonomy
  - Individual Learning
  - Collaborative Learning
  - Learning Awareness
  - Projects
  - Real and Complex Learning Situations

\(^{14}\) Teachers in Constructivist Classrooms (Can, 2009)
Teacher is knowledgeable about constructivist theory
The teacher prompts student learning by posing questions
The teacher guides, not directs, student learning
The teacher poses problems that are or will be relevant to the students
The teacher reflects on their teaching
A constructivist activity by the researcher (See Appendix B, Theory 2, Activity

**Afternoon: 13:30-15:00**

  Guiding questions:
  ✓ Brookfield makes the case that we need to “get inside the student’s head.” What are your thoughts about this? Is this, or should this be an aspiration of a teacher? In what ways could this be helpful to the teaching learning process? In what ways might it pose difficulties to the teaching learning process? What challenges does “getting inside the student’s head” pose for the teacher?
  ✓ What does it mean to become a critical teacher? How can we explain the idea that being a reflective teacher requires reflective students? In which parts of the curriculum is critical reflection necessary?

**DAY 4**
**Morning: 11:00-12:30**

- Discussions: The researcher and participants
  Theme: Traditional classrooms vs. constructivist classrooms

**Afternoon: 13:30-15:00**

- There will be no group discussions in the afternoon session. The researcher will briefly give theoretical information about: **Students** in constructivist classrooms
  - A constructivist activity by the researcher (See Appendix B, Theory 3, Activity 1)

**DAY 5**
**Morning: 11:00-12:30**

---

**Students in Constructivist Classrooms** (Can, 2009)
Students learn how to learn, the students reflect on how they learn
Students ask questions in the classroom
Students construct their own understanding of knowledge
Students explore the bigger concepts
Students provide peer feedback to each other
Student assessment is based on process-driven methods
− There will be no group discussions in the morning session. The researcher will briefly give theoretical information about: Learning in constructivist classrooms
− A constructivist activity by the researcher (See Appendix B, Theory 4, Activity 1)

DAY 6
Morning: 11:00-12:30

− Small group discussions (critical colleague groups)
  Theme: English Language Education in Turkey
  Guiding Questions:
    ✓ What are the main problems you encounter in teaching English in Turkey? What can be the solutions to these problems? How has the field of English Language Teaching developed in Turkey? What is the role of teacher education programs in the development of English Language Teaching? What are the more progressive/modern ways that can be used for better/more effective language learning?

Afternoon: 13:30-15:00

− There will be no group discussions in the afternoon session. The researcher will briefly give theoretical information about: Assessment in constructivist classrooms
− A constructivist activity by the researcher (See Appendix B, Theory 5, Activity 1)

DAY 7
Morning: 11:00-12:00

16 Learning in Constructivist Classrooms (Can, 2009)
Primary and raw resources are used in the classroom
Experiential learning is integrated into the classroom
The lessons build on students’ prior knowledge
Constructivist learning is integrated into collaborative and cooperative learning activities
Hands-on activities are integrated into the curriculum
Classroom learning is dynamic, ever-changing, evolving, reflective, inquiry-based

17 Assessment in Constructivist Classrooms (Can, 2009)
Evaluate student progress by examining the thinking process of the student: Students and teacher might construct a rubric to guide work
Evaluate students observing them perform
Have students document their learning through journal or diary-like activities and reflect on their learning: use of e-mail (built on class topics), online discussion boards, and other BBS (bulletin board system) features to be effective in the assessment of learning, and Readers’ Response Journals
Prompt students to create new problem-solving environments; construct a Web site, PowerPoint Presentations
There will be no group discussions in the morning session. The researcher will briefly give theoretical information about:

- **The 2nd Floor: Constructivist classrooms**
- **A Constructivist Design Model**

### Afternoon: 13:00-15:00

- Watching a movie called *Dead Poets Society*, in which a dedicated teacher gives his students the gift of inspiration.
- **Small group discussions (critical colleague groups) on the movie:**
  - **Theme:** Comparing a traditional teacher to an imaginative and creative one; comparing a teacher who uses transmission style in teaching to one who uses completely different methods of instruction to help his students become true lovers of poetry and who wishes his students to learn to make their own decisions about their future plans.
  - **Assignment for the next day:** Dewey, J. (1997). *Experience and education.*

---

18 **A Constructivist Design Model**-(Stephens & Brown, 2000, cited in Can, 2009)

- **Initiating:** Stage-setting for learning (Reaction Guide, The 10 Most Important Words, Brain racing, Question of the Day, Clustering)
- **Constructing:** Interactive phase in which students are actively engaged in processing what they learn and incorporating it into their schemata (Venn Diagram, Cubing, Concept Collection, Explorer’s Kit, Pen-in-Hand)
- **Utilizing:** Thoughtful process in which students must use their minds as sculpting tools to chisel and refine concepts and ideas so that they are useful and relevant. (Investigative Teams, Character Home Pages, Discussion Continuum, Online Portfolios) (Reflection on every phase)
DAY 8  
Morning: 11:00-12:30

- The researcher and the participants will work on designing a constructivist activity altogether based on the theoretical information provided on the previous day.

Let’s work on the 2nd floor: Let’s design a constructivist reading activity altogether based on the design model mentioned on the previous day.

---

19 Designing a Constructivist Activity (as an in-class -Reading-activity with the whole group)- Constructivist Design Model-(Stephens & Brown, 2000, cited in Can, 2009)

“Vandalism is on the rise in school. Because it is a large school with several buildings, lockers have been broken into, personal belongings stolen, furniture scratched, and walls defaced even during school hours, without anyone seeing the culprits. Among the safety measures the school plans to take are: students will no longer be allowed to leave the cafeteria during lunch, and there will be no outside recess so that no student can wander around without being seen. Hall passes will also be limited. Students will have to leave their bags in their lockers as soon as they get to school so that no one can carry around dangerous articles.

You find these rules unreasonable and potentially ineffective. You feel that innocent students will be inconvenienced, and that there must be better measures. What can you do?” (Duffy & Savery, 1994, cited in Can, 2009)

Initiating: Reaction Guide

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Not Sure</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1) I sometimes find my locker damaged.</td>
<td>......</td>
<td>......</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2) I usually scratch my desk.</td>
<td>......</td>
<td>......</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3) I cannot leave the cafeteria during lunch.</td>
<td>......</td>
<td>......</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4) The rules in our school are very strict.</td>
<td>......</td>
<td>......</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5) I leave my bag in my locker.</td>
<td>......</td>
<td>......</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Constructing: Cubing (In small groups of three)

Description (describe it)
Comparison (compare it)
Association (associate it)
Analysis (analyze it)
Application (apply it)
Argumentation (argue for or against it)

Cubing (In small groups of three)

Description (describe it): Vandalism: Lockers have been broken into, personal belongings stolen, furniture scratched, and walls defaced even during school hours, without anyone seeing the culprits
Comparison (compare it): Venn Diagram: That school and our school
Association (associate it): I sometimes find my locker damaged. The other day … was stolen from my friend’s locker.
Analysis (analyze it): Analyzes, breaks down, compares, contrasts, diagrams, deconstructs, differentiates, discriminates, distinguishes, identifies, illustrates, infers, outlines, relates, selects, separates.
Application (apply it): New measures should be taken, instead of punishing everybody; cameras should be out in the hallways.
Argumentation (argue for or against it): I do not think that the innocent students should be punished as described in the text.
TASK—Prepare your own constructivist lesson based on Stephens and Brown (2000)’s design model as a whole group:

Theme: Vandalism
Initiating
Constructing

Afternoon: 13:30-15:00

− Book talk as whole group discussions: Dewey (1997). *Experience and education.*
− Theme: John Dewey’s Influence on Education
  Guiding questions:
  ✓ What do you think Dewey had in mind in writing this brief book? What are key ideas Dewey describes in this book, and how might they relate to current issues in teaching and learning? What questions would you put to John Dewey should he make an appearance in our class wondering what we thought about his philosophy of education? In what ways are some of Dewey’s ideas carried out in educational practices you have experienced?
− Assignment for the next day: Eisner (2002). *The educational imagination: On the design and evaluation of school programs.* The first small group will read the part “The Curriculum Development and Teaching: What’s it all about? Terms and Experience (pp. 1-125)” and talk about this part; the second group will read the part “Dimensions of Curriculum Planning and Evaluation (pp. 125-212)” and talk about this part, and the third group will read the part of “Educational Criticism and Connoisseurship (pp. 212-345)” and will be talking about this part.

DAY 9
Morning: 11:00-12:30

  Theme: The first group on Curriculum Development and Teaching: What’s it all about? Terms and Experience (pp. 1-125); the second group on Dimensions of Curriculum Planning and Evaluation (pp. 125-212)

Afternoon: 13:30-15:00

  Theme: The third group on Educational Criticism and Connoisseurship (pp. 212-345)

DAY 10
Morning: 11:00-12:00

− Whole group discussion:
  1. Reflections on Seminar Sessions
     • What has been of most value to you in the seminar sessions and why has it been valuable? Be specific.
● What did you find to be most helpful (and why) to you in your learning during this seminar?
● What are your suggestions for the seminar and the facilitator in general?

2. General Ideas to Wrap-up
● Where do we go from here?
● What do we do with this information?
● How does it inform ideas for my future teaching? How does it change me, if at all, and my view/knowledge of the role of curriculum/teaching?
APPENDIX B

A VARIETY OF CONSTRUCTIVIST IN-CLASS ACTIVITIES
Appendix B

A Variety of Constructivist In-Class Activities

A variety of in class activities that will be done by the teacher in the workshop:

1. **Theory:** One of the necessary constructivist conditions for learning according to Piaget (1973) is to provide for social negotiation (cooperative and socio-moral atmosphere) as an integral part of learning.

2. **Method:** Using student-centered activities to create a warm atmosphere in the classroom

**Topic: Warmers and Icebreakers for a Warm Beginning**

**Instructional Goal(s):**

These activities are for a warm beginning, or in other words for an icebreaker. They are designed to help students to get to know the teacher and each other at the beginning of the course.

**Materials needed:** A soft ball (or just a piece of paper)

**Activity 1:** A name learning activity: The ball name game

**Stage 1**

All the learners as well as the teacher stand in a circle. The teacher has a soft ball (or even a crumpled piece of paper as a substitute ball) in her hand.

The teacher introduces herself and gives herself an adjective beginning with the first letter of her name to describe herself:

*I am Active Ann.*

She then passes the ball to the person next to her. He/she does the same:

*I am Happy Henry* and so on.

**Stage 2**

After the ball has gone round all the class and everyone has chosen an adjective they like for themselves, the teacher can throw the ball across the group and at the same time say her own adjective and name: *I am Active Ann.*

This goes on around the group, each person choosing to throw to whomever they wish, until everyone has had a turn.

**Stage 3**

The teacher retrieves the ball and this time throws it to someone across the room while saying that person’s name *Happy Henry*. The learner who receives the ball has to do the same, saying the adjective and name of the person s/he throws it to. *Beautiful Beth*

**Activity 2:** Getting to know each other activity

---

20 Some of the activities under this title/section are learned and practiced in the workshop done by Gulfem Aslan at the British Council in Ankara. Some are taken from Can (2009)’s website. One is designed by Leona Salewsky.
Stage 1
Ask the students to write three topics on a piece of paper that each of them likes to talk about. These can be hobbies or something they have heard in the news or a book they have been reading. For example: Football, Turkey and The European Union, or Cats, Food, and The Election.

Stage 2
Ask the students to form a line according to the spelling of their first name, from A to Z. They will probably be standing next to someone whom they do not know but whose name they may remember.

Stage 3
Tell the students to turn to the person next to them and talk about one of the topics on their paper for one minute. Then the other student talks for a minute on a favorite topic. More advanced learners can practice good listening too, making noises such as “uh huh,” “really!” and so on while their partner is talking.

Stage 4
Ask students to re-organize themselves according to their birthdays. For example, January 10, May 15, June 1. This will involve them asking each other questions to work out the correct order.

Stage 5
Repeat stage 3. If they are standing next to the same person then they can talk about another topic from their piece of paper.

Evaluation
When the class have finished, ask them to share with you any interesting or unusual information they found out about each other and you can discuss any communication difficulties they had, vocabulary problems and so on.

Discussion with the participants: How can you quickly create a warm atmosphere in your classes at the beginning of a new course? What other activities would you think of as warmers and ice-breakers?

Anticipated Problems:
- How can I apply these activities in my large classes and passing the ball might be a problem time wise? Is there a solution? The class can be divided into two or three groups after the teacher shows the activity.
- Isn’t the ball throwing activity childish? This can be a very enjoyable and fun activity to learn the names of all students in the classroom unless you keep long.

2. Theory: Theories of Intelligence (H. Gardner, 1983) indicate that there are distinct linguistic abilities that differ across individuals, and these individual differences should be taken into consideration in teaching. Put differently, teachers should cater for different learning styles in teaching.

Method: This lesson presents language (imperatives) in a realistic/meaningful context using a variety of different groupings such as pair work, group work, whole class, and individual work. Teachers encourage
all types of learners to be completely involved in the authentic activity, which encourages collaboration and co-operation.

**Topic: Grammar/Imperatives**

**Instructional Goal(s):**

- To present the function and positive and negative forms of imperatives in an authentic context.
- To appeal to both right and left brain dominant learners with differing sensory styles (through drama), thereby facilitating learning and memory (recall).
- To allow students to “discover” for themselves the rules of using imperatives in a meaningful way as well as accurately.

**Activity 1:** “This is a hold-up” designed by Gulfem Aslan

**Materials Needed:**

1. A jumbo sized rubbish bin liner
2. A stocking, handkerchief or mask
3. A toy gun
4. A CD player and a CD of some light music.
5. A large sign saying: “Mario’s Restaurant”
6. Postcard-sized colored cards (for wallets), as many as there are students in the class.
7. Worksheet 1: list of sentences to be put in the correct order.
8. Worksheet 2: questions for awareness raising and controlled practice of imperatives.
9. Projector (if available, if not the board can be used by the teacher)

**Procedure:**

- Enter class with a jumbo-sized rubbish bin liner and ask the students what they think you are going to do with it. Elicit some guesses.
- Put up a sign saying, “Mario’s Restaurant,” and start playing some light music.
- Explain that they are all customers in this high-class restaurant. Ask them to pretend they are eating dinner and talking to their friends. Say that something exciting is going to happen in a minute. Give out the colored cards and tell them to write their names on one side of the card. Then tell them to put the card in their pockets or bags.
- Tell students that they are going to hear eight sentences and you want them to listen very carefully the order of the sentences: they will only hear them once. Elicit back the instructions.
- Set them to start “chatting and eating” in the restaurant. Tell them you are the waiter here and get them discussing what might be able to order in a restaurant like this. (Mario’s Italian). Leave the classroom. Outside, quickly put on your mask, have your gun in one hand and the bin liner in the other. Then, pretending to be a gangster, push open the classroom door, pointing your gun at the students and shout out threateningly: “Ok, you guys. This is a hold-up.”
- Keeping your gun pointed at them, issue the following instructions in this order:
  1. Don’t move Freeze Stand up slowly with your hands up
  2. Put both hands on your heads
  3. Take out your wallets (show them the colored cards so that they know these are their wallets)
  4. Don’t try any funny business
  5. Hold them up in the air
  6. Drop them into this bag, one by one
7. Sit down and keep your ugly heads down on your tables
8. Keep your hands on your heads
   ● Walking backwards to the classroom door say: “Alright now. Be good. Ok? Ha Ha Ha Ha! Bye...” and leave the classroom.
   ● Re-enter the class with all your gear off. Give out Worksheet 1. Have students do the task in pairs/groups. Discuss the answers afterwards and put up the correct version on the projector (or board).
   ● Give out Worksheet 2 and again have the students answer the questions in pairs/groups. Discuss and elicit correct answers.
   ● Now ask them to write down all they have learnt today about: how and when to use “imperatives/ giving orders/ commands/ instructions.” One important point here is to give the learners a chance to discover rules for themselves.

**Evaluation:**
Have groups of students write down instructions/ commands for one of the activities below (make sure they know the necessary vocabulary for the task. If not, go round the groups and provide the vocabulary they need):

1. A step/gymnastics session (provide a pop CD)
2. How to bathe a small baby (provide a baby doll for this task)
3. How to float on water without sinking
4. A fire drill in school
5. Anything else you can think of
Then have them read out in turn and ask another group to stand up and act out/mime the actions.

**Discussion with the participants:** Goals 1 and 3 of the lesson focused on imperatives, both form and usage. Can all types of learners process the information easily? In other words, does it cater for different learning styles?
Yes. This lesson has taken into consideration visual, auditory, kinesthetic.
Visual learners are able to see the sentences in order and study them on the projector. They can also enjoy the visual demonstration of the drama and have a chance to write down sentences for themselves again in the extension activity.
Auditory learners hear the sentences during the drama and instructions are given orally in the extension activity.
Kinesthetic learners will love moving around and taking part in the hold up. They also have a second chance to move in response to the instructions in the extension activity.

**Anticipated Problems:**
● What could I use if I didn't have the necessary materials, i.e., a plastic gun? You do not have to find and use fancy materials in the activities, by using your imagination; you can easily use simple daily materials in the activities. For example, a cucumber in a paper bag or just your hand can be used instead of a gun.

**Rules about Form of Imperatives**
Imperatives have the same form as the infinitive without to:
   i.e., Work! Come! Go! Write!
The negative is formed by putting “do not” (don’t) before the imperative:

i.e., Don’t work! Don’t come!

The pronoun “you” is understood but not normally expressed.

After doing the “A Hold Up” activity with the learners, these rules can be presented by the teacher.

Now they know the rules and they have had some practice. This is very neat and tidy. Tell the learners a rule and then practice the rule. Imperatives will now be clear to them. But it doesn’t tell them very much about using the form. It has many other uses/functions which can be talked in the next session.

3. Theory: For Dewey (1916, 1938), education depended on action. More clearly, knowledge and ideas derived from a situation in which learners had to draw them out of their experiences that were meaningful and important for them. Task-based/Real-life experiences, teaching sentence structures in real contexts

Method: This lesson presents language in a real context. It supports co-operative learning. The learners are engaged in dialogue with other students and the teacher.

Topic: Grammar/Imperatives in Various Functions

Instructional Goal(s):

● Learners will practice using language (put it into action) and at examples of it working in context, not just at language usage (learn about how it works).
● To present the various functions of Imperatives
● To allow students to discover for themselves the rules of using imperatives in a meaningful way as well as accurately.
● To allow students to discover the other functions of imperatives
● Students will be able to understand the imperative form in the meaning of giving instructions/directions; through the activity (making fudge brownies using brownie mix)
● They will have learned new verbs such as to preheat, to heat, to mix, to bake, to cool, and nouns such as fudge brownies, brownie mix.

Activity 1: Instruction for a Recipe

Materials Needed: A box of brownie mix, two eggs, oil and water

Procedure:
Ask students if the following are imperatives. If not, what are they?

1. Simmer for 15 minutes over a low heat: Instruction for a recipe
2. Come again soon: Invitation
3. Halt! Order
4. Give us this day our daily bread: Prayer or invocation
5. Don’t mention it: Standard response to thanks
6. Marry me: Request, begging, marriage proposal
7. Go away: Request, warning, threat, order

Explain all of the statements fit the form rule for imperative. However, their functions do not necessarily fit the heading, “imperative.”

Ask students what other functions imperatives have. Elicit some answers such as request, warning, threat, and order. After these kinds of answers, the teacher can add another one, giving directions to find ways.
Ask where in the real life we come across with the imperatives and in which functions they are used? Elicit answers such as giving directions to find ways/locations (Go straight down this street for two blocks. Turn left when you get to Maple Street. Stay on Maple for half a block. It’s on the left hand side) or giving instructions about homework exercise, course project, lab experiment, paper, in-class activity.

Then, do the activity in small groups.

Students had already been informed that they would make brownies as an in-class activity, and they were asked to bring the necessary ingredients for the brownie such as brownie mix, oil, eggs and the supplies such as pan, cooking spray, bowl, and spoon into the classroom.

Students do this activity in small groups of four. They will read the directions on the box, and they will make fudge brownies by following the directions. Making brownies for this kind of activity was chosen on purpose, because to have brownies soft and moist enough, all directions should be followed step by step. When each group is done, the jury that consists of three students and the teacher will decide which one is the best. There will be a prize for the winner.

Ingredients:
Eggs, oil, and water

Directions:
Heat: First preheat as directed. Grease bottom of pan only.
Mix: Empty mix into bowl. Add ½ cup vegetable oil, ¼ cup water and two eggs. Mix with a spoon until all particles are moistened (about 50 strokes). Spread batter evenly in pan.
Bake: Bake as directed below (bake at 350 F for 28 to 30 minutes) or until toothpick inserted 2 inches from the side of the pan comes out clean or almost clean. Do not over bake; this causes brownie dryness. Cool before cutting.

The teacher will revise the positive and the negative imperative forms, and will ask if the students have recognized any meaning difference between what they have practiced today and the previous day. Elicit the answer yes. Then they will be asked to explain that difference.

Discussion with the participants: Should we teach the grammar first and then practice it or should we talk first and analyze afterwards?

It is a well-known fact that students’ gaining communication ability is one of the most important goals of foreign language education. By teaching the form of the grammar points of a language does not help the learners to use the target language in real communications. For them, to be able to speak in the language in social interactions, it is not enough just to teach structures and words, but how and when those structures are used is also emphasized (context). Teachers should help learners to do things with the language, not just observe it, or speak about it (activate). They should also be given practice for using language themselves in their own way in a “communicative context” as this is how they will learn for themselves (personalize).

Anticipated Problems:
- How can I apply this activity in large classes, wouldn’t it be too messy to do such kind of activity in the classroom? Again, you can do it in groups. Yes, that can be messy, but the teacher will say to the students to clean up using imperatives in the meaning of giving directions/instructions.

Evaluation: Students are asked to think about where in the real life they can use imperatives with different functions, in pairs. Then, they are asked to write a dialogue using these forms of imperatives (i.e., A:
Excuse me, how can I get to the post office? B: Go straight ahead; take the second turning on the right . . .). Finally, they role-play their scenarios in pairs.

4. Theory: Reinfried (2000) applies the constructivist principles in foreign language learning and teaching. According to him, constructivist language learning should be actively implemented. One important principle in foreign language education according to Jonassen (1994) is presenting authentic tasks by contextualizing them rather than abstracting the knowledge. Theories of Intelligence (H. Gardner, 1983) point out that there are different linguistic abilities that differ across individuals. Teachers should be aware of this reality in teaching, and should take different types of learners into consideration in teaching.

Method: Using a variety of different groupings such as pair work, group work, whole class and individual work, new structure is presented in a meaningful activity.

Topic: A grammar and integrated-skills lesson focusing on “used to”

Instructional Goal(s):
1. To have the students deduce from a meaningful context the function and form of “used to” with the third person singular
2. To improve students’ fluency in speaking and enhance their listening skills within an information-gap speaking/listening task
3. To improve the students’ accuracy in using “used to” within a controlled writing/speaking task to relate past events
4. To enhance the students’ writing skills “used to” within a free (creative) group-writing task
5. To enhance the students’ extensive reading skills (optional)

Activity 1: “The Story of Cevriye Hanım” designed by Gulfem Aslan

Materials Needed:

**For Part 1:**
- A colorful headscarf
- A long, colorful skirt
- A pair of socks
- A pair of plastic slippers
- A cleaning rag (duster)
- A plastic bag

**For Part 2:**
- An English Magazine
- An iPod
- A cell phone
- A track suit
- Running shoes
- A bell
- Some perfume

**Also:**
- A CD player
- A recording of “Fosforlu Cevriye” (by Ibrahim Tatlises)
- A recording of some Western music
● Two chairs
● Board & colored markers/chalk

Procedure:

Task 1: Miming the Story of Cevriye Hanim
Goal: Introducing the language through a meaningful context
Steps:
Tell the students they are going to watch a film entitled “the story of Cevriye Hanim” and write the title on the board

1. Partner the students into As and Bs and say they have only one ticket for the film between each pair, so As will watch part 1, while Bs wait outside the cinema (the classroom) and then after the break, the Bs will come in and watch part 2 of the film while the As go outside and wait. Write on the boards:
   As-Part 1: Cevriye Hanım’s Life Ten Years Ago
   Bs-Part 2: Cevriye Hanım’s Life Now
   Explain that the first part of the film is about her life as it was 10 years ago and that the second part of the film is about her life as it is now.

2. Send Bs outside the classroom to wait quietly

3. Tell the students you are going to “play” Cevriye Hanim and ask them to watch and take short notes on her actions, lifestyle, clothes etc.

4. Mime the following sketch using the realia and props for part 1:
   ● Play the tape of Fosforlu Cevriye in the background
   ● Lie down on the two chairs and pretend to be sleeping
   ● Wake up and turn on tap. Wash face and hands
   ● Put on skirt, socks, headscarf and high-heeled shoes
   ● Put on cardigan, grab plastic bag with duster and slippers in it and leave the house
   ● Wait in the line at the bus stop and push and shove to get on the bus when it arrives. Mime standing and jiggling around
   ● Get off the bus and walk to a house. Knock on the door, kiss someone’s hand and put to your forehead
   ● Take out slippers and put them on and take out duster from plastic bag
   ● Dust the furniture, wipe the floors, wipe the windows, do the ironing and the washing up. Then hold out your hand for money, put it in your bosom, kiss someone’s hand and leave.

5. Ask the As to leave the room without saying anything to the Bs when they see them outside and to ask the Bs to come in

6. When the Bs come in and sit down, tell them are going to “play” Cevriye Hanım Part 2 and ask them to watch and take short notes on her actions, lifestyle, clothes etc.

7. Mime the following sketch for part 2:
   ● Play the tape of the Western music in the background
   ● Lie down on the two chairs and pretend to be sleeping Wake up, yawn, and ring the bell
   ● “Tell” the maid to bring breakfast and read Newsweek in bed while listening to an iPod as you wait for it
   ● When maid brings breakfast, eat your toast and drink your tea, then ring the bell for her to collect the tray
● Get out of bed and take a shower, dry yourself and put on perfume
● Put on track suit and running shoes
● Ring bell and get the maid to bring your pet dog, hold her by her lead and leave the house with the dog pulling
● Mime jogging around the park with the dog, while talking on your mobile phone
● Come back home, give the dog to the maid, take another shower and go back to bed and sleep

**Task 2:** Information gap activity
**Goal:** To improve students’ fluency in speaking and enhance their listening skills
**Steps:**
1. Get students to sit in their original pairs as As and Bs
2. Tell students that As are to describe what happened in part 1 (10 years ago) to their partners, Bs, and when they’ve finished, Bs are to describe to their partners, As, what Cevriye Hanim’s life is like now

**Task 3:** Presenting grammar: “used to”
**Goal:** To elicit from the students the function and form of “used to” through the given context
**Steps:**
1. Elicit from As some things that Cevriye did 10 years ago, and write on board: e.g.: 10 Years Ago: 
   Now: 
   She got up early but she doesn’t any more
   She worked but she doesn’t any more
   She listened to Ibo but she doesn’t any more
2. Elicit from the students another way of saying that she did these things in the past and that she doesn’t do them anymore: “used to”
3. Write on board:
   She *used to* get up early, but she doesn’t any more (and highlight in a used to + Infinitive (without to) different color)
   She used to work, but she doesn’t anymore . . .
   She used to listen to Ibo, but she doesn’t any more . . . etc.

**Task 4:** Grammar practice: writing and reading out sentences with “used to”
**Goal:** To improve the students’ accuracy in using “used to” within a controlled writing/speaking task
**Steps:**
1. Ask students in their pairs to write 5 more similar sentences about the story using “used to”
2. Have each pair read out one of the sentences they have written and check answers for accuracy and pronunciation

**Task 5:** Group work: Writing a group story about what happened to Cevriye Hanım
**Goal:** To enhance the students’ creative writing skills within a free writing task
**Steps:**
1. Ask students whether Cevriye’s life has changed a lot. (Elicit: Yes!)
2. Put students into groups of 4 or 5, give them a group number and ask them to write a joint composition about what happened to change her life so much

**Task 6:** (Optional) Getting students to read and grade all the group stories
Goal: To enhance the students’ extensive reading skills

Steps:
1. When students have finished all the group stories, get them to stick them up the written stories up on the walls of the classroom
2. Get all the students to stand up and read all the stories and give each one a grade out of 10 for originality which they write on the bottom of each story
3. Give feedback on which story got the highest marks and reward that group with a prize
4. Put the best story chosen by the other students forward for publication in the school magazine

Discussion with the participants:

- At what point does the teacher introduce the new language? Why does she or he do it at this point? New language is introduced only after the context is clearly established without thinking about grammar. By the time she or he gets to introducing “used to” there would be no doubt about the concept she or he is expressing.
- How does the teacher check that the students have understood the concept of the new teaching point? She or he checks understanding by eliciting examples to write on the white board. If the students had not grasped the concept then it would become clear at this point i.e., she or he used to be very rich when she was cleaning houses. She can further check understanding during the practice activities.

Anticipated Problems:

- How can I be sure that the students will be quiet? The problem of keeping the students outside the class quiet and occupied may be overcome by enlisting the help of another teacher. (e.g.: the teacher on duty)

5. Theory: Jonassen (1992) emphasizes the importance of supporting collaborative construction of knowledge through social negotiation when he explained how knowledge construction can be facilitated. 
Method: Using a role-play activity and evaluating the students perform a theatre play; students will perform a play in the target language

Activity 1 (Can, 2009): A theatre play can be translated into native language and performed

Goal: By translating a theatrical play into the native language, the learners will understand the meaning of the sentences used in the play, and by performing the play in the class; they will see how the sentence structures/concepts are used in the context. Moreover, it shows that the language is not only verbal but it is also related to body language.

Materials: Some information, objects, cloths, and materials about the time of the play can be brought into class after the reading in order to be used in the role-play. Objects about the decoration and time of the story can also be brought.

Plan: (1) After students read the play and the concepts are presented by the teacher, the class is divided into several groups based on the number of students, each group translates different parts of the play into their language, and then each group brings the authentic materials such as objects, costumes, pictures, decoration materials into the classroom to be used in the performance. (2) Each group performs its part in relevant costumes and decoration. Performing a play which is in the target language will also increase the learners’ cultural awareness. They will have a chance both to learn more about the culture of the target
language and to inquire more about their own culture. (3) A play chosen in their native language can be translated into the second language and performed.

**Evaluation:** Students are asked to perform to other groups first, and then to other classes. For evaluation, before their performance members of each group with their teacher will create a rubric. While they are role-playing, the members of other groups as well as the teacher will evaluate their performance based on the criteria indicated in the rubric.

**Activity 2** (Can, 2009): Examining the progress of the target language

**Goal:** To examine the progress of the target language, and improve a deeper understanding about the culture of the target language.

**Materials:** Home and school environment, Internet, books, etc.

**Plan:** (1) Books, texts, poems that reflect the improvement of target language, should be chosen. For instance, medieval English writer Geoffrey Chaucer’s text, “The Canterbury Tales” could be brought into class, and then the introduction part can be read. Afterwards, the students can be asked to choose one of the characters in the text and try to find/collect information about that character. They can wear their characters’ costumes and in the costume they make a presentation. (2) Then, they get together in small groups, and discuss the characteristics of their characters in groups, and lay out the social, historical, and cultural connections of the language of that time. (3) The students can demonstrate their characters in the class. (4) The students are asked to create/prepare their own activities and share their ideas with class.

**6. Theory:** An important notion that Vygotsky (1978) stresses in constructivism is the scaffolding, which can be explained as guiding the student from what is previously known to what is to be known. The learner’s previous knowledge constructions, beliefs, and attitudes are considered in the knowledge construction process.

**Method:** Using individual work and group work students are encouraged to use their creativity and imagination

**Activity 1** (Can, 2009): Developing Imagination

**Goal:** Determination of the concepts by the learners, improvement of the imagination with hands-on-activities, and support the learner autonomy, self-confidence and determination.

**Materials:** One box of paperclips (Toothpicks and small marshmallows can also be used instead of paperclips)

**Plan:** (1) A paperclip is given to every student in the foreign language class, where they are asked to make a shape using those clips. Names are given to those shapes, and the students are asked to make up a story about that new concept in foreign language. This way, the creativity is improved and their self-motivation is supported. (2) Based on the number of the students in the class, groups can be set up, and a box of paperclip can be given to each group. This time, they will be asked to make shapes and combine with others to make different and bigger shapes. The learners are encouraged to engage in dialogue with other students while working. Finally, they are asked to make up stories using their imagination and creativity based on the shapes they have created, one from each group tells the story to the rest of the class. Some groups may decide to write plays, and perform them as a group in the classroom.
**Evaluation**: The written products from these kinds of activities will be collected in a portfolio to be evaluated by the teacher. This portfolio kept by the students will allow them also to see their own improvements from the beginning of the academic year till the end.

7. **Theory**: Two of the seven goals for the design of constructivist learning environment according to Honebein (1996) are embedding learning in realistic and relevant contexts and embedding learning in social experience.

**Method**: Using a variety of groupings, students are encouraged to learn cooperatively by discussing and deliberating

**Activity 1** (Can, 2009): Magazine or newspaper publication

**Goal**: Publishing magazine or board news either as in class activity, or as a homework assignment. This way, a real output is gained with the class materials.

**Materials**: Internet, books, weekly or monthly magazines, newspapers, etc.

**Plan**: (1) Students could publish a class magazine or wall newspaper altogether about the topics that they learn in English lessons. This way, they will see how they can create some real concrete outputs using what they have learned in the class. They can also see and observe their own improvements in English from the beginning of the semester. (2) Setting groups and having each group prepare some part of the magazine or newspaper, and update/change it weekly so that they can contribute each section of the magazine and/or newspaper. The learners will have the responsibility of updating the newspaper. And this will provide them more control on their actions. Even out of the class, they will think about it, and try to find new topics for each week, which will increase their natural curiosity. Further, more copies of these magazines can be prepared in order to deliver them to other classes, as well, or the newspaper can be published in somewhere in the school building.

**Evaluation**: The students are asked to keep all the materials that they have used to create the newspaper in a folder to submit it to their teacher by the end of the semester.

**Activity 2** (Can, 2009): Data collection about the reading texts

**Goal**: To improve understanding by collecting real materials such as info, pictures, objects about the concepts in the reading text.

**Materials**: Home and school environment, Internet, books, etc.

**Plan**: (1) Students bring info, objects, pictures, etc. into the class after the reading session after the concepts in the text presented, and with those real objects, a project can be made. (2) Groups are set based on the number of students in the class (i.e., five groups of fives), and each group can make a project and exhibit. For example, a museum can be established using the objects that were collected for a text about museums. The same thing (making projects) can be done for the texts with the contents such as animals-zoo, planets-solar system.

8. **Theory**: Using Technology in Foreign Language Education (Lebow, 1993)

**Method**: Using technologies like designing web pages for learning, applying collaborative learning, goal-based scenarios gives opportunities to teachers to implement the multiple constructivist conditions (Lebow, 1993). In order to establish conversation and collaboration among students, technology is a necessary tool in today’s world.
Topic: Study in the USA (A resource for international students) Teaching Integrated Skills (Speaking, Reading, and Writing) to EFL Students

Activity 1: A lesson plan for a web-based teaching
Stage 1—Identify Desired Results

Instructional Goal(s):
- Students will think more purposefully for an authentic task
- Students will practice speaking in the classroom context
- Students will practice writing through chatting and sending email
- Students will understand an authentic process of application to colleges via Internet (using technology)
- Students will use an understanding of process to plan appropriate study situations for themselves

What essential questions will be considered? Discussion Questions
- Would you like to study abroad?
- Would you like to study in the USA? Why/Why not?
- What are the advantages of studying in the USA?
- What disadvantages may it bring about? While speaking the advantages and the disadvantages, think about the “Education System, Variety of Educational Opportunities, Opportunity for Research, Teaching and Training, Another Country and Culture, etc.”

What key knowledge and skills will students acquire as a result of this unit?

Students will know
- Key terms such as Study Abroad, Chat Room, Letter of Intention, Application Process, College Admission, Admission Requirements, and Qualifying Tests.

Students will be able to
- speak freely and confidently on a topic in the classroom with their classmates
- do a group work/group discussion
- make a decision where to study
- write a letter of intention to convince the college administration

Stage 2—Determine Acceptable Evidence

What evidence will show that students understand?
- reaching a decision where to study
- making a choice among the four universities
- preparing the required documents such as reference letters, transcripts, application form
- writing the letter of intention

Other Evidence (tests, quizzes, prompts, work samples, observations)
- Teacher’s observing the group discussions
- Chat room records
- Students’ emailing the letters of intention to the teacher

Method: Using technologies like creating power point projects for learning, applying problem-based learning gives opportunities to teachers to implement the multiple constructivist conditions (Lebow 1993). By using technology, teacher can have more authentic activities, which are more engaging, enjoyable, and practical. Students can have a chance to collaborate with their peers.

Topic: Studying Abroad, Teaching Integrated Skills (Speaking, Reading, and Writing) to EFL Students using a power point project

Activity 1: A lesson plan for an English lesson using a Power Point project by Leona Salewsky

Stage 1—Identify Desired Results

Instructional Goal(s):

● Students will think more purposefully for an authentic task
● Students will practice speaking in the classroom context while discussing the reason of choices with the peers, and presenting the findings (i.e., the name of the program, program dates, fees, activities, housing options . . .)
● Students will practice writing through sending email to the school that they have chosen to request a student information handbook, and also note-taking through authentic web pages of the language schools in order to inform the rest of the class about their choices.
● Students will practice reading while gathering information about the schools, they will be practicing the skimming and scanning strategies as they look for specific information
● Students will understand an authentic process of requesting something via Internet (using technology)
● Students will use an understanding of process to plan appropriate study situations for themselves
● Students will take the responsibility of making decisions about their study

What essential questions will be considered? Discussion Questions

● Where would you like to go to improve your English?
● Why an English speaking country? What are the advantages and disadvantages of studying abroad?
● Discuss the questions above and give specific, logical reasons for your choices.

What key knowledge and skills will students acquire as a result of this unit?

Students will know

● Key terms such as Study Abroad, Letter of Request, Requesting a Student Information Handbook.

Students will be able to

● speak freely and confidently on a topic in the classroom with their classmates
● do a group work/ group discussion (collaboration, co-operation, engaging in dialogue with the other students)
● make a decision where to study (taking the responsibility of their own actions)
● write a letter of request to order a student information handbook (problem-based learning and goal-based scenarios)

Stage 2—Determine Acceptable Evidence

What evidence will show that students understand?

● reaching a decision where to study
● making a choice among the language schools in different countries
● writing the letter of request
Other Evidence (tests, quizzes, prompts, work samples, observations)
- Teacher’s observation the group discussions
- Teacher’s observation the student presentations
- Chat room records
- Students’ emailing the letters of request to the teacher
- Students’ requesting an information handbook and when they receive the handbook from the school that they have chosen, their bringing it to class to share with others (task completed)

10. Theory: Encourage ownership and voice in the learning process, and embed learning in the social experience (Honebein, 1996)
Method: Group work
Topic: Vocabulary
Instructional Goal(s): To help ESL students develop their vocabulary (pizza, topping, ordering, ingredients, crust, and ultimate pizza) through a real-life based activity.

Materials needed: Box, crayons, colorful papers, scissors, glue, stickers
Activity 1: Creating and advertising pizza

Procedure:
Stage 1: Get the students involved in a project to create their own pizza & commercial. Give all students their own pizza that they serve at their establishment, something that no other place would have. This may inspire group discussions about the “ultimate pizza.” They can use consumer information (from other students) to generate numerous kinds of pizza, pizza toppings, and crust ingredients that they would serve to please their customers. After this, in the writing process you want them to put it all together in commercial format. The students can decorate pizza boxes with their own logos, and show them off in videotaped “commercials.”

Stage 2: Students will take their output to show the local Pizza Hut and/or Papa John’s to get an evaluation. These professional pizza people will decide the best one and inform the teacher. At the end, the winner group will get an extra-large pizza prepared and cooked according to the winner’s recipe.

Evaluation: Students are asked to write a recipe for different kinds pizzas (veggie, cheese, etc.) by using the new words.
APPENDIX C

INTERVIEW PROTOCOL I
Appendix C

Interview Protocol I

Project Name: Constructivism as a New Notion in English Language Education in Turkey

Time of Interview:
Date:
Place:
Interviewer:
Interviewee:

Project Description: English as a foreign language is still taught in traditional ways in Turkey. Because of the drawbacks of traditional approaches, it needs new applications and methods to be effective. Constructivism is offered as one of the modern approaches used in foreign language teaching in this study. The main purpose of the study is to explore how six selected English teachers, working in the public schools in Turkey, understand constructivism as a new notion in education and how they apply it into practice. In short, this study explores the teacher change in English teaching approach and methods.

First Interview: Pre-Workshop Interview Questions
1. What is your name, please?
2. Could you please give some information about your educational background? For example, which university did you graduate from?
3. Can you please talk about your foreign language learning process? When did you start learning English as a foreign language? How long did you get formal foreign language education? Where did you learn it?
4. How long have you been teaching English?
5. How long have you been teaching English at this school?
6. What grades are you teaching this semester?
7. How can you describe your current foreign language teaching? What kinds of materials/activities do you usually use in teaching?
8. Do you think that your current teaching style provides effective foreign language learning with your students? If not, what do you think you need to do for a more effective foreign language teaching? In this regard, what would be the role of professional development seminars in your change/development as a teacher?
9. What do you know about constructivism as a new notion in education, especially in foreign language teaching? Please answer this question considering your prior knowledge from our brief conversations on this topic?
10. As we know, Turkish Ministry of National Education has been trying to switch to the constructivist approach since 2005, and the previous curriculum has been changed accordingly. Why do you think that they needed a change like this?
11. What are the problems in Turkish education system in general today? And what are the problems in foreign language education that you face as an English teacher?
12. What does better education mean to you? What can be done for a better foreign language education for the students in Turkey?
13. As we have mentioned before, there has been a movement towards more progressive education system (constructivist best practice) in Turkey. In this regard, what kinds of professional development activities have been done by the Ministry of Education in order to introduce this new education system to English teachers?

14. Do you think that you apply constructivist teaching methods/models in to practice? If so, what kinds of activities are you doing in teaching, and evaluation?

15. Why did you voluntarily accept to be a part of this research project, what are your expectations from this study? What can be the benefits of participating in this kind of study for your personal and professional growth?

Thank you for your participating in this interview. Instead of your real names, I will use pseudo names in the study. Identifying information will not be included in the data that you provide. Your information will be kept confidential within the limits of the law. Any identifying information will be kept in a secure location and only the researchers will have access to the data. You as the research participant will not be identified in any publication or presentation of research results; only aggregate data will be used.

Hope to meet you next time.
Arzu Gül
Appendix D

Interview Protocol II

Project Name: Constructivism as a New Notion in English Language Education in Turkey
Time of Interview:
Date:
Place:
Interviewer:
Interviewee:
Project Description: English as a foreign language is still taught in traditional ways in Turkey. Because of the drawbacks of traditional approaches, it needs new applications and methods to be effective. Constructivism is offered as one of the modern approaches used in foreign language teaching in this study. The main purpose of the study is to explore how six selected English teachers, working in the public schools in Turkey, understand constructivism as a new notion in education and how they apply it into practice. In short, this study explores the teacher change in English teaching approach and methods.

Second Interview: After-Workshop Interview Questions
1. I already got feedback about the workshop after each session, but do you think that the workshop met your expectations in general? Did you find it beneficial for your teaching career? If yes, what are the benefits?
2. Do you think your prior knowledge on constructivism gained from our gatherings helped you better understand the issue?
3. Where do you think you go from here? How did this workshop inform ideas for your future teaching career?
4. Do you think that it has changed you, your view/perspective, and knowledge of the understanding of teaching at all? If so, what do you know now that you did not know before the workshop?
5. What else would you like to say about the professional development seminar?

Thank you for your participating in this interview. Instead of your real names, I will use pseudo names in the study. Identifying information will not be included in the data that you provide. Your information will be kept confidential within the limits of the law. Any identifying information will be kept in a secure location and only the researchers will have access to the data. You as the research participant will not be identified in any publication or presentation of research results; only aggregate data will be used.

Hope to meet you next time.
Arzu Gül
APPENDIX E

INTERVIEW PROTOCOL III
Appendix E

Interview Protocol III

**Project Name:** Constructivism as a New Notion in English Language Education in Turkey

**Time of Interview:**

**Date:**

**Place:**

**Interviewer:**

**Interviewee:**

**Project Description:** English as a foreign language is still taught in traditional ways in Turkey. Because of the drawbacks of traditional approaches, it needs new applications and methods to be effective. Constructivism is offered as one of the modern approaches used in foreign language teaching in this study. The main purpose of the study is to explore how six selected English teachers, working in the public schools in Turkey, understand constructivism as a new notion in education and how they apply it into practice. In short, this study explores the teacher change in English teaching approach and methods.

**Third Interview: Interview Questions**

1. How can you describe your understanding of constructivism after the workshop?
2. Can you please compare your current teaching style to your teaching before the workshop? What are the differences you notice? What are the constructivist methods/models you are currently using in teaching and evaluation that you did not know/use before? Can you give some examples?
3. What else would you like to say about the constructivist applications in your own teaching in general?
4. Have you had any difficulties and/or problems after you started using constructivist best practice in teaching? If yes, can we talk about those problems in detail? What are the challenges you have experienced so far? Are these challenges from the school administration, or from the inspectors?
5. As a constructivist educator yourself now, what have you done to overcome these problems?

Thank you for your participating in this interview. Instead of your real names, I will use pseudo names in the study. Identifying information will not be included in the data that you provide. Your information will be kept confidential within the limits of the law. Any identifying information will be kept in a secure location and only the researchers will have access to the data. You as the research participant will not be identified in any publication or presentation of research results; only aggregate data will be used.

Hope to meet you next time.

Arzu Gül
APPENDIX F
INTERVIEW PROTOCOL IV
Appendix F

Interview Protocol IV

**Project Name:** Constructivism as a New Notion in English Language Education in Turkey

**Time of Interview:**

**Date:**

**Place:**

**Interviewer:**

**Interviewee:**

**Project Description:** English as a foreign language is still taught in traditional ways in Turkey. Because of the drawbacks of traditional approaches, it needs new applications and methods to be effective. Constructivism is offered as one of the modern approaches used in foreign language teaching in this study. The main purpose of the study is to explore how six selected English teachers, working in the public schools in Turkey, understand constructivism as a new notion in education and how they apply it into practice. In short, this study explores the teacher change in English teaching approach and methods.

**Fourth Interview: Interview Questions**

1. Have your students noticed any change on your teaching approach and applications?
2. Do you think you can apply the theoretical knowledge you have gained about constructivist applications in the professional development seminar into practice in your real teaching settings?
3. So far, do you think what I have been talking about constructivist teaching methods are utopia or they can really be applied in the classrooms in Turkey? In other words, are they applicable and practical, and financially and material wise affordable? Why or why not?
4. So far, you have had some opportunities to have critical conversations and discussions with your colleagues. How has the process of critical colleagueship contributed to your professional development?
5. Before finishing the conversation, would you like to add anything else?

Thank you for your participating in this interview. Instead of your real names, I will use pseudo names in the study. Identifying information will not be included in the data that you provide. Your information will be kept confidential within the limits of the law. Any identifying information will be kept in a secure location and only the researchers will have access to the data. You as the research participant will not be identified in any publication or presentation of research results; only aggregate data will be used.

Hope to meet you next time.

Arzu Gül
APPENDIX G

INTERVIEW PROTOCOL V
Appendix G

Interview Protocol V

**Project Name:** Constructivism as a New Notion in English Language Education in Turkey

**Time of Interview:**
- **Date:**
- **Place:**
- **Interviewer:**
- **Interviewee:**

**Project Description:** English as a foreign language is still taught in traditional ways in Turkey. Because of the drawbacks of traditional approaches, it needs new applications and methods to be effective. Constructivism is offered as one of the modern approaches used in foreign language teaching in this study. The main purpose of the study is to explore how six selected English teachers, working in the public schools in Turkey, understand constructivism as a new notion in education and how they apply it into practice. In short, this study explores the teacher change in English teaching approach and methods.

**Fifth Interview: Interview Questions**

1. Have you used any kinds of new (i.e., constructivist) evaluation and assessment methods? If yes, what methods have you used for students’ assessment?
2. If you look back on the process, what are the challenges you have faced and how have you overcome those problems, if any?
3. What insights do you think you gained by participating in a professional development program in foreign language teaching in Turkey?
4. What do you think about the importance and the strengths of learning community?
5. In the end, as a result of this project, do you think that you have changed as a teacher? If yes, how did this change reflect on your teaching applications in the classroom setting?
6. Is there anything else you would like add about the overall process of this project?

Thank you for your participating in this interview. Instead of your real names, I will use pseudo names in the study. Identifying information will not be included in the data that you provide. Your information will be kept confidential within the limits of the law. Any identifying information will be kept in a secure location and only the researchers will have access to the data. You as the research participant will not be identified in any publication or presentation of research results; only aggregate data will be used.

Thank you for your time.

Arzu Gül
APPENDIX H

INTRODUCTION LETTER
Appendix H

Introduction Letter

Dear Participants,

My name Arzu Gül and I will be the principal investigator of the project named “Constructivism as a New Notion in English Language Education in Turkey.” My advisors and the co-investigators of this project are Drs. Wendy C. Kasten and Alexa L. Sandmann.

As known, English as a foreign language is still taught in traditional ways in Turkey. Because of the drawbacks of traditional approaches, foreign language education needs new applications and methods to be more effective. Constructivism is offered as one of the modern approaches used in foreign language teaching in this study. The main purpose of the study is to explore how six selected English teachers, working in public schools in Turkey, understand constructivism as a new notion in education and how they apply it into practice. In short, this study explores the teacher change in English teaching methods and approaches.

In that regard, I will do this study in public schools in the city of Ankara, Turkey. At the beginning of the study in September 2014, there will be a 10-day professional development seminar for the English teachers. During the data collection process of the study, I will do five sets of interviews. The first set will be before the workshop in the beginning of September, the second one will be right after the workshop in the middle of September; the last three interviews with each participant will be conducted during the Fall 2014 semester. In addition, there will be one-class hour-long observations. During the class observations, I will take fieldnotes.

In this regard, I would kindly like to inform you that the first interview will be conducted in the beginning of September 2014, right before the ten day professional seminar starts.

During the whole process of the study, all information provided by you will be kept confidential within the limits of the law. Any identifying information will be kept in a secure location and only the researchers will have access to the data. You, as the research participants will not be identified in any publication or presentation of research results; only aggregate data will be used. Therefore, instead of your real names, I will use pseudo names in the study. Identifying information will not be included in the data that you provide.

Taking part in this research study is entirely up to you. You may choose not to participate or you may discontinue your participation at any time without penalty or loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled. You will be informed of any new, relevant information that may affect your health, welfare, or willingness to continue your study participation.

Please do not hesitate to contact me at agull@kent.edu, or +90-507-741-7733, should you have any questions or concerns. You can also contact my advisors and co-investigators Dr. Wendy C. Kasten at wkasten@kent.edu, or +1-330-322-2705 and Dr. Alexa L. Sandmann at asandman@kent.edu, or +1-330-672-2580. If you have any questions about your rights as a research participant or complaints about the research, you can call the Kent State University Institutional Review Board at +1-330-672-2704.

Sincerely yours,
Arzu Gül
APPENDIX I

FOLLOW UP LETTER I
Appendix I

Follow Up Letter I

Dear Participants,

Thank you very much again for your valuable time on the first interview. I would kindly like to inform you that the second interview will be conducted in two weeks’ time. By that time, please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions or concerns. Please be reminded that you can withdraw from the study any time at any phase.

Sincerely yours,

Arzu Gül
APPENDIX J

FOLLOW UP LETTER II
Appendix J

Follow Up Letter II

Dear Participants,

Thank you very much again for your valuable time on the second interview. I would kindly like to inform you that the third interview will be conducted in a month. By that time, please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions or concerns. Please be reminded that you can withdraw from the study any time at any phase.

Sincerely yours,

Arzu Gül
Appendix K

Follow Up Letter III

Dear Participants,

Thank you very much again for your valuable time on the third interview. I would kindly like to inform you that the fourth interview will be conducted in a month. By that time, please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions or concerns. Please be reminded that you can withdraw from the study any time at any phase.

Sincerely yours,

Arzu Gül
APPENDIX L
FOLLOW UP LETTER IV
Appendix L

Follow Up Letter IV

Dear Participants,

Thank you very much again for your valuable time on the fourth interview. I would kindly like to inform you that the final interview will be conducted in a month. By that time, please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions or concerns. Please be reminded that you can withdraw from the study any time at any phase.

Sincerely yours,

Arzu Gül
APPENDIX M

INFORMED CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN A RESEARCH STUDY
Appendix M

Informed Consent to Participate in a Research Study

Dear Participant,

I am Arzu Gül, the principal investigator of this project, titled “Constructivism as a New Notion in English Language Education in Turkey.” My advisors and the co-investigators are Dr. Wendy C. Kasten & Dr. Alexa L. Sandmann.

You are being kindly invited to participate in this research study. This consent form will provide you with information about the research project, such as what you will need to do, and the associated risks and benefits of the research. Your participation is voluntary. Please read this form carefully. It is important that you ask questions and fully understand the research in order to make an informed decision. You will receive a copy of this document to take with you.

English as a foreign language is still taught in traditional ways in Turkey. Because of the drawbacks of traditional approaches, it needs new applications and methods to be effective. Constructivism is offered as one of the modern approaches used in foreign language teaching in this study. The main purpose of the study is to explore how six selected English teachers, working in the public schools in Turkey, understand constructivism as a new notion in education and how they apply it into practice. In short, this study explores the teacher change in English teaching approach and methods.

In that regard, what you are supposed to do during this study is explained as in the following:

- You will be asked to read and sign a project consent form.
- You will be asked to sign audio consent forms.
- You will be asked to fill out a background information survey.
- You will participate in a 10-day professional development seminar starting in the beginning of September 2014 and it will last for two weeks.
- You will be observed in your classroom settings by the principal investigator three times during the Fall 2014 semester.
- The classroom visits will be tape-recorded only when needed.
- Only when needed by the principle investigator, some photographs will be taken and video recordings will be done.
- The principal investigator will interview you five times. The first set of interviews will be conducted before the workshop (in the beginning of September 2014), the second one will be right after the workshop (in the middle of September 2014). The other three sets of interviews will be done during the Fall 2014 Semester.
- You will be asked to read both the English and Turkish versions of transcripts.
- You will be asked for some written materials, such as your daily and yearly plans, and class syllabi, etc.
This study involves audio, or photography. The professional development seminar activities, the interviews and your classroom applications will be tape-recorded. Some photos during the professional development seminar, interviews and classroom observations will be taken when necessary. Besides audio recordings and photography, video recordings will also be done during these processes only when necessary. These recordings will not be used for any other purposes other than this project. You will see the video tapes and photographs and hear the audio tapes prior to be used for the project.

The potential benefits of participating in this study can be considered as in the following:

- Providing you with a new way of contemporary teaching approach.
- Introducing you constructivist teaching methods in foreign language teaching.
- Help you better understand if new methods and techniques can be applied successfully in Turkey.
- Your participating in this project will provide a chance to see what insights can be gained about doing professional development in foreign language teaching in Turkey.
- Creating a group of like-minded English teachers who can exchange and share ideas, and cooperate with each other, even after the project completion.

I would like to inform you that there are no anticipated risks beyond those encountered in everyday life. Instead of your real names, I will use pseudo names in the study. Identifying information will not be included in the data that you provide.

Your study related information will be kept confidential within the limits of the law. Any identifying information will be kept in a secure location and only the researchers will have access to the data. You as research participant will not be identified in any publication or presentation of research results; only aggregate data will be used.

Taking part in this research study is entirely up to you. You may choose not to participate or you may discontinue your participation at any time without penalty or loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled. You will be informed of any new, relevant information that may affect your health, welfare, or willingness to continue your study participation.

If you have any questions or concerns about this research, you may contact Dr. Wendy C. Kasten at +1-330-322-2705 and/or Dr. Alexa L. Sandmann at +1-330-672-2580. This project has been approved by the Kent State University Institutional Review Board.

Thank you in advance for your support and cooperation.

Arzu Gül
APPENDIX N

DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION SURVEY
Appendix N

Demographic Information Survey

1. General Information
   a. Name
   b. Age
   c. Gender
   d. Nationality

2. Education
   a. University Graduated
   b. Major
   c. Graduation Year
   d. Degree (BA, MA, PhD)
      i. Degree in

3. Teaching Experience
   a. Experience in English Teaching
   b. Type of Current School
   c. Experience at the Current School
   d. Courses Taught
   e. Grades Taught
   f. Hours Taught per Week
APPENDIX O

OBSERVATIONAL FIELD NOTES SHEET
### Appendix O

**Observational Field Notes Sheet**

Date:  
Day of Week:  
Name of observer:  
Start and end times:  
Location name/Class:  
School’/Class’ physical condition:  

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Descriptions/Details</th>
<th>Reflections</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix P

Official Document From Ministry of National Education

The Ministry of National Education
General Directorate of Innovation and Educational Technologies

Document Number: 81576613/605/1875923
Issue: Research Permission

25/07/2013

Dear Arzu GUL
(Gökkuşağı Caddesi, 1214 Sokak, No.9/17
Balgat/Çankaya/ANKARA)

Connection: The petition dated 16/07/2013

The permission request related to your (a) writing to our General Directorate for data collection tools in order to use in your thesis titled as “Teaching English as a Second Language within the Framework of Constructivist Approach” has been examined.

The data collection tools of which an approved copy was held in our Ministry and multiplied of its sealed and signed copy during the application process has seen no harm to be applied in the selected schools of sample provided that volunteering basis is provided.

Kindly submitted to your attention.

Mustafa KOC
On behalf of the Minister
General Director

Attachment: Data Collection Tool (11 pages)

Secured Electronic Signed Copy
True Copy
25/7/2013

Abdülkerim RAMAZANOĞLU

Atatürk Biv. 06648 Kızılay/ANKARA
Electronic network: www.meb.gov.tr
e-mail: adroyad@meb.gov.tr

For further info: Name Surname Title
Tel: (0212) xxx xx xx
Fax: (0 312) xxx xx xx
REFERENCES
REFERENCES


Aykac, N., & Ulubey, O. (2012). Pre-service teachers’ opinions about the application level of elementary school program. *Journal of Faculty of Educational Sciences, 45*(1), 63-82.


Laba, A. (2014). *An examination of text authenticity used at Kent State University ESL Center: Reading materials, the insights and perceptions of ESL/EFL students and instructors.* Unpublished Doctoral Dissertation. Kent State University, Kent, Ohio.


Noom-ura, S. (2013). English-teaching problems in Thailand and Thai teachers’ professional development needs. English Language Teaching, 6(11), 139-147.


Sprague, M. M. (1992). *Influences of peer coaching activities and teacher personality type on the implementation of the TABA inductive model of teaching*. Dissertation Abstracts International (University Microfiche No. AAC 9227840)


