

To my beloved father, Hüseyin Şen

COMPARING PEER AND SELF OBSERVATION CONDUCTED BY UNIVERSITY
PREPARATORY SCHOOL EFL TEACHERS

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ABSTRACT

COMPARING PEER AND SELF OBSERVATION CONDUCTED BY
UNIVERSITY PREPARATORY SCHOOL EFL TEACHERS

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This study was designed to investigate the similarities and the differences between the types of information provided by peer and self observation conducted in Turkish university preparatory school classrooms by Turkish EFL instructors, as well as the extent to which peer and self observation contribute to reflective thinking in this setting and whether there are any differences in their contribution to reflective thinking. Six teachers, two of whom were focus teachers (FTs), as self observers, and the rest as peer observers (POs) participated in this study. From these participants, two groups, with one focus teacher and two peer observers, were formed. Data were collected through four types of observation instruments completed during or after the teacher observations: observation forms, checklists, open-ended questions and reflective writings.

In this study, one lesson of each focus teacher was video-recorded, and both these focus teachers, as self observers, and two of their peer observers were asked to

evaluate the videotaped lessons using the observation tools they were provided with. Each group's documented information collected through observation forms, checklists and open-ended questions were compared to explore the similarities and differences between the types of information provided by peer and self observation. In addition to this, each group's reflective writings were compared to explore to what extent peer and self observation contribute to reflective thinking and whether there are any differences in their contribution to reflective thinking. All the data in this study was analyzed both qualitatively and quantitatively. In the analysis of the observation forms, checklists and open-ended questions, the categories were developed by the researcher using the general inductive approach described by Thomas (2006), and in the analysis of the reflective writings, a framework for levels of reflective thinking devised by another researcher (Hasanbaşoğlu, 2007) was used.

The findings of this study suggest that there are similarities and differences between peer observers and focus teachers in the documentation and interpretation of teacher actions, evaluation of what is observed, suggestions and ideas given, and specific information (via the checklist) about what is the focus of the observation. However, the similarities and differences are affected not only by the type of the observation, but also by variables such as the personal characteristics of the observer, the observation instruments and even the type of lesson observed.

Key words: Reflective teaching, teacher education, teacher observation, peer observation, self observation.

ÖZET

TÜRKİYE'DEKİ ÜNİVERSİTE YABANCI DİL HAZIRLIK OKULU ÖĞRETİM ELEMANLARININ KENDİLERİNİ GÖZLEMLEMESİ İLE AKRANLARI TARAFINDAN GÖZLEMLENMELERİNİN KİYASLANMASI

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Yüksek Lisans, Yabancı Dil Olarak İngilizce Öğretimi Bölümü

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Bu çalışma, Türkiye'deki bir üniversitenin hazırlık sınıflarında görev yapan Türk yabancı dil öğretmenleri tarafından gerçekleştirilen akran gözlemi ve kişinin kendi kendini gözlemlemesi tarafından sağlanan bilgi tipleri arasındaki farklılıkları ve benzerlikleri incelemek amacıyla düzenlenmiştir. Ayrıca, bu yabancı dil öğrenme ortamında akran gözlemi ve kişinin yansıtıcı düşünmeye ne kadar katkıda bulunduğu ve bu iki gözlemin yansıtıcı düşünmeye katkısında farklılıklar olup olmadığı da araştırılmıştır. Bu çalışmada iki tanesi odak öğretmen olmak üzere altı katılımcı yer almıştır. Odak öğretmenler kendilerini gözlemlerken geri kalan dört öğretmen akran gözlemcisi olarak bu çalışmada yer almıştır. Bu altı katılımcıdan iki grup oluşturulmuştur ve bu gruplar birer odak öğretmen ve iki tane de akran gözlemciden oluşmuştur. Veri, dört değişik gözlem aracı yoluyla öğretmenlerin gözlemlenmesi

sırasında ya da sonrasında toplanmıştır. Bu araçlar gözlem formlarını, kontrol listeleri, açık uçlu sorular ve yansıtıcı yazmadan oluşmaktadır.

Bu çalışmada , odak öğretmenlerin bir dersi video ile kaydedilmiştir. Hem bu iki odak öğretmenden, kendileri gözlemci olarak, hem de diğer iki öğretmenden, akran gözlemcisi olarak, kaydedilen bu dersi kendilerine verilen gözlem araçlarını kullanarak izlemeleri ve değerlendirmeleri istenmiştir. Her grubun gözlem formları, kontrol listeleri ve açık uçlu sorular yoluyla kaydedilmiş bilgileri hem akran gözlemi hem de kendi kendini gözleme tarafından sağlanan bilgi tipleri arasındaki benzerlikleri ve farklılıkları incelemek amacıyla karşılaştırılmıştır. Buna ek olarak, her grubun yansıtıcı yazıları, akran ve kendi kendini gözlemin yansıtıcı düşünmeye ne kadar katkıda bulunduğunu ve yansıtıcı düşünmeye katkısında farklılıklar olup olmadığını görmek amacıyla karşılaştırılmıştır. Bu çalışmada elde edilen bütün veri hem nitel hem de nicel olarak analiz edilmiştir. Gözlem formlarının, kontrol listelerinin ve açık uçlu soruların analizinde araştırmacı tarafından kategoriler geliştirilmiştir. Bu kategorilerin geliştirilmesinde araştırmacı, Thomas(2006) tarafından tanımlanan genel tümevarımlı (indüktif) yaklaşımı kullanmıştır. Yansıtıcı yazmaların analizinde ise Hasanbaşoğlu (2007) tarafından yansıtıcı düşünmenin seviyeleri için geliştirilen çerçeve uygulanmıştır. Bu çalışmanın sonuçları göstermektedir ki öğretmen davranışlarının kaydedilişi ve algılanışı, gözlemlerin değerlendirilmesi, bulunulan öneriler ve verilen fikirler ve gözlemin odağı olan kontrol listeleri yoluyla elde edilen bilgiler açısından kendini gözleme ve akranı tarafından gözlemlenme arasında benzerlik ve farklılıklar vardır. Ancak, bu benzerlik ve farklılıklar sadece gözlemin çeşidinden değil, aynı zamanda gözlemcinin

karakteristik özelliklerinden, gözlem araçlarından ve gözlemlenen dersin çeşidinden de kaynaklanmaktadır.

Anahtar kelimeler: Yansıtıcı düşünerek öğretme, öğretmen eğitimi, öğretmen gözlemleri, akran gözlemi, kendi kendini gözleme

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CHAPTER I – INTRODUCTION

Introduction

Trust but verify. (Russian proverb)

Just like personal development, even though others may provide assistance in the process, teacher development requires personal involvement in initiating, leading and assessing one's development (Underhill, 1992). Peer and self observation, as two routes to professional development, are important tools for reflectivity and they are given great importance in nurturing reflective teachers. According to Richards and Farrell (2005), peer observation provides opportunities for teachers to view each others' teaching in order to expose them to different teaching styles, and it also provides opportunities for critical reflection on teachers' own teaching. Self observation, on the other hand, is perceived to be an obvious starting point for a teacher's reflectivity (Farrell, 2001) and a crucial systematic part of monitoring oneself (Brown, 1994). Both kinds of observation are accepted as rich sources of information on teaching. The purpose of this study is to compare peer and self observation, two valuable reflective tools, conducted by university preparatory school EFL teachers, to discover the types of information emerging from them and to investigate to what extent they each contribute to reflective thinking, the starting point of reflective teaching, in this setting.

Background of the Study

Many theorists have played a leading role in defining the notion of reflective teaching, whose historical roots lie in Dewey's view of reflective thinking (King, 2008, p.21). Dewey (1933, cited in Zeichner & Liston, 1996), a major theorist, contributes to reflective teaching with his definition of reflective action. He claims that reflective action is a kind of process that consists of both logical and rational problem solving processes, along with other features like intuition, emotion and passion. Schon (1983, cited in Zeichner & Liston, 1996), another major thinker in the reflective teaching movement, adds to the definition by stating that reflective teaching is a thinking process that converts tacit knowledge into more conscious and therefore more expressive knowledge. Another view defines reflective teaching as a reaction against the idea of accepting teachers as technicians who teach what they are told to teach without questioning (Zeichner & Liston, 1996).

The popularity of reflective teaching over the last decade owes a great deal to the impression that it has left through its benefits on the field of teaching. These benefits have been argued to contribute both to the development of the teacher and the quality of teaching. Commenting on the benefits of reflective teaching on teachers, both Dewey and Schon (1933, 1983, both cited in Campoy, 2005, p. 42) claim that through reflective teaching, a teacher becomes a reflective problem solver and a competent professional. Dewey (1933, cited in Campoy, 2005) also adds that reflective teaching encourages teachers to recognize, question and experiment with alternative means for their teaching so that, at the end, they become educational leaders. Campoy (2005, p. 43), discussing the effects of reflective teaching on teaching enhancement, states that reflective teaching, by creating a dynamic process,

enriches teaching and makes it more exciting and more interactive. In addition, Pollard (2005) contributes to this idea, saying that reflective teaching provides high quality in teaching as it involves continuous development and professional expertise. All these ideas dedicated to the benefits of reflective teaching help teachers understand that reflective teaching is the kind of practice every teacher should devote her time and effort to, through a variety of processes and techniques.

Among many ways promoting reflective teaching, self observation and peer observation are two well-known ways to facilitate reflective teaching. These reflective tools serve as teacher development activities (Richards & Lockhart, 2004). Self observation is seen as the primary and the most important tool for professional progress (Ur, 1996, p. 319) as teachers themselves are believed to be in the best position to examine their own teaching (Richards & Lockhart, 2004). Peer observation, on the other hand, is seen as a basic part of many occupations. In teaching it provides an opportunity for mutual benefit. While observing, an observer both gives feedback and also develops self-inquiry of his own teaching (Richards & Farrell, 2005).

Peer observation is basically a tool for an observer to understand some aspects of teaching, learning or classroom interaction after watching or monitoring a lesson (Richards & Farrell, 2005). Richards and Lockhart (2004) define peer observation by telling what it is not. They say it is not a way of evaluation, it should not be viewed as a negative experience and its function is no more than gathering information about teaching.

While mentioning the benefits of peer observation as a reflective tool, Richards and Farrell (2005) state that peer observation provides an opportunity for

the teacher to see how someone else deals with many of the problems that are common for all teachers. In addition, peer observation helps the observers think about their own teachings. These self inquiries contribute to building collegiality by bringing teachers together to share their ideas and expertise.

According to Armstrong and Frith (1984, cited in Richards & Farrell, 2005), self observation is observing, managing and evaluating one's own behavior in order to achieve a better understanding and control over it. Richards and Farrell (2005, p. 34) also define self observation as self monitoring and define it as objective, systematic information collection on teaching behavior and practices to achieve a better understanding of individual teaching weaknesses and strengths.

Self observation offers benefits to teachers. As in peer observation, it provides many teachers with better understanding of their practices and provides them with the plans for the practices they desire to change (Richards & Farrell, 2005).

Some of the procedures used in peer and self observation are similar to each other as all procedures serve the purpose of both self and peer observation. Narratives, one kind of written record, are like a summarized description of the lesson. Checklists, also known as questionnaires, are similar to narratives in that they also document written information about the lesson observed. According to Richards and Farrell (2005, p. 41), both narratives and questionnaires can focus on a certain aspect of a lesson or cover the lesson as a whole. Questionnaires are good at gathering information about the affective aspects of teaching in a short time (Richards & Lockhart, 2004). According to Schratz (1992, cited in Richards & Lockhart, 2005) and Hasanbaşıoğlu (2007), video recording is another valuable procedure in providing

the teacher with a mirror-like view and in fostering the teacher's self-reflective ability.

In recent research, it has been found that self and peer observation contribute to teaching in two different ways. In some studies both methods are used to provide information about particular areas of teaching. Ross and Bruce (2007) used both of these techniques to show that both techniques can be employed as personal growth strategies. Freese (2006) also used observation notes, dialogue journals and self-study paper procedures of both peer and self observation to examine the complexities of learning to teach. Greenwalt (2006) examined how some preservice teachers analyzed their own instruction through the video-recording procedure of self observation.

In other studies, these reflective techniques themselves have been evaluated. Adshead, White and Stephenson (2006) conducted a survey study to determine general practitioner teachers' views on peer observation of their teaching. Blackmore (2005) conducted a study to guide university management wishing to implement peer observation within their own institution.

The studies mentioned above describe some situations in which peer and self observation are used. In general, teachers must make decisions about what kind of observations to conduct or implement, based on only their subjective impressions of the benefits or drawbacks. More information is needed to help teachers to make this decision.

Statement of the Problem

The literature provides information about the definitions, implementation techniques, strengths, weaknesses (Richards & Farrell, 2005; Ur, 1996) and required attitudes (Dewey, 1933, cited in Zeichner & Liston, 1996) of peer and self observation. However, the literature lacks studies that specifically compare peer and self observation. There have been studies in which one or both of these reflective tools are used alone (Kasapoğlu, 2002) or together (Freese, 2006) and some studies investigated perceptions of peer or self observation (Karabağ, 2000; Adshead, White and Stephenson, 2006; Varlı, 1994), and in some other studies, these tools were used as a program component (Franck and Samaniego, 1981; Jay and Johnson, 2002), but no research has surveyed exactly how they are similar to or different from one another, and the extent to which they provide different information or benefits from one another.

At the School of Foreign Languages of Muğla University, the administration considers reflective teaching a valuable path for professional development. Therefore, as a practice of reflective teaching, the administration prefers the teachers to employ peer observation in their reflective practices. The administration's preference for peer observation lies in the idea that it regards peer observation as objective, adequate and systematic. Although teachers recognize the benefits of peer observation, they still feel nervous about it, as peer observation involves being observed by another teacher. Furthermore, the teachers perceive it as impractical since it requires time for both preparation and implementation. As there is a distinction between the perceptions and preferences of the administration and the teachers on the use of peer observation, and

since the teachers employ peer observation technique reluctantly, comparing peer observation and self observation may provide both sides with beneficial information about these techniques' respective contributions to reflective teaching. With this information, it might be possible for both the administration and the teachers to leave their preferences and beliefs aside and compromise on a decision about both peer and self observation based on objective comparison.

Research questions

This study will address the following research question.

1. What are the similarities and differences between the types of information provided by peer and self observation conducted in Turkish university preparatory school classrooms by Turkish EFL instructors?
2. To what extent do peer and self observation conducted in this setting contribute to reflective thinking? Are there any differences in their contribution to reflective thinking?

Significance of the Study

The literature lacks the practical information this study aims to provide about the similarities and differences between self and peer observation. It is thought that exploration of this issue will contribute to the literature and make reflective teachers aware of the similarities and differences in the kinds of information resulting from peer and self observation. It will also inform decision-making by reflective teachers, as well as other people in the teaching context.

At the local level, a study on this issue may be valuable to the teachers at the School of Foreign Languages of Muğla University by providing objective information about the similarities and differences between the peer and self observation techniques. This study may help the teachers and the administration become aware of the type and amount of information each technique provides. Finally, knowing more about peer and self observation techniques, the administration and the teachers may agree on employing both or one of the techniques, or they may decide to employ them at different times and for different purposes.

Conclusion

In this chapter, the background of the study, statement of the problem, research questions and significance of the study have been presented. The next chapter presents the relevant literature on reflective teaching, observation types, and the studies relevant to peer and self observation. The third chapter is the methodology chapter, which describes the participants, instruments, data collection procedures and data analysis of the study. The fourth chapter presents the findings of the data analysis. The last chapter presents the discussion of the general results, pedagogical implications, limitations of the study and suggestions for further research.

CHAPTER II- LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

The purpose of this study was to investigate the similarities and the differences between the types of information self and peer observation tools produce when conducted by university preparatory school EFL teachers. This chapter provides background on the literature related to the study, beginning with an introduction to reflective teaching, including the definition of reflection, processes of reflection and benefits of reflective teaching. The chapter continues with the definition of observation, definitions of peer and self observation, and their benefits, drawbacks and procedures. Lastly, several research studies about peer and self observation are introduced.

Reflective Teaching

There has been a radical shift in the understanding of teaching in the last decade. This shift has been brought to the field of teaching with the understanding and acceptance of the term reflective teaching. This movement has benefited teachers by raising their awareness of themselves and their teaching, and it has developed school systems by employing teachers in the decision making in curriculum development and school administration (Zeichner & Liston, 1996). Reflective teachers who have adopted the idea of reflective teaching have avoided being stagnant in their teaching, raised their awareness about their personal and professional growth, and consequently improved themselves and enhanced their teaching environment (Richards, 1990).

Being a notion, a movement, a reform, a rejection, a confrontation and a commitment (Zeichner & Liston, 1996), reflective teaching has become responsible for the development of teaching and teachers. The term has given new meaning to the role of teachers. Teachers, formerly considered technicians who never questioned the values and aims of their actions, have become reflective practitioners who have begun to see themselves as modifiers, developers and creators of teaching (Jay & Johnson, 2002). Reflective teaching's contribution to the individual development of teachers has also affected the administration of schools, as teachers have become involved in the reforms of school systems. As a result, many schools have avoided routine actions and have decided to collaborate with school teachers who are the pioneers of reflective, effective teaching.

Definitions of Reflection

Clarifying the understanding of the term reflection is necessary, as this complex concept is greatly valuable for teaching (Jay & Johnson, 2002). Since reflection is definitely not a new notion in the world of academia (Chigubu, 2005), it has been called by various names (Chigubu, 2005; Richards, 1990) and has been defined in different ways in the teaching profession so far. Some of these definitions have simplified the concept of reflection (Jay & Johnson, 2002; Richards, 1990) and some definitions have directed teachers to comprehend it in a particular way (Dewey, 1933, Schon, 1983, both cited in Zeichner & Liston, 1996).

Richards (1990) defines reflection simply as a conscious examination and reconsideration of an activity or process, which results in decision making and that produces a source for action planning to serve a broader purpose. Jay and Johnson (2002) also give an explanatory definition for reflection. They say that reflection is a

process of experience and uncertainty that is composed of both individual and mutual involvement. Uncertainty is the question or the emergence of a significant matter and experience is the composition of the individual's or another's insights, a key element in evaluating the matter. It is through these stages one exposes himself to reflection and reaches newfound clarity through action.

Dewey's (1933, cited in Jay & Johnson, 2002) definition of reflection requires top down processing in order to interpret it in terms of teaching. He defines reflection from a general point of view as "the active, persistent and careful consideration of any belief or supported form of knowledge in the light of the grounds that support it and the further conditions to which it tends"(p. 74). When transferred to teaching with a simpler interpretation, Dewey's definition of reflection in teaching is perceived as a holistic process in which teachers involve themselves in meeting, responding to and solving the problems in teaching. In explaining reflection, he extends his definition by emphasizing the importance of balance in reflection, saying that reflection is neither rejecting what is being questioned nor questioning what exists. Reflection should be perceived as a balance between the routine action that guides teaching daily and reflective action to seek new or better ways of teaching (1933, cited in Zeichner & Liston, 1996).

Schon (1983, cited in Jay & Johnson, 2002) looks at reflection through the same lens as Dewey, contributing to the definition of reflection by saying that it is a kind of endeavor to make sense of a phenomenon that is troubling or puzzling. He also leads teachers to a specific comprehension: Reflection is not practicing theories that are prepared and presented by external research, but generating one's own theories and synthesizing them with one's own practices. Professional help from

external sources cannot help one to solve one's problems unless one faces and produces one's own solutions. Then, it can be called real reflection, according to Schon.

Among the definitions, Zeichner and Liston's (1996) definition, being the clearest to understand and easiest to follow, is a good representation of reflection in the field of teaching. According to Zeichner and Liston, teachers subconsciously store their teaching experiences as tacit knowledge. Reflection is a trigger that unveils this tacit knowledge to make teachers aware of what they have collected so far and subject this uncovered information to conscious processing or evaluation.

A high value is placed on reflection in many fields of thinking. In philosophy you hear it described in the words of Socrates (Francis, 1995), in literature, you hear Tolstoy uttering a metaphor of reflection (Jay & Johnson, 2002), and in education, Zeichner & Liston, (1996) introduce it as a prominent consideration. In education, reflection is represented through contemplation, inspiration and experience (Jay & Johnson, 2002) as it makes crucial contributions to teachers' improvement and their participation in reflective teaching.

Although the term seems explicit, reflective teaching requires taking countless decisions (Robbins, 2001). Arriving at these decisions requires teachers to be involved in processes. At the end of these processes, they become able to convert what they experience into decisions; thus, reflective teaching is successfully practiced.

Processes of Reflection

The notion of reflection has become increasingly important in teaching. Its prominent role in educators' personal and professional growth has encouraged both educators and researchers studying in the reflective practice area to think more about

the variables of teaching. Educators have started to reflect on themselves and on their practices in order to be more productive, more cooperative and more innovative practitioners of teaching. Simultaneously, researchers have started prescribing ways of transformation, turning theory to practice, to direct teachers in their reflective practices. The literature embraces several descriptions of processes that differ from one another in practicality, number of steps, length of time and structure.

Schon's model of the processes of reflective teaching is remarkable because of its practicality and simplicity. Schon (1983, cited in Zeichner & Liston, 1996) describes his reflective model of the processes in two time frames, framing and reframing. Framing, also called reflection-on-action, gives teachers the opportunity to think about and plan for their lesson before it starts and think over or critique the lesson when it finishes. Reframing, occurring during the action, is defined as reflection-in-action. In reframing, practitioners reconsider their actions when they encounter a problem during the lesson and they try to solve it on the spot, making immediate adjustments. According to Schon, these frames of reflection are interdependent. Therefore, teachers should reflect both in and on action to be perceptive and reflective practitioners.

Schon's system of processing reflection with its practicality and pragmatic nature is inspirational for other researchers in the field. Freese (2006) involves teachers in an order of reflective processing similar to Schon's. She requires teachers to follow three types of processes. In anticipatory reflection, as in reflection-on-action, teachers predict problems and invent solutions for these problems before the lesson. In contemporaneous reflection, they rearrange the lesson according to sudden changes occurring during teaching. This is similar to Schon's reflection-in-action

process. In retrospective reflection, which is also included in Schon's reflection-on-action, the teachers review their actions and improve their understanding after the lesson.

Zeichner and Liston (1996) have also been influenced by Schon's model of reflection. They describe their reflection model in five dimensions with some modifications of extension and improvement of Schon's model. In the first dimension, rapid reflection, the teacher immediately and automatically acts on what she decides while teaching. The second dimension, repair, also occurs during teaching. This time, the teacher acts according to students' reactions and therefore spends only a short time to think about her own reaction. The third dimension, review, arises before or after teaching, when the teacher thinks about, writes about or discusses the students' learning matters or the teaching issues. The fourth dimension, research, is a long term process in which the teacher systematically concentrates on a particular matter and engages in a form of research to collect information to solve her problem. The final, fifth dimension consists of retheorizing and reformulating. In this dimension, the teacher spends a long time on her reflections. She not only criticizes her practice theories but also considers these theories in the light of academic theories. She both benefits from professional theories and also contributes to them with her own experiences of teaching. In Zeichner and Liston's (1996) model, time is an important aspect. The time available determines which dimension of reflection is required.

Jay and Johnson (2002) construct a typology of reflection, dividing the process into dimensions as Zeichner and Liston (1996) do. They define three dimensions to follow to get involved in reflective practice. The first dimension, descriptive reflection, simply involves setting the problem, determining the matter to reflect on.

The second dimension, comparative reflection, is taking the defined matter further and thinking about it from a number of different perspectives. These perspectives involve taking others' perceptions and comments into consideration, as different views are considered to contribute to one's self evaluation. Jay and Johnson suggest that the perceptions of another teacher, a student, a counselor or a parent might be of great value in considering a classroom situation. The last dimension, critical reflection, is like the conclusion paragraph of three paragraphs in a composition. In this reflection, the teacher returns to his own understanding of the problem. Having collected different views about the problem, he makes his own choice, either doing what he himself believes to be the best way of understanding and solving the problem, or continuing reflection with an improved understanding, but gathering further questions to ask about the problem. This means that the last dimension might be either an ending or a continuous process of reflection.

Surprisingly, Dewey (1933, cited in Ziechner and Liston, 1996) does not propose any steps or procedures of reflective processes, as he supports the idea that reflection is a holistic way of meeting and responding to problems. He defines reflection as an integrated process engaging the logical and rational problem solving processes with the emotional, intuitive conditions of teachers. In Dewey's reflection process, there exists a classification only in the emotions teachers are to be involved in to be reflective: open-mindedness, responsibility and wholeheartedness.

All these models of reflection processes are designed to help teachers become proficient reflective practitioners and these models become effective and applicable when used as guidance in choosing the tools of reflective teaching. Jay and Johnson's (2002) dimensions of reflective processes would provide considerable assistance to

peer and self observation tools, essential ingredients of reflective teaching, as they give importance to both one's personal insight and the evaluation of other views in practicing self reflection.

Benefits of Reflective Teaching

The fact that reflective teaching provides the opportunity to explore under the surface of one's teaching enables teachers to evaluate themselves, to feel empathy for their students and to be one of the leaders of a school structure that establishes its teaching policy on the understanding of reflective teaching (McEntee, Appleby, Dowd, Grant, Hole & Silva, 2003). Reflective teaching enriches the quality of the teacher by giving him the power of control over his actions in teaching. This control leads the teacher to build autonomy and responsibility (Richards, 1990). The teacher who transforms this autonomy and responsibility to reflective teaching becomes more reflective about teaching and is keen on self-improvement (Cruickshank, 1981).

Besides encouraging teachers to be students of teaching (Cruickshank, 1981), reflective teaching also encourages teachers to see their teaching from the eyes of their students. As reflective teachers aim to perfect their teaching under the philosophy of reflective teaching, they feel they have to take learning into consideration, too. They feel the need to reflect on the relationship between the act of teaching and the experience of learning (Loungran, 1996, p. 15). Knowing that the only way to enhance learning is through providing the students, the owners of the learning practice, with what they are interested in and what they need, reflective teachers also contribute to the intellectual and emotional development of students (Bullard, 1998).

Reflective teaching also contributes to the development of institutions. When teachers practice reflective teaching, they begin to construct their own practical theories (Schön, 1983, cited in Zeichner & Liston, 1996). The schools where these teachers work may start using the theories of their reflective teachers, who are more familiar with the issues and problems of teaching that are specific to their institution and who create better solutions and knowledge that can contribute to the teaching peculiar to this institution.

The benefits of reflective teaching all imply that a teacher's professional growth results in the growth of students and development of the institutional decisions. So, it is clear that there is a need to nurture the source, the teacher, to achieve high standards of teaching. One way of doing this is through observing, as observation is a powerful way of bringing about change, and it is a valuable way to explore how a reflective view of teaching can be developed (Richards, 1990).

Observation

Contemporary education promotes effective teaching and tries to improve and extend it through the help of evaluation, a prescription for teachers' professional growth. Today's teachers take advantage of evaluation from learning about their teaching and getting feedback about how they teach (Bullard, 1998). The literature provides us with a considerable number of definitions and ways to evaluate teaching (Yon, 2007). Observation is one of several methods used to become aware of the teaching situation, to measure the effectiveness of teaching and to plan for further teaching (Malderez, 2003). Although some educators perceive it as a form of appraisal that is used to judge teachers' competence and performance (Bell, 2001), it is commonly accepted as an essential tool in education to support the understanding

and development of effective teaching (Malderez, 2003). The kind of observation today's education fosters is that which is conducted for obtaining descriptive accounts rather than evaluative accounts. Currently, observation in education is conducted for various purposes, such as professional development and training (Malderez, 2003), and observation through these purposes prevents teachers from becoming isolated and routinized (Cosh, 1998, p. 173). Therefore, observation is an invaluable means for keeping teachers in the experience of teaching and reaching the insights of teachers (Cosh, 1998). Two very common ways to implement observation are through self observation, which provides teachers with the opportunity to manage their own teaching process (Malderez, 2003), and through peer observation, which enables teachers to learn about their teaching by giving the observation responsibility to someone else.

Definitions of Peer Observation

For peer observation to be fully effective, a shared understanding of it is essential. The literature provides two distinct perceptions of peer observation that involve different aims leading to different results. The first perception acknowledges peer observation as a kind of measurement tool that aims to observe teachers for the purpose of accountability or assessment (Cosh, 1998). This causes teachers to feel threatened and they may neither desire nor benefit from the observation. On the other hand, those who consider peer observation as a reflective approach define it as a tool for staff development (Cosh, 1998). From this perspective, peer observation is a supportive and constructive tool (Cosh, 1998), through which teaching and learning quality is established and improved (Fletcher & Orsmond, 2004). Teachers who accept peer observation as a mutual assistance, or peer support (Blackmore, 2005),

use peer observation to gain rich, qualitative evidence about their teaching and through this evidence they adopt reflectivity and change in their professions (Siddiqui, Jonas-Dwyer & Carr, 2007). Educators need to consider peer observation as a reflective tool to contribute to their teaching and their reflective practice. Then, teachers may perceive peer observation as a model for encouraging self reflection and awareness of their teaching (Cosh, 1999); this is the only way teachers begin to feel the need for it and start to benefit from it fully and effectively.

Benefits of Peer Observation

Peer observation in the reflective teaching context has many benefits for practitioners (Richards & Farrell, 2005). On the condition that it is conducted in a mutually respectful and supportive way, it is a worthwhile practice (Siddiqui et al., 2007) for teachers to take advantage of.

The benefits of peer observation are perceived similarly by many scholars of the field. Richards and Farrell (2005), like many others (e.g. Blackmore, 2005; Cosh, 1990; Fletcher & Orsmond, 2004) claim that peer observation is beneficial for the observer, the observee and for the community of teachers as a whole. While observing the peer, the observer has a chance to discover how others teach a certain thing or how they deal with a common problem. They have a chance to compare their own teaching with a colleague's. Being observed, the observee is offered an objective idea about how he teaches. He has a chance to compare his subjective view with the objective view of a peer. As a result, peer observation provides the observee with the opportunity to take a wider and deeper look at his teaching. Richards and Farrell (2005) also claim that, through peer observation, teachers build a collegiality where

the same or similar teaching concerns or expertise about teaching are collected, shared and discussed. Peer observation, built upon trust and support, creates a dynamic teaching environment where teachers continuously exchange ideas and improve their teaching skills. In addition to this, peer observation engages teachers to develop self awareness so that they become more autonomous, and more conscious about their current conditions and further decisions. In contrast to Richards and Farrell (2005), Blackmore (2005) focuses on the availability of feedback as a valuable outcome of peer observation. Blackmore (2005) states that the feedback that emerges from peer observation informs teachers about the quality of their teaching. Then, teachers have the opportunity to either be reassured that they are successful in their profession or reconsider their actions. Blackmore (2005) and Fletcher and Orsmond (2004) also claim that peer observation has a continuous improvement effect on the teacher's development. Through observation the teacher identifies the gaps to be filled and takes decisions for further development. Adshead et al. (2006) enlarge the framework of benefits by adding that teachers who reflect more effectively on their teaching through peer observation start looking from a wider picture. In addition to teaching, teachers learn to take students' learning into consideration and they feel empathy for students. All these benefits imply that peer observation is preferred because it is useful and successful for teachers' aims to improve their reflective practices.

Drawbacks of Peer Observation

Peer observation is a worthwhile opportunity for teachers to benefit from, to form a broader understanding and to gain competence in their teaching professions. However, since it is a work of collaboration and as it is best benefited from when it is

a part of a reflective process, it must be perceived correctly and implemented systematically. If these cannot be achieved, some drawbacks emerge that make peer observation a less meaningful and less effective tool for reflective practice. The drawbacks that occur because of inaccurate perceptions are mostly about lack of confidence. Observees often perceive peer observation as a kind of scrutiny that is not for constructive and supportive reasons, but for identifying unsuccessful teachers and any decline in their teaching quality (Adshead et al., 2006; Cosh, 1999; Siddiqui et al., 2007). Observees also have a tendency to think that being observed by a peer who is a subject specialist causes them to feel anxious as the peer focuses too much on the content and behaves in a judgmental fashion (Blackmore, 2005). Observers, trying not to be perceived as harsh critics, may be reluctant to provide complete and very accurate feedback for the observee, and they may hide their negative comments, sharing only positive comments (Blackmore, 2005). To avoid any of these situations, interpersonal relationships should be improved so that teachers feel safe and desire to share their comments to stimulate development.

Other drawbacks of peer observation occur because of systematic faults. Fletcher and Orsmond (2004) say that peer observation is a tool designed to be used embedded within the school system. They claim that peer observation requires a developmental process. If it is not ongoing progress, it becomes repetitive and does not produce any new understanding or it does not support teacher development. If peer observation lacks a shared perception and unity of purpose in the school system, it fails again. If it is perceived differently by lecturers, peer observation does not provide united benefit for the community of teachers but instead causes ambiguity and it may not assist the aims to be achieved in the school system.

Cosh (1998) views the drawbacks from a different perspective by taking the technical sides of peer observation into consideration. He alleges that teachers are not qualified enough to comment on the teaching of a peer as teaching consists of too many variables to observe and define. Allowing another person to criticize the subjective nature of teaching is not logical. He adds that teaching involves the interaction of so many elements that it cannot be described according to restricted criteria. Peer observation is not functional enough to give feedback about so many details of teaching. Therefore, it is not good at providing sufficient assessment for teachers. Cosh (1998) also claims that as peer observation cannot assess the general teaching of a teacher, it is of little value since it only provides some technical information that can be inferred from a model lesson. It seems clear that Cosh is looking at observation from an evaluation point of view rather than as something that both participants can benefit from.

Although the results of peer observation are largely accepted to be effective and constructive in the teaching community, because the process of implementation is not perceived to be supportive and practical by teachers, teachers tend to avoid peer observation. Once teachers stop laboring under the misconception that peer observation is a kind of test of their teaching and once they adapt it to their practices as a continuous, developmental system, they may be more willing to get involved in reflective practices using peer observation.

Procedures of Peer Observation

In order to learn from peer observation, recorded information is needed, as one cannot depend on memory that is inadequate in remembering the details of an event.

Some basic procedures serve as necessary and critical documentations of peer observation and their use varies according to the purpose of the observation. The procedures Richards and Farrell (2005) offer teachers are three suitable and useful ways of documenting peer observation. They all have disadvantages along with their advantages, but, as long as they are prepared by taking the predicted disadvantages into consideration, teachers can benefit considerably from these procedures.

Checklists, being the only structured way of documentation, provide the observer with a systematic, directed way of observation. A checklist, beforehand, informs the observer about what to observe. Therefore, it is easy to use. The disadvantage in using checklists is that it is often difficult to fit the descriptive events of the lesson into a checklist which covers limited aspects defined in certain sentences (Richards & Farrell, 2005).

Field notes are another procedure that can be used to store information for the sake of the observee. Field notes are brief descriptions of significant events happening during the teaching. The observer takes notes about the incidents he thinks are important to reflect on. The disadvantage of this procedure is that, as there is flexibility in the observation, the observer may miss noting the exact problem or difficulty of the lesson. In consequence, the information he collects may not be sufficiently helpful for the observee to evaluate himself (Richards & Farrell, 2005).

Written narratives, written by the observer, are like a descriptive picture of the lesson with no evaluation. It helps the observee to see how s/he implemented the lesson. As description takes time and not all details can be recorded as a narrative, it is reasonable and preferable to focus on a certain aspect of teaching while writing narratives (Richards & Farrell, 2005).

For teachers who are trying to improve a certain aspect of their teaching, narratives, being descriptive documents, provide them with rich information about that certain aspect of teaching. Being objective and constructive documentations, narratives also have a positive impact on the teacher who wishes to innovate by taking the broad information that narratives provide into consideration.

Definitions of Self Observation

Recently the main source used for getting feedback about a teacher's teaching has been through observation by someone else. Still, the idea of self observation exists as a powerful source of information in teaching practice (e.g. Yip, 2006), and as long as teachers are accepted as being in the best position to examine their own teaching (Richards & Lockhart, 2004), self observation will be used extensively.

Awareness is seen to be the key to teacher development. As teachers establish their awareness through the help of reflection, they frequently feel the need for reflective tools to mirror themselves. Self observation is one valuable tool intended for the purpose of collecting information about a teacher's own teaching to evaluate his practices by making his own decisions (Richards & Farrell, 2005). Self observation, an important kind of reflective practice, when adopted alone, engages a teacher in a process in which he examines his practices and analyses himself by taking these practices into consideration and, while doing this, he depends on his personality and professional competence (Yip, 2006). As he is the only one involved in the observation, he takes his own decisions. It is also advised that self observation be shared with others who can help enrich the reflection that emerges (Richards & Farrell, 2005; Smith, 1991; Yip, 2006). This is achieved by letting other colleagues contribute their own point of view after the teacher monitors himself (Yip, 2006).

This collaboration provides teachers with the opportunity to compare their subjective insights with the objective views of other teachers.

In addition to being an “after practice observation”, self observation may also occur during teaching, when the teacher observes himself at the time of teaching, following the thinking, feeling and responding steps of self reflection (Yip, 2006). It is not an absolute requirement of self observation to engage teachers in observation after the practice. Even made use of in everyday life, self observation with its richness of definition (e.g. Yip, 2006) is a tool that teachers are offered to use to enhance their own decision making and capability of evaluating their own teaching.

Benefits of Self Observation

Frequent use of self observation in different fields for various reasons is concrete evidence to demonstrate its usefulness (Smith, 1991). In teaching, self observation, which promotes constructive teaching through self reflection, is given substantial importance in the growing literature. Teachers benefit from self observation in many ways. It provides an opportunity for objectiveness. Teachers, who trust in their teaching, may discover that what they believe to be true is very different from the objective reality. Realizing that, their focus shifts to actions which are shaped not by intuition, routine or impulse but by reflection and consciousness (Richards & Farrell, 2005). Self observation offers teachers a safe, reflective environment where they can monitor themselves in privacy, without sharing it with other teachers. They become responsible for their own teaching and make their own judgments about it (Richards & Farrell, 2005). Most importantly, individuals using

self observation not only evaluate their performance, a part of their teaching, but they also take the opportunity to learn about themselves as a whole. They monitor their personality, identity and competence (Yip, 2006). They become aware of how they teach, who they are, what kind of a teacher they are and how well they teach.

In addition to claiming benefits for the self observer himself, self observation indirectly contributes to the enhancement of collaborative reflection. Becoming capable of observing themselves efficiently and objectively, teachers who engage in self observation become competent peer observers (Smith, 1991).

Drawbacks of Self Observation

Similar to other reflective tools, self observation requires mental and affective readiness and the provision of appropriate physical conditions. Both the teachers and the other members of the teaching society should adopt a sense of self observation and readiness for the process of self observation. There should be sufficient time, a reasonable workload and positive attitudes towards the capability of self observation (Yip, 2006). Synthesizing all these requirements is very difficult to achieve, but since drawbacks may occur in many of the observation tools and since the benefits of self observation outweigh its difficulties in implementation, thanks to its strong effect and longer-lasting nature powered by the teacher's own will and need (Freeman & Cornwell, 1993), it deserves to be used by teachers.

Procedures of Self Observation

Richards and Farrell (2005) propose some procedures for self observation and classify these procedures into five documentation types. These five documentation types are lesson reports, written narratives, checklists or questionnaires, and audio and video recordings. All these procedures of self observation are the representations of what has actually happened during a lesson. They all provide teachers with a self observation opportunity by enabling them to record their teaching after or before the lesson and reflect on themselves after the lesson.

Lesson reports and narratives are two of these documentation types, the written recordings of a teacher about his lesson. The teacher using these procedures reports the details of his teaching he wants to use as a source for his further teaching. For both documentation types, he can record the happenings according to two objectives. He can either take a descriptive view or a reflective view. In descriptive records the teacher aims to compose a report and in reflective records the teacher aims to evaluate his teaching.

Checklists and questionnaires, other ways of documenting one's teaching, can either focus on overall teaching or on a particular aspect of teaching. They can either be adapted from a published book or developed by the teachers.

Audio and video recordings are collected during teaching. Being real time recordings, they help to document one's teaching more accurately. Moreover, they raise the awareness of teachers with their mirror-like function. Video recording, in addition, provides more complete and more detailed information, letting the teacher focus on whatever detail he wants to deal with. Martin and Mayerson (1992) agree

with Richards and Farrell (2005) that video recordings provide teachers with raw data that is more than they expected to get, so that they can observe the aspect they want.

Martin and Mayerson (1992) add to the claims for the effectiveness of video recording, stating that it provides teachers with the ability to see themselves through the eyes of the students. Video recording, by providing such practical and efficient documentation, dominates the self observation issue. Storing reality with all its variables and details, it provides rich descriptive data that teachers can reflect on more correctly using all their senses.

In the practice of teaching, with the arrival of the video recording procedure for self observation, teachers have started to make use of the video recording procedure more often than other procedures, but they have mostly chosen to implement video recording with other ways of documentation. They use video recordings with checklists (Martin & Mayerson, 1992), or video recordings with narratives (Hasanbaşoğlu, 2007). Some combine their video recording documentations with interviews (Göde, 1999) or with supervisor analyses (Franck & Samaniego, 1981).

Any kind of observation helps a teacher in assessing his effectiveness in teaching (Robbins, 2001) but the amount of information observations provide and the practicality they serve decides their frequency of use. Empirical studies can confirm that self and peer observation are informative and practical tools in teaching. Studies show that there is an agreement on the frequent use of self and peer observation in the field of teaching (e. g. Cosh, 1999; Fletcher & Orsmond, 2004; Franck & Samaniego, 1981).

Research Studies

In the literature, many research studies that include self and peer observation have been conducted. Some of these studies have aimed to take advantage of these tools and others have investigated the perceptions of these tools.

Peer and Self Observation Used as a Program Component

In some of the studies, self and peer observation tools were used to provide information for teaching or to promote teaching through teacher development programs. To begin with, Jay and Johnson (2002) examined the effect of a teacher development program called TEP (Teacher Education Program), which attaches importance to reflective practice. This program is based on a reflective seminar which provides the opportunity for student teachers to reflect on their practices and enhance their effective teaching knowledge through the implementation of self observation conducted through portfolios. Learning the theory of reflection, the student teachers convert the adopted theory into practice in which they question and understand their teaching. TEP encourages teachers to reflect on themselves, learn how to meet their needs, take action and adjust the teaching context according to their needs.

Bell (2001) mentioned another program which used the peer observation tool to achieve the program's aims. The TDP (Teaching Development Program), whose aim is to support teachers in gaining growth in their profession, is conducted by an observee, a peer observer, or a support colleague, and an educational developer. The observee is observed by the support colleague and he is given written feedback. Then, the observee reflects on his feedback in writing and submits the written feedback and his own reflection to the educational developer. The educational developer also provides written feedback for the observee. The observation and written feedback the

peer observation provides through the TDP are believed to improve the skills and knowledge of teachers, stimulate change and support the development of a collegial approach to teaching.

In another study, Freese (2006) investigated the effect of a MET (Master of Education in Teaching) program at the University of Hawaii. He examined, through self and “peer” observation, how this program affected the professional improvement of a student teacher. The study was carried out with a student, as the pre-service teacher, a mentor and the researcher as the teacher educator. The student teacher observed himself through a video tape and through the journal he shared with the mentor. The researcher, as an outside observer, observed the student teacher and took some observation notes and shared conversations with him to provide “peer” feedback. The results were reasonably positive. Observing himself through the help of video recording, the pre-service teacher had a chance to objectively diagnose the complexities of his teaching and the information he obtained through the help of peer observation also enabled him to become more aware of his thinking and his position in teaching. As a result, he became accustomed to inquiry, collaboration and reflection and accepted them as principles of teaching.

In all of these studies, peer or self observation methods were used as a part of a teacher development program. These tools are embedded in the program system and their efficiency is not examined, as the primary aim is to observe the program’s achievement. In contrast, the study to be described in this thesis investigates and compares the efficiency of the tools, peer and self observation.

One study conducted by Franck and Samaniego (1981) tries to enhance the use of video taped self observation by teaching assistants (TA), assisted by a

supervisor and a video analyst in a program provided by the Department of Spanish and Classics, in cooperation with the Teaching Resources Center, at the University of California, Davis. The program studied involves the use of both in-class and self observation, but it commits teachers to in-class and self observation in order to extract their views on the efficiency of these two tools and train them in the use of methodology of self observation. At the end of the program, the TAs felt that self observation provided greater learning opportunity. Franck and Samaniego's study resembles the present study in that it compares two reflective tools, in-class and self observation, but it compares the perceptions of them. The study presented in this thesis compares peer and self observation to discover the similarities and differences in the information they provide.

Evaluation of Peer and Self Observation

With the exception of Franck and Samaniego's study, the previous studies described the contribution of peer and self observation when implemented in teacher development programs. The last study explored the perceptions of teachers in one teacher development program. The following three studies also present perceptions of the use of peer and self observation.

A study conducted by Adshead et al. (2006) tried to determine the views of general practitioner teachers on a proposed peer observation system. The study was carried out through a questionnaire survey at four schools in London and 3,900 practitioners contributed to the survey. It was found that most of the teachers agreed on the need for and benefits of peer observation, but they did not feel ready to commit to peer observation as it requires time and the participation of another colleague.

Blackmore (2005) also studied the perceptions of teachers in her study, but her study is different from Adshead et al. (2006), in that she aimed to discover how the teachers evaluated the ongoing peer review model of peer observation, which seeks to measure the quality of improvement rather than the quality of performance. In order to reach a conclusion, Blackmore (2005) implemented a case study with the teaching staff of Riverbank University, collecting the data via written reviews and interviews. The findings showed that the majority of the teaching staff were pleased with the peer review model, but there was some inadequacy in the implementation of the model that needed to be overcome. From the teachers' feedback, Blackmore inferred some suggestions that could be beneficial in improving the conditions for the peer review model. The main suggestion was the development of a framework, with the cooperation of the teaching staff, that would inform the observers about the stages to follow in their peer process.

In another study, Lam (2001) investigated whether teachers accepted classroom observation as a staff development tool or as an appraisal. The study was conducted with 2400 educators in Hong Kong. Teachers completed questionnaires investigating their perceptions of the existing practice of classroom observation, the ideal practice and the difficulties they faced during the practice. It was discovered that teachers perceived classroom observation as an appraisal and wished for a model of peer observation which would aim to assist their professional development rather than judge their performance.

In all the studies described above, peer or self observation was either used to foster the effectiveness of a teacher development program or evaluated according to the teachers' perceptions of them. None of the studies looked at how these methods

may differ in terms of the kind of information they provide. In this study, peer and self observation are compared neither according to teachers' perceptions of them nor according to the changes they bring to teaching. This study is unique in that, by investigating the information produced by self and peer observation, it tries to provide clarity for teachers who are not sure about the information self and peer observation provide and are therefore indecisive about which to implement.

Conclusion

Reflection has become an indispensable constituent of teaching in the last century as teaching is agreed on as a dynamic system which requires the improvement of the teachers and the development of the school system. This necessity for reflection leads the teaching community to be involved in using some ways to reflect on themselves and adopt new information to enhance their teaching. Peer and self observation are among these ways that are frequently used and valued thanks to the large amount of information they produce for the teachers who desire to practice reflective teaching.

The literature provides information about the attitudes towards peer and self observation, and the situations in which peer and self observation are conducted, but there is no comparison of these two tools that takes into consideration the types of information that emerge from them. Learning the differences and the similarities between peer and self information might be of great use for reflective practitioners in contributing to their decision making about the type of tool to prefer. The next chapter presents the methodology of a study that will provide such information, filling the gap in the literature.

CHAPTER III: METHODOLOGY

Introduction

This study aims to explore the kinds of information emerging from peer and self observation and compare the information they provide. It also aims to find out how well self and peer observation contribute to teachers' reflective thinking. The research questions addressed in this study are:

1. What are the similarities and differences between the types of information provided by peer and self observation conducted in Turkish university preparatory school classrooms by Turkish EFL instructors?
2. To what extent do peer and self observation conducted in this setting contribute to reflective thinking? Are there any differences in their contribution to reflective thinking?

This chapter will provide information about the setting, the participants, the instruments and the data collection procedures.

Setting

This case study was conducted at the School of Foreign Languages (SFL) at Muğla University. The SFL has students from all faculties at different levels of language proficiency. Of these students, some are in the compulsory program and some are in the voluntary program. There are fifty-five teachers working at SFL. Some are graduates of literature faculties and the rest are graduates of ELT faculties. There are five teachers with MA degrees.

At the beginning of this teaching year (2007-2008), SFL decided to enhance its teachers' professional development through the help of peer observation. Hence, SFL provided all teachers with a workshop in which an education specialist and the SFL teachers compiled an observation form cooperatively. This observation form was prepared by taking practicality considerations and the rationale behind this need into account. Therefore, it included items that were common to all teachers. Teachers were also given necessary information about the procedures of the implementation. After September, when the workshop was completed, Peer Observation of Teaching (POT), considered to be a practical and an objective way of promoting teacher growth, by enabling the teachers to observe each other and be involved in a reciprocal process, was implemented at SFL.

The teachers who practice the peer-review model believe in its benefits, but they still have some negative attitudes towards peer observation, as peer observation requires certain pre-observation procedures and sharing one's teaching with another colleague. These peculiarities of peer observation cause concerns among the teachers about the time required and the need to trust their colleagues' professional comments.

Participants

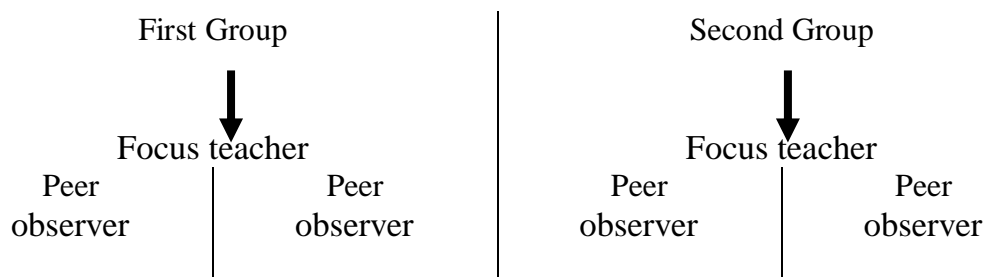
This case study was conducted with six teachers who were willing to participate in the research. First, the researcher approached two teachers to be the focus teachers of the study. The focus teachers would employ the self observation technique. These two teachers were asked for their involvement and they accepted the researcher's offer enthusiastically, as both teachers had positive attitudes towards peer observation, they were open to teacher development activities, and both were willing

to participate in a research study that would benefit them. In addition, they both wanted to be observed in terms of classroom interaction, as they were not sure whether they created the right classroom environment for interaction. These features were important to the quality of the study.

These two teachers were each asked to choose two colleagues to observe their lessons. The focus teachers were permitted to choose their own peer observers as the researcher wanted the observation to be conducted in a secure environment. Each focus teacher chose two of their very good friends. The first focus teacher (FT1) stated that she had decided to choose these two teachers because one of them had been working in the institution for nearly 5 years and had been sharing the same classes with FT1 for the last two years. FT1 added that they had observed one another in their classes. FT1 also claimed that P1 was willing to learn new ideas and apply them in her classes. Another important quality was that P1 did not have any prejudices against peer observation. P1 believed that she could learn a lot from peer observation. FT1 chose the other peer observer because he had been her colleague for nearly five years. He was open to new innovations in the field of teaching. She chose him because he was not directly involved in the prep school as he was teaching English to freshman students. She said she thought that his observation would give her some insights about her teaching as somebody looking at the preparatory program from a different perspective. The second focus teacher chose her peer observers among the colleagues with whom she had good relationships. She briefly said that her rationale was that she always believed in their objectivity and competence in teaching and they were always willing to follow new developments in teaching.

Thus, two groups of observers were formed, with one focus teacher and two peer observers in each group (see Figure 1). The reason for including two groups was to increase the reliability of the information gained through comparison of the two techniques.

Figure 1 - Group composition



All six teachers were experienced teachers. Their ages ranged between 27 and 35. All of the teachers except the peer observer who taught the freshman students had participated in peer observation before, both as an observer and an observee. They were all familiar with the observation form they were going to use as they had participated in the compilation of the form in the workshop they were given. A summary of the characteristics of the two groups can be seen in Table 1.

Table 1 - Information about the participants

	Group 1			Group 2		
	FT1	P1	P2	FT2	P3	P4
Gender	F	F	M	F	F	M
Age	35	27	35	35	34	36
Years of teaching experience	12	5	12	13	12	13
Education	MA in TEFL	ELT BA	ELT BA	Literature BA	ELT BA	MA in ELT
Previous participation in peer observation	Yes	yes	no	yes	yes	yes

Instruments

As the aim of the study was to compare the types of information provided by peer and self observation techniques, it was necessary to use the same kinds of instruments for both techniques. The researcher chose to use observation forms, checklists, open-ended questions and reflective writings. In addition, videotapes were used to record the lessons of the focus teachers. Both the focus teachers and the peer observers were provided with this visual information so that they could evaluate the videotaped lessons of the focus teachers.

Observation Form

The researcher decided that the participant teachers would use the previously established, currently used observation form (see Appendix A), as they were all accustomed to it and, most importantly, the observation form had been designed by them with the help of an education specialist. Hence, it consisted of the points that they wanted to pay attention to during their observations. The observation form had six categories, each focusing on a different aspect of the lesson, and each category had sections for both positive aspects and suggestions and ideas. The last category was intended for the focus of the observation, so the researcher determined that this section would be focused on the observation of interaction, on which the focus teachers had formerly agreed as their common concern.

Checklist with open-ended questions

The checklist was chosen by the researcher according to the problematic aspect of teaching the focus teachers had in common. The focus teachers had decided that they were both uncertain about the classroom interaction in their lessons, and that they needed some diagnostic views about it. For this purpose, the researcher chose to use a checklist that was intended specifically for classroom interaction. The researcher designed the checklist by adapting and combining one previously established checklist (Classroom observation form, n.d.) and another checklist from an unidentified source. The final checklist (see Appendix B) had fifteen items with three response options: *not observed*, *more emphasis needed* and *accomplished very well*. Three open-ended questions (see Appendix B), related to the problem of classroom interaction, were added to the checklist. The open-ended questions were developed by the researcher. Each open-ended question was designed by taking the nature of interaction into consideration. As interaction in teaching is comprised of two sides, the instructor and the students, two open-ended questions were asked to extract particular information from these two sides' perspectives (describe the instructor's effort in creating interaction, describe the form and extent of student interaction); one open-ended question was asked to gather information about the observed interaction (how much interaction occurred during teaching). The open-ended questions were integrated with the checklist as it was thought that a checklist alone could limit the information that might emerge from peer and self observation. The open-ended questions were used to support and enrich the information the checklist provided. The checklist was piloted in order to be sure of its intelligibility and completeness. The piloting was done by one of the peer observers. She piloted the checklist one week

before the data collection period and gave feedback to the researcher. No problems were encountered with the checklist, so it was used without further modification.

Reflective Writing Task

The third instrument used in the study was the reflective writing task (see Appendix C). As observation benefits both the observers and the observed teachers (Richards & Farrell, 2005), the teachers were asked to share more information about the experience of observing and being observed, in order to explore the levels of reflective thinking of both the focus teachers and the peer observers. In order to obtain this information, the focus teachers were encouraged to narrate what they learnt that was useful from observing their own lesson and the peer observers were encouraged to narrate in English how they related the lesson they had observed to their own usual teaching practices. All the observers were asked to narrate in English as they were believed to be capable of dealing with this task in English. The writings were used to determine the extent to which the self and peer observation techniques contributed to reflective thinking.

Framework for Levels of Reflective Thinking

A framework for levels of reflective thinking was needed to determine how well peer and self observation contribute to reflective thinking. Therefore, the researcher decided to use a framework (see Appendix D) already devised by another researcher (Hasanbaşoğlu, 2007). Hasanbaşoğlu devised this framework by adapting Hatton and Smith's framework (1995 cited in Hasanbaşoğlu, 2007) which she thought was inadequate to investigate the self-reflection of teachers in their reflective writing.

More levels were added to (name)'s framework, in order to reflect the kind of writing produced by the teachers, who were writing after having viewed a videotape of their own teaching. Hasanbaşıođlu, taking into consideration the two highest levels of Bloom's taxonomy, synthesis and evaluation, made the model framework more applicable. The reason this framework was chosen was that it was used for a similar task in the present thesis and the explanation of the steps in the development of the framework was legitimately convincing to reuse it. Hasanbaşıođlu's framework included four levels. The first level was the "portrayal of the lesson". The first level applied to the descriptions by the observers: their depiction of the lesson without any analysis and the information they give about themselves and their students. The second level was "understanding". This level applied to the reflections that involved reasoning: mentioning about the strengths and weaknesses or explaining the reason for the activities. The third level was "bridging". This was inspired from the second highest level of Bloom's Taxonomy, "synthesis". Linking present and past experiences was considered to be in the bridging level. The fourth, highest level was "planning". This level was considered to be like the highest level, "evaluation" in Bloom's Taxonomy. This last level applied to the solutions found by the observer. The sentences in the reflective writings were coded according to the level they represented in the framework.

Data Collection Procedures

In February 2008, the researcher recruited the teachers that would participate in the study and got permission from the head of the SFL to conduct the study. At the end of February, the checklist was developed with the open-ended questions, and the

questions for the reflective writing task were prepared. In the first week of March 2008 the data was collected. On Monday, the participants were assembled for a pre-observation briefing and they were introduced to the procedure. In this session, first they were given essential instructions about how to carry out the observations and use the instruments (the list of instruments can be seen in Table 2 below). They were informed that they would be doing the observation by watching the video recorded lesson of the focus teacher. They were also informed that it would be more efficient if they wrote the reflective writings some time after the observation, as they would have time to process what they had observed. Second, the participants were asked not to interact with one another until the data collection period was over; a de-briefing session would be held at the end of the data collection period. After the pre-briefing, on Tuesday, the researcher recorded one of FT1's lessons with a video camera. As the students were used to seeing an observer in the class from the self observer's former observation experiences, they did not mind the presence of the researcher. The only thing that was new to them was the video camera but, as at the beginning of the lesson they were informed that video recording was just an alternative way of doing observation and that it was the teacher, not the students, who was targeted, the students did not pay any attention to the camera. When the recording finished, the master copy was duplicated and the copies were delivered with the observation form, the checklist and the reflective writing question to each teacher of the first group: FT1 and her two peer observers. The teachers were told to follow the procedure that was described in the de-briefing session. The FT and the POs were permitted to watch the video and to fill in their forms at their homes, but they were told to do it without taking a break and in silence. On Wednesday, one lesson of the focus teacher of the

second group was video recorded following exactly the same procedure as the first one. The second group, the peer observers of FT2 and the focus teacher herself, were also told to watch the video and fill in their forms at home, without a break, and in silence.

Table 2 - List of instruments used in the observations

First procedure	Observation form already in use
Second procedure	Checklists with open-ended questions.
Third procedure	Narratives

One day later, all of the participants were asked to write the required reflective writings. The peer observers wrote about their own practices based on the focus teacher they had observed and the focus teachers wrote about themselves, taking the video recorded lessons into consideration.

On Friday afternoon, on the seventh of March, the participants, with the leadership of the researcher, assembled again for the de-briefing session, for the purpose of sharing their observations. First, the focus teachers talked about their experiences via the observation forms and the reflective writing they had completed. Then, the peer observers talked about their evaluations. Finally, all the participants interacted by asking and answering questions to each other and commenting on the points they felt needed to be discussed.

Data Analysis

The data for this study were collected from the observation form, the checklists, the open-ended questions and the narratives. First, the observation forms, the checklists and the open-ended questions were analyzed. The groups were analyzed

within themselves; that is, the information that emerged from each data collection method of one observer was compared with the other observers of the same group. The three instruments were read and re-read several times, looking for patterns and themes. This procedure reflects the general inductive approach described by Thomas (2006). By the end of this procedure certain patterns and themes emerged. These themes were: the tendencies to list and describe and/or interpret specific teacher actions, the use or non-use of evaluative words, and the presence or absence of suggestions or ideas given, along with some patterns regarding the number of words used by the observers. Then, the results of each group were compared to see if the patterns that emerged were common to both groups. The information extracted from these three data collection instruments was used to find the answers of the first research question.

Second, the reflective writings were analyzed in order to examine how well self and peer observation contributed to reflective thinking. This analysis was done using the framework for levels of reflective thinking and it was done a second time by another researcher to provide inter-rater reliability. Each group's narratives were analyzed and for each group the narrative of the self observer was compared with the narratives of the peer observers to explore how well self and peer observation contributed to reflective thinking. Then, the results of each group were compared to see if the patterns that emerged were common to both groups.

Conclusion

In this chapter, information about the methodology of the study was presented with the research questions. The section included information about the setting, participants, instruments, and data collection procedures and data analysis. The next chapter presents the results of the data analysis of this study.

CHAPTER IV: DATA ANALYSIS

Overview of the Study

This study was conducted to investigate the similarities and differences between the information self and peer observation produce and to unveil how much peer and self observation contribute to reflective thinking. The study was conducted by two groups of teachers with three participants in each. Each group involved one focus teacher (self observer) and two peer observers. The research questions explored are as follows:

1. What are the similarities and differences between the types of information provided by peer and self observation conducted in Turkish university preparatory school classrooms by Turkish EFL instructors?
2. To what extent do peer and self observation conducted in this setting contribute to reflective thinking? Are there any differences in their contribution to reflective thinking?

Data Analysis Procedures

The data of this study were collected through observation forms, checklists, open-ended questions, and reflective writings. These instruments were used by all the participants, four peer observers and two focus teachers, after watching the videotaped lessons of the focus teachers.

The first attempt made in this chapter was upon the analysis of the observation forms, checklists and the responses to three open-ended questions, seeking information for the answer to the first research question: What are the similarities and

differences between the types of information provided by peer and self observation conducted in Turkish university preparatory school classrooms by Turkish EFL instructors? This analysis was done by categorizing the information emerging from the data collected through these three instruments with the help of the general inductive approach (Thomas, 2006). The next and the final step in the procedure of the data analysis was the exploration of the reflective narratives written by both the peer observers (POs) and the focus teachers (FTs) in order to answer the second research question: To what extent do peer and self observation contribute to reflective thinking? Are there any differences in their contribution to reflective thinking? Since the data analysis procedures were different for each instrument, these procedures will be described separately, before the results for each instrument are given.

Analysis of the Observation Forms

The first data collection tool used in order to explore the types of information emerging from self and peer observation was the observation form. The observation form was comprised of six sections: pace of the lesson, teacher presentation, class management, teaching aids, student production, and interaction as the focus of the lesson to be observed. Furthermore, each section had parts for positive aspects and suggestions/ideas. The observation forms, completed by each observer, were categorized according to five perspectives: number of words, number of positive words, number of negative words, total number of negative and positive words (evaluative words), and number of suggestions/ideas. Adjectives, adverbs and verbs carrying positive or negative connotations were considered to be evaluative words. In determining the suggestions and ideas, the number of sentences devoted to

suggestions and ideas were counted. The sentences which were accepted as suggestion and idea sentences were those which included suggestion or idea patterns such as *should* or *it is better*. In addition to this, the number of specific teacher actions mentioned by each observer was taken into account. These specific teacher actions were the actions each observer documented using a verb in their observation forms. Finally, the specific teacher actions mentioned by each observer were categorized according to the words chosen by the observers. When the observer used words that might be said to carry negative or positive connotations (such as *tried*, *managed*, *ignored*, and so on), the action was categorized as “interpreted”. However, when it appeared that the observer was simply reporting the action using words with no particular connotation, the action was categorized as “reported”. The information derived from the number of described specific teacher actions was used to see how many specific teacher actions were mentioned in each type of observation, and the information obtained from the categorization of the specific teacher actions according to the connotations they carry (interpreted or reported) was used to see how much interpretation was triggered by each type of observation. All the categories emerging from the observation forms were used to investigate the similar and different kinds of information self and peer observation provide.

Table 3 presents each group's word counts related to these five perspectives:

Table 3 - Word counts, observation forms

Observer	Number of words		Number of positive words		Number of negative words		Number of positive and negative words (evaluative words)		Number of Suggestions/ideas	
	G1	G2	G1	G2	G1	G2	G1	G2	G1	G2
FT1/2	281	180	6	2	1	4	7	6	2	5
PO1/PO3	146	114	8	6	2	1	10	7	2	2
PO2/PO4	136	83	3	4	3	-	6	4	3	-

G1 = Group 1 G2 = Group 2

In both groups, the total word usage of the focus teachers (FTs) was considerably more than that of the peer observers (POs). In both groups, one PO used the most evaluative words, and these POs also used the most positive words in their groups. The FT from the first group and one PO from the second group had the fewest negative words. In the first group, the FT used many more positive words than negative words, but FT2, while using fewer evaluative words, used more negative words than positive words. The number of positive words used by the POs in each group was more than the number of negative words, except for P2, who was the only one who had an even number for both negative and positive words. In terms of the number of suggestions and ideas, the numbers of suggestions and ideas of the observers in the first group were almost the same, while in the second group the numbers differed for all the observers. One PO in the first group and the FT in the second group gave the most suggestions.

In general, there was consistency between the FTs of each group in terms of having the highest number of word usage, and there was also consistency between the two groups in that in both groups the POs differed in their use of evaluative words. In

terms of negative or positive evaluation, the POs were generally positive, while the FTs were not consistently positive or negative. No consistency was seen between the groups regarding the number of suggestions/ideas given.

Table 4 presents the ratios of the number of evaluative words and the number of words in suggestions and ideas to the total number of words for each group.

Table 4 - Word count ratios, observation forms

G1	Total number of words	# of evaluative words/ total #of words	# of words in suggestions and ideas/ total number of words	G2	Total number of words	# of evaluative words/ total #of words	# of words in suggestions and ideas/ total number of words
FT1	281 words	2.5%	12.82%	FT2	180 words	3.33%	39.44%
PO1	146 words	6.85%	23.98%	PO3	114 words	6.14%	43%
PO2	136 words	4.41%	47.06%	PO4	83 words	4.82%	0%

G1 = Group 1 G2 = Group 2

The ratio of the number of evaluative words to the total number of words for the FTs in both groups was less than that of the POs. In terms of the ratio of the number of words in the suggestions/ideas section to the total number of words, in both groups, one PO had the highest ratio. It is interesting to note that FT2, P2 and P3 are using almost half of their words on suggestions. The findings show that there appears to be no pattern among the observers.

The following table lists the number of specific teacher actions described by each observer in each group in their observation forms.

Table 5 - Number of specific teacher actions described, observation forms

G1			G2		
FT1	PO1	PO2	FT2	PO3	PO4
16	3	12	6	1	1

According to Table 5, the number of specific teacher actions mentioned by all three observers in the second group was quite limited when compared to the first group. It should be emphasized here that each group of teachers observed a different lesson and a different teacher with different students at different levels. In addition, each lesson was observed by different observers with different ways of looking at the lesson, possibly differing in terms of global or analytic perspectives. These might have had an effect on the number of specific teacher actions mentioned in the second group, as the lesson observed by the observers of the second group might not have been conducive to documenting specific teacher actions. However, the tables make it clear that the number of specific teacher actions mentioned by the FTs in each group was considerably more than that of their POs. Especially, the FT from the first group appears to have written whatever action took place in the lesson. This is the only pattern observed between the groups.

Table 6 below lists the number of reported and interpreted specific teacher actions described by each observer in each group in their observation forms.

Interpreted actions are written in bold.

In the first group, the FT had the most reported actions. The number of reported actions of all the observers in the first group is more than their number of interpreted actions. In the second group, the number of both reported and interpreted actions of the FT is more than the POs reported and interpreted. In the first group, the

FT only had reported actions, but the FT in the second group had both reported and interpreted actions. In the first group both POs had both reported and interpreted actions, but in the second group each PO lacked either the reported or the interpreted action. Very interestingly, most of the observers in both groups documented more reported actions than interpreted actions.

Table 6 - Specific teacher actions, observation forms

	G1			G2		
	FT1	PO1	PO2	FT2	PO3	PO4
	-explains what they are going to study in the lesson -gives information about the topic -prepares the students to the task -asks them to read the sentences before doing the listening -asks questions -walks around the class -checks students -uses the board and the CD player -writes some words -explains the words -addresses students -puts the topic to be discussed -waits for students' answers -expresses her ideas -joins the lesson -makes a move very slightly when she wants to change the topic.	-uses CD for listening -makes all the students participate in the lesson -helps students	-explains what the students are supposed to do. -gives answers -asks questions -repeats -gives clues -provides guidance	-gives clear introductions about each activity before it is started -asks questions -provides guidance -joins the activity as a partner of one of my students.	-starts by (with) Nelson Mandela	-leads the students to the direction she has in her mind
# of reported actions	16	2	5	2	1	-
# of interpreted actions	-	1	1	2	-	1

G1 = Group 1 G2 = Group 2

Analysis of the Checklists

The second data collection tool used in order to explore the types of information emerging from self and peer observation was the checklist. The checklist included fifteen behaviors that would promote interaction. Three response options were provided for each behavior: not observed (NO), more emphasis needed (MEN) and achieved very well (AVW). This checklist was agreed to be appropriate for this study for two reasons. First, it was considered to consist of many observable behaviors that would promote interaction, which was the focus of the observation. Second, the response options were easy to choose for the observer, being neither too many nor too few. The checklist was used by each observer and the responses chosen by the observers were compared across the groups.

Table 7 presents the extent of agreement among the observers in each group:

Table 7 - Agreement among observers, checklist

G1		G2	
All same	5	All same	6
All different	3	All different	1
F1 PO1 common	7	F2 PO3 common	9
F1 PO2 common	7	F2 PO4 common	7
PO1 PO2 common	7	PO3 PO4 common	10
Number of items	15	Number of items	15

G1 = Group 1 G2 = Group 2

Among the items, the observers agreed on at least 33% of the checklist items in both groups. In the first group, the POs agreed on nearly half (46.6%) of the items and in the second group they agreed on two thirds of the items. Each pair (the FT with each PO, and the POs together) agreed on a similar number of items in the first group,

while in the second group, the agreement between the POs was the highest when compared to the other pairs.

The following table presents the extent of interaction-promoting behaviors reported by each observer. In the table, NO stands for “not observed”, MEN stands for “more emphasis needed” and AVW stands for “achieved very well”. MEN and AVW are different points on a continuum, but the differences they indicate here could simply be differences of opinion as to how things should be done in the classroom. Thus, MEN and AVW options are more related to the extent of the behavior observed rather than the presence or the absence of it. NO is certainly different from what MEN and AVW indicate. NO means that the behavior is absent, in the eyes of the observer. Taking these points into consideration, it is possible to say that MEN and AVW, in a way, represent the presence of the behavior, according to the observer. This view is illustrated in columns D and H.

Table 8 - Responses of all observers, checklist

	A	B	C	D		E	F	G	H
				MEN+AVW (behavior observed)					MEN+AVW (behavior observed)
G1 FT1	NO 5	MEN 1	AVW 9	10	G2 FT2	NO 7	MEN 2	AVW 6	8
PO1	5	3	7	10	PO3	3	4	8	12
PO2	4	3	8	11	PO4	1	1	13	14

G1 = Group 1 G2 = Group 2

NO = not observed MEN = more emphasis needed AVW = Accomplished very well

Table 8 illustrates that the most common response for all participants was AVW, except for FT2, but if columns D and H are taken in into consideration, as they both indicate the presence of the behavior, it is possible to say that, for all the

observers, AVW+MEN was the most common response. In the first group, the responses of the FT were quite similar to the responses of the POs, with fewer NOs and more AVW+ MEN, and the responses of the POs were quite similar to one another. In the second group, the responses of the FT were different from those of the POs, with more NOs and fewer AVW+MEN. The responses of the POs in the second group were also different from one another. There was more than one point difference in the E, F and G columns of the POs in the second group.

Comparison of the checklists revealed that there were some contradictions among the observers; for some items, at least one observer chose NO, and at least one other observer chose MEN or AVW, indicating disagreement as to whether the behavior was actually present.

Table 9 presents the contradictory observations by the observers in the first group.

Table 9 - Contradictions of the first group, checklist

Contradictory IPBs	FT1	PO1	PO2
Encouraged student questions	NO	AVW	MEN
Encouraged student discussion	AVW	AVW	NO
Asked questions to monitor students' progress	NO	MEN	AVW
Allowed relevant student discussion to proceed uninterrupted.	AVW	NO	MEN
Respected diverse points of views	AVW	NO	NO
Suggested questions of limited interest to be handled outside of the class.	NO	NO	AVW

The contradictions might have been caused by the differences in the interpretations of the observers. Nearly all items consist of one or more words that are open to different interpretations. In the first two items the verb “encourage”, in the fourth item the words “relevant” and “uninterrupted”, in the fifth item “limited” might

have caused the observers to interpret the behaviors differently. For example, some teachers might have interpreted the expression “uninterrupted discussion” as solely students’ discussion with no teacher interference. However, the others might have interpreted it as students’ discussion with teacher’s contribution to provide assistance. In the third item, perhaps the POs thought the intent of the teacher’s questions were to monitor student progress, but perhaps the FT was aware of the intent behind her questions.

Table 10 presents the interaction-promoting behaviors and contradictory responses of the observers in the second group.

Table 10 - Contradictions of the second group, checklist

Contradictory IPB	FT2	PO3	PO4
Encouraged student questions	NO	MEN	AVW
Encouraged student discussion	NO	AVW	AVW
Gave satisfactory answers to student questions	NO	AVW	AVW
Responded to nonverbal cues of confusion, boredom and curiosity	NO	NO	AVW
Encouraged students to respond to other’s questions	NO	MEN	MEN
Allowed relevant student discussion to proceed uninterrupted	NO	NO	AVW

The contradictions in the second group might have also been caused by the differences in interpretation by the observers. All the items contain one or more words that have connotations and these might have caused the interpretations to differ. In the first two items and in the fifth item “encourage”, in the third item “satisfactory”, in the fourth item “confusion”, “boredom” and “curiosity” and in the sixth item “relevant” and “uninterrupted” might have been interpreted differently by the observers. The IPBs which were responded as NO by one of the FTs might signal that this FT was self-deprecating in order not to leave anything for the POs to criticize.

It is interesting that, in both groups, the number of contradictions between at least two observers on the IPBs was the same: There were six IPBs on which there was disagreement in both groups. What is more interesting is that in each group's contradictory items, three IPBs were common to both groups. This pattern in Tables 9 and 10 might have been the result of the kind of the behaviors described in the items. Among all IPBs, these three IPBs might have had the greatest tendency to be interpreted most differently.

Considering all the results derived from the checklists, it is reasonable to say that there was not much consistency between the two groups in terms of the number of responses made similarly and differently and the distribution of responses. However, there was consistency between the two groups in terms of the contradictory responses on the checklist.

Analysis of the Open-ended Questions

This section presents the analysis of the responses all observers gave to the three open-ended questions about the interaction they observed in the videotaped lessons. These three open-ended questions were:

1. Describe the instructor's effort in creating interaction.
2. How much interaction occurred during teaching?
3. Describe the form and extent of student interaction.

In the analysis of the open-ended questions, the same types of data analysis procedures used in the observation form were implemented. This compatibility enabled the patterns emerging from both instruments to be compared to see whether, in both instruments, the groups followed the same patterns in terms of word counts,

evaluative words, suggestions/ideas, ratios, number of specific teacher actions and reported and interpreted actions.

The responses to the three open-ended questions were first evaluated in terms of word counts. Each observer's words used in responding to the three questions related to interaction were counted to find out how much writing is triggered by self and peer observation. Then, the responses of the observers to these open-ended questions were dealt with using the same procedures used for the observation forms. The responses to all three open-ended questions were categorized according to five perspectives: number of words, number of positive words, number of negative words, total number of negative and positive words (evaluative words), and number of suggestions or ideas. Positive and negative adjectives and adverbs, and verbs that carried positive or negative connotations (in the opinion of the researcher) were considered to be evaluative words. In determining the suggestions and ideas, the number of sentences devoted to suggestions and ideas were counted. The sentences which were accepted as suggestion and idea sentences were those sentences which used suggestion or idea patterns such as *should or it is better*. In addition to this, the number of specific teacher actions, sentences consisting of verbs, was stated. As was done before in the observation forms, the specific teacher actions noted by all observers were classified as "reported" and "interpreted" actions according to the connotations they carried, and the information obtained from this categorization was used to investigate how much interpretation is triggered by peer and self observation. All the categorizations of the information of observation forms shed light on what kinds of information is produced by peer and self observation.

The table below presents each observer's responses to the open-ended questions in word counts related to the five perspectives mentioned above.

Table 11 - Word counts of both groups, open-ended questions

Observer	Number of words		Number of positive words		Number of negative words		Number of positive and negative words (evaluative words)		Number of Suggestions/ideas	
	G1	G2	G1	G2	G1	G2	G1	G2	G1	G2
FT1/2	187	152	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	1
PO1/PO3	163	107	1	3	0	0	1	3	0	0
PO2/PO4	196	359	1	4	1	0	2	4	1	0

G1 = Group 1 G2 = Group 2

In terms of word counts, in the first group there was some consistency both between the FT and the POs and between the POs, although P2 used the most words in response to the three open-ended questions. In contrast, in the second group, there was inconsistency both between the FT and the POs and between the POs. Similar to the first group, in the second group one PO used the most words in his response to the three open-ended questions. In the first group, the number of words used by each observer was quite similar, but in the second group, P4 used many more words than the FT and the other PO.

Taking into consideration the evaluative words, in the first group, the FT used no evaluative words, unlike the POs, whose number of evaluative words was very similar to each other. In the second group, the FT used only one evaluative word, and the number of evaluative words used by the POs was again very similar to one another. In both groups, the number of evaluative words used by POs was more than that of FTs. In the second group, FT2's number of negative words was more than her

number of positive words, and in both groups, POs generally used more positive words than negative words. In terms of suggestions, in the first group, only P2 made a suggestion and in the second group only FT2 made a suggestion.

In general, in terms of word counts, there was consistency between the groups. In both groups, one PO used the most words in responding to the open-ended questions and the other PO used the least words. In terms of evaluative words, there was again consistency between the FTs of both groups. FT1, using no evaluative words, and FT2, using the least evaluative words, were the least evaluative observers in both groups; given that FT2's evaluative word was negative, it is possible to say that whatever evaluation the FTs provided was negative, too.

The POs were the most evaluative observers in both groups. With the exception of the one negative word used by P2, the POs used only positive evaluative words. Therefore, it is possible to say that the POs provided overall positive evaluation.

When suggestions and ideas were taken into consideration, inconsistency was seen between the groups. In the first group, it was only P2 who offered a suggestion and in the second group, only FT2 did so. The number of suggestions was similar in and between the groups, with both P2 and FT2 making the only suggestion.

When the patterns seen in the two instruments are compared, in terms of word counts, what was found in the analysis of the open-ended questions does not reflect what was seen in the analysis of the observation form. While in the observation form, the FTs used the most words, in the open-ended questions, the POs used the most words. In both observation form and open-ended questions, the POs used more positive words, but while there was no consistency in the observation forms in terms

of overall evaluative words, in the open-ended questions, the POs consistently used more evaluative words than the FTs. Regarding suggestions and ideas, there was no consistency found between the POs and the FTs in terms of suggestions and ideas in either instrument.

Table 12 presents the ratios of the number of evaluative words and the number of words in suggestions and ideas to the total number of words in each group.

Table 12 - Comparison of numbers in ratios for both groups, open-ended questions

G1	Total number of words	# of evaluative words/ total #of words	# of words in suggestions and ideas/ total number of words	G2	Total number of words	# of evaluative words/ total #of words	# of words in suggestions and ideas/ total number of words
FT1	187 words	0%	0%	FT2	152 words	0.66%	5.92%
PO1	163 words	0.61%	0%	PO3	107 words	2.80%	0%
PO2	196 words	1.02%	5.10%	PO4	359 words	1.12%	0%

The ratios of the number of evaluative words and the number words in suggestions and ideas to the total number of words in each group are very low for all observers. The ratio of evaluative words to the total number of words for the FTs in both groups was less than that of the POs. In terms of the ratio of the number of words used for suggestions and ideas to the total number of words, in the first group, along with one PO, the FT was the lowest, while in the second group, the FT was the highest. Thus, it is not possible to say that there is a pattern among the observers.

Regarding the comparison of numbers in ratios, in both open-ended questions and observation forms, the ratio of evaluative words to the total number of words for

the FTs was less than that of POs. Another similarity that occurred in the analysis of both the open-ended questions and the observation form was that, in terms of the ratio of the number of words in suggestions and ideas to the total number of words, there was no consistency between the POs and the FTs. One difference occurred in the ratio of number of words used for suggestions and ideas; the ratios were much higher in the observation forms.

Table 13 shows the number of specific teacher actions (STA) described by all six observers, in both groups, according to their responses to the three open-ended questions related to interaction.

Table 13 - Number of specific teacher actions, open-ended questions

G1			G2		
FT1	PO1	PO2	FT2	PO3	PO4
12	7	12	5	2	9

According to Table 13, in terms of the number of specific teacher actions related to interaction mentioned by the first group, the FT and one PO mentioned the most specific teacher actions. In contrast, there was no consistency between the peers in the second group. In the second group, one PO described the most specific teacher actions, while the other described the fewest. There was no observable pattern in the second group between the FT and the POs, or between the POs.

In general terms, in terms of the consistency between the two groups, in the first group, while the FT described the most specific teacher actions, in the second group, the number of specific teacher actions listed by the FT was quite limited. In both groups the POs varied in their number of specific teacher actions mentioned.

When comparing the number of specific teacher actions noted in the observation forms and the open-ended questions, what was found in the open-ended questions does not reflect what was seen in the analysis of the observation form. In the observation form, while the FTs produced the most specific teacher actions, in the open-ended questions, no consistency was found between the FTs and the POs.

The following table presents the number of interpreted and reported specific teacher actions taken from the answers of the observers to the open ended questions related to interaction. “Interpreted” specific teacher actions are in bold, and “reported” specific teacher actions are in regular font.

T(14)	FT1	PO1	PO2	FT2	PO3	PO4
Q1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Gave necessary information for student- student interaction -Began with listening -Prepared the ground for the coming discussion -Discussed the questions with Ss -Checked if they really understood the listening or not. -Asked students to give justification about their answers -Gave a start to the discussion -Wrote a statement on the board -Asked students their opinions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Tried more than students to create action -Took advantage of using mother tongue when necessary -Gave some examples for her own thoughts -Tried to guide and help -Told the synonyms of words and expressions -Used the synonyms in sentences -Gave the meaning of synonyms in Turkish 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Put effort to interact with the students -Asked questions -Encouraged students to answer -Let anyone (everyone) talk -Tried to confirm if everything was going well 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Tried to create interaction by asking questions to the students about the subject of the lesson. -Tried to listen to all the students who were willing to talk -Ignored the ones who weren't volunteering to talk and to answer the questions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Used the transition very creatively and effectively 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Managed to draw students' attention to her presentation -Managed to maintain interaction between herself and the Ss. -Established good relations with her students -Provided and maintained student motivation
Q2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Depended on students' willingness to join. 	-	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Tried to clarify the meaning by her questions. -Made repetitions -Wrote on the board 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Tried to monitor them -Gave the correct answers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Used the blackboard moreefficiently than I do. 	-
Q3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Restated the questions in a different way -Simplified the questions for the students. 	-	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Provided comments, information, questions related to the subject and the students' reactions -Used L1 -Elicited the correct answers. -Recasted learner utterances 	-	-	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Managed to recycle the same language items -Activated Ss' language production -Encouraged her students to improve their conveyed message -Handed out some worksheets to students to consolidate the language -Initiated jigsaw kind activity
# of interpreted actions	1	3	4	4	2	5
# of reported actions	11	4	8	1	-	4

Table 14 - Number of interpreted and reported specific teacher actions, open-ended questions

In the first group, the FT used the least interpretation in her description of the specific teacher actions, but had the most reported actions. The POs included both interpreted and reported actions in their documentation of the specific teacher actions. What was common for all the observers in the first group was that they appeared to report more than they interpreted.

In the second group, P3 listed the fewest interpreted actions and had no reported actions. On the other hand, both P4 and FT2 included both interpreted and reported actions in their documentation of specific teacher actions, with P4 interpreting the most.

In general, one PO in each group wrote the most interpreted specific teacher actions. Thus, there was consistency between the two groups in terms of the observers who wrote the most interpretive specific teacher actions. In contrast to the consistency seen in the observers with the most interpretive actions, there was no consistency between the groups in terms of the observers who wrote the least interpretive specific teacher actions. While it was a FT in one group, it was a PO in the second group. In addition, while all the observers in the first group commonly described more reported actions than interpreted actions, the opposite pattern was observed in the second group.

Consistency was discovered between the two groups in terms of word counts and evaluative words. POs used the most words and they were the ones who made the most interpretations. Regarding the specific teacher actions and number of interpreted and reported actions, no consistency was found.

In terms of the number of reported and interpreted actions, what was seen in the open-ended questions does not reflect what was seen in the observation form. In

the observation forms of all observers, the reported actions outnumbered the interpreted actions, while in the open-ended questions, there was no such definite pattern. For some observers, the interpreted actions were more than the actions reported. One interesting result is that, in both open-ended questions and observation forms, the first group recorded more reported actions than interpreted actions.

Analysis of the Reflective Writings

In order to explore the extent to which peer and self observation contribute to reflective thinking, and whether there are differences in their contribution to reflective thinking, both focus teachers and peer observers were asked questions that would encourage them to write while reflecting on their observations. The focus teachers were asked what they learned from observing their own lesson that was useful, and the peer observers were asked what they could say about the lesson they observed when they relate it to their own usual teaching practices. Then, the reflective writings of both focus teachers and peer observers, which were written in English, were analyzed in two stages. First, the topics each observer wrote about were collected by the researcher by categorizing the sentences under each topic, to see the different topics prompted by peer and self observation. Then, the level of reflection of each observer was examined through the analysis of the reflective writings, to investigate the level of reflective thinking stimulated by peer and self observation.

Tables 15 and 16 present the topics addressed by each group. The tables are presented separately as not all the topics are represented in both groups. Table 15 presents the topics mentioned by the observers of the first group.

Table 15 - The topics reflected on by Group1, reflective writings

Topics of reflection	FT1	PO1	PO2
1-Feelings about the lesson	+	+	+
2-Students' participation	+	-	+
3-Problems	+	+	+
4-Classroom management	+	+	-
5-Instructions	-	-	+
6-Students' interest	+	+	-
7-Teacher language	+	+	+
8-Amount of interaction	-	-	+
	6	5	6

It is seen that, although the actual topics differ from one another, the number of topics mentioned by each observer was nearly the same. Of the eight topics, three, feelings, problems, and teachers' language, were written about by all three observers and among these eight topics, there are no topics that are either unique to the FT or to both POs. Two topics, instructions and amount of interaction, were addressed only by P2.

Table 16 presents the topics addressed by the observers of the second group.

Table 16 - The topics reflected on by Group 2, reflective writings

Topics of reflection	FT2	PO3
1-Feelings about the lesson	+	-
2-Activities	+	-
3-Students' participation	+	-
4-Problems	+	-
5-Instructions	+	-
6-Students' interest	+	-
7-Teacher language	+	-
8- Interaction pattern	+	-
9- Posture	+	-
10-Board Usage	+	+
11- Approach	-	+
	10	2

It is seen that P4 was not included in the table, as he did not reflect on his own teaching as the question directed him to. The number of topics mentioned by each observer was very different in number. The FT wrote about a considerable number of

topics, while the PO wrote about only two. Of all eleven topics, only one, board usage, was common to both observers; there was only one topic that was unique to the PO, and eleven of the topics written about were peculiar to the FT.

When Tables 15 and 16 are viewed together, in both groups, the FTs addressed the most topics, but while there was no topic mentioned by only the FT in the first group, in the second group, eleven topics were only mentioned by the FT.

The level of reflection was determined by using the framework for levels of reflective thinking developed by Hasanbaşoğlu (2007). The framework included four levels. The first, lowest level was the “portrayal of the lesson”, the second level was “understanding”, the third level was “bridging”, and the fourth, highest level was “planning”. Each level consisted of explanatory statements that would make it easier to assign a reflective writing sentence to the appropriate level of reflective thinking. With the help of these statements, each sentence in each reflective writing was assigned to one of the levels in the framework. The distribution of the sentences across the levels of the framework revealed the level of reflective thinking of each observer.

In order to ensure reliability, a second rater was also asked to evaluate the level of reflective thinking in the reflective writings, using the framework. The level of agreement between the two raters was high, with only a few disagreements. These items were resolved by discussion and negotiation by the researcher and the second rater (complete coded reflective writings for a FT and a PO can be seen in Appendix E).

Some coded excerpts for each level taken from the reflective writings of the observers are given below.

Level 1

- The classroom atmosphere is motivating.
- I encouraged the students to join the lesson.

Level 2

- Although the students made mistakes while they were talking, I did not correct them in order not to distract them.
- I always thought that I was speaking very fast, so students were not able to understand me. However, from the observation, I was slow and the SS were able to catch up with me.

Level 3

- Before I did not use to bother whether my students changed their places or not, but after the observation I have decided that it would be better if at least some students changed their places.
- I learnt that code switching isn't such a negative thing. When I watched myself, I saw that I use code-switching where it is extremely necessary. So, I felt relaxed about it, because I had been really anxious about code-switching.

Level 4

- We should create opportunities for the students who do not volunteer to talk and even force them to speak.
- Teacher talk was fast. It might have been difficult to understand for the students. I think it should have been slower.

The following table presents the level of reflection of all observers in both groups. P4 is excluded from the table, as he did not reflect on his own teaching in his writing.

Table 17 - The levels of reflection, reflective writings

Level	G1			G2	
	FT1	PO1	PO2	FT2	PO3
1	11	1	3	7	6
2	2	2	-	1	-
3	-	-	-	2	-
4	-	1	3	-	-
total	13	4	6	10	6

G1 = Group 1 G2 = Group 2

In this table, the number of sentences at each level of reflection is presented for each observer. In the first group, FT1 had the largest number of sentences that could be considered reflection, and FT1's amount of reflection was considerably more than that of the POs. The POs' number of reflective sentences was very close to each other. In terms of the levels of reflection, only the POs expressed a degree of reflection as high as level 4. FT1's reflection reached only to level 2 and P1 was the only observer whose reflective sentences spanned three levels. In the second group, FT2 had the largest number of reflective sentences. Only FT2's reflections reached as high as the third level, and only FT2's reflections spanned three levels.

In general, the greatest amount of reflection in each group belonged to the FTs. No pattern was seen in the levels of reflection of the two groups. In the first group, the highest level was reached by the POs, but in the second group, it was the FT whose level of reflection was higher than the PO. In the first group, only one PO had reflection spanning three levels and in the second group, reflection over three levels was seen only in the FT's writing.

After the analysis of the writings, the topics reflected on in the writings, the total number of levels of reflection and the number of spanned levels in the writings, it appeared that FTs wrote about more topics, and more reflectively, although their level of reflective thinking was not consistently higher.

Conclusion

This chapter has presented the qualitative and the quantitative analysis of the data obtained through four observation techniques: open-ended questions, observation forms, checklists and reflective writings. Open-ended questions, observation forms and checklists were analyzed to shed light on the first research question, the similarities and differences between the types of information provided by self and peer observation. Next, the findings of the analysis of the reflective writings were used to answer the second research question: to what extent peer and self observation conducted by university preparatory school EFL teachers contribute to reflective thinking and whether there are any differences in their contribution to reflective thinking. The next chapter will discuss the findings, practical implications, limitations of the study, and suggestions for further research of the present study.

CHAPTER V: CONCLUSION

Introduction

This study investigated the similarities and differences between the types of information provided by peer and self observation and to what extent peer and self observation contribute to reflective thinking.

Six teachers participated in this study, each three forming a group. Each group consisted of one focus teacher and two teachers who were asked to be peer observers by the focus teacher. The focus teachers were video-recorded by the researcher and their video-recordings were watched and observed by the focus teachers themselves and their peer observers. The observations were documented in an observation form, in a checklist and as replies to three open-ended questions. These documents were analyzed qualitatively and quantitatively, through the categorizations developed by the researcher, in order to examine whether the types of information provided by peer and self observation had similarities and differences. In addition to this, to study to what extent peer and self observation contribute to reflective thinking, the observers' responsive writings to a question were analyzed with the use of a framework for levels of reflective thinking devised by another researcher.

This chapter includes the discussion of the analyzed data, pedagogical implications, limitations of the study and suggestions for further research.

General Results and Discussion

In this section, the general results of the study will be presented and discussed according to the research questions.

What are the similarities and differences between the types of information provided by peer and self observation?

In order to answer this question, the observation forms, checklists, and open-ended questions were considered all together, from the perspective of what kinds of information they provided. Four kinds of information emerged from these instruments: documentation and interpretation of teacher actions, evaluation of what was observed, suggestions and ideas given, and specific information (via the checklist) about what the focus of the observation was. These four categories of information provided a clearer focus on the differences between self and peer observation, as well as a successful organizing framework.

Documentation/interpretation of specific teacher actions

The information about the documentation of specific teacher actions (STAs) was extracted from the observation forms and the open-ended questions. The results suggest that both the observation instrument and the person who observes have an indispensable role in the kind of information provided by peer and self observation. In the observation forms, the FTs documented the most STAs. However, in the open-ended questions, no definite pattern was found between the FTs and the POs. This result may suggest that self-observers saw the general observation perspective prompted by the observation form as an opportunity to describe their actions. However, POs might not have bothered describing actions in an observation form as their main concern might have been the behaviors that needed to be evaluated. Hence, they might have thought that only in this way would they be beneficial to the observee. The open-ended questions, on the other hand, dealt with the focus of the

observation, interaction, and encouraged the observers to elaborate on a certain aspect of the lesson. The inconsistency in the documentation of STAs (two peer observers and a FT documented more STAs) here probably means that the open-ended nature of the questions left it up to the observer, whether peer or self, as to *how* they wanted to elaborate on the particular aspect of the lesson.

In the observation forms of both the FTs and the POs, the reported actions outnumbered the interpreted actions. However, in the open-ended questions, there was no such definite pattern between the POs and FTs. Some POs and FTs had more interpreted actions, and some POs and FTs had more reported actions. Interestingly, there was consistency within the groups. In the first group, the reported actions of all observers were more than the interpreted actions, and in the second group, the interpreted actions were more than the reported actions.

The result of the analysis as to whether STAs were interpreted or simply reported reveals that not only the kind of instrument, but also the type of lesson may have had an effect on the amount of interpretation the observers gave about the observation. In the observation forms, the result, that both the FTs and the POs preferred to report more than interpret, may suggest that, when the observers were asked to comment on general issues, regardless of what kind of observation they were involved in, they preferred to report rather than interpret. Hence, it may be the peculiarity of the observation form to commit observers to report actions. However, in the open-ended questions, the picture differs. The consistency within each group may suggest that, rather than the instrument used, the type of the lesson might have had an effect on the observers' tendency to report or interpret actions. It may result from the fact that all the observers in the first group had more reported actions because the

interaction they observed in the FT1's lesson did not require much interpretation. In contrast, in the second group, the interaction observed in the FT2's lesson might have been worth making more interpretations about.

It seems that the observation forms, which directed the observers toward general issues, may have encouraged observers to document reported actions rather than interpreted actions. Open-ended questions, on the other hand, seemed not to be influential in directing the observers to a certain kind of documentation. It seems that they only provided the observers with the focus of a problem, and observers, regardless of which type of observation they were involved in, either reported or interpreted actions according to the nature of the problem emerging in the lesson.

Evaluation of what was observed

The result of the analysis of evaluative behavior by the observers implies that both the type of the observation instrument and the characteristics of the observer could have an effect on the amount and the type of the evaluation made during the observation.

In the observation forms, there was no pattern between the FTs and the POs in terms of the number of evaluative words; FTs and POs varied in their use of evaluative words. It was also revealed that the POs used more positive words in the observation forms and open-ended questions than the FTs did. This revelation reflects the literature. Blackmore (2005) states that observers, trying not to be perceived as harsh critics, are reluctant to provide complete and very accurate feedback for the observee, and they hide their negative comments but share only positive comments. In addition, in both observation forms and the open-ended questions, the FTs generally

used more negative words than the POs. This seems to suggest that, from an evaluative point of view, the FTs were reluctant to appear to praise themselves. Alternatively, they may have wanted to show that they could diagnose their weaknesses by themselves without the need of any peer review.

Another result is that, in both groups, in both observation forms and the open-ended questions, there was no pattern between the POs and the FTs in terms of what was positively or negatively evaluated. Each observer in each group, in each form of observation, commented on the sections and the questions from his/her own perspective, choosing different aspects of the lesson to positively or negatively evaluate. It is interesting to note that, in their observation forms, both FTs commented positively about their own efforts in creating interaction, which was the focus of the lesson. On the other hand, in the open-ended questions, with the exception of one PO, all of the observers criticized the interactional aspect of the lesson. This may suggest that, as the open-ended questions were particularly related to interaction, the problematic aspect of the lesson, all the observers concentrated more on the interaction, and they may have put great effort into finding something to criticize. The change in the interpretation of the FTs seems to have been caused by the nature of the instrument used. It may be that the FTs had naturally decided to prepare an interactive lesson before the observation, as they knew that interaction would be focused on by all the observers. Therefore, when they were filling in the observation forms, they may have thought that they had achieved the interactive lesson which they had prepared for. However, when the observers were asked to discuss the interaction a second time, in detail, through open-ended questions, both the FTs and the POs who had praised the interaction in the observation form may have become aware that there

was a discrepancy between their first impression and the real situation. This may suggest that open-ended questions, a technique which makes the observers revise or deepen their thinking over the focus of the lesson, may provide different results for both POs and FTs, with their power to encourage more critical and broader thinking. It seems that using the observation form for the focus of the lesson may be misleading for both the POs and the FTs. In the literature, Siddiqui et al. (2007) point out the importance of instrument selection. They say that “if selecting instruments for an observation session, the emphasis should be on selecting the ones that match your session format” (p. 298). Another reason for the change in the observers’ opinions upon interaction might be the effect of the checklist which was completed by the observers right after the observation forms and before the open-ended questions. The checklist may have made them think more analytically about the issue as it has a directive nature which is also stated in the literature by Richards & Farrell (2005). They claim that checklists, being the only structured way of documentation, provide the observer with a systematic, directed way of observation. A checklist, beforehand, informs the observer about what to observe.

Suggestions or ideas given

In the comparison of the number of words devoted to suggestions and ideas in the observation forms and the open-ended questions, there was no pattern found between the FTs and the POs, for either instrument. The only difference occurred between the instruments used; in the observation forms, all the observers made more suggestions than they did in the open-ended questions. This is quite possibly because the observation form had a section for suggestions and ideas regarding all the aspects

of the lesson being observed, which may have reminded all the observers about the potential suggestions and ideas that could be given. Hence, they put effort into making suggestions or providing new ideas. This may suggest that the types of information the FTs and the POs provide can be standardized with the instrument used, and both types of observers can be directed to the kind of observation expected from them. Martin and Mayerson (1992) state that each observation instrument is good at providing particular information about one specific area. Furthermore, Richards and Farrell (2005) in their book *Professional Development for Language Teachers* explain which observation procedure is particularly useful for collecting what kind of information and how the observation procedures can be structured according to teachers' needs and interests.

There was no observable pattern between the POs and the FTs in terms of common suggestions or ideas. Each observer made different suggestions on different aspects of the teaching he/she observed. There were some minor suggestions common to both POs in one group, and one FT and one PO in the other, in the observation forms. This lack of pattern seems to suggest that the suggestions and ideas are dependent on the personal characteristics of the observers. Thus, the overall results for suggestions and ideas seem to echo the previous findings in this study. It seems that the information provided may be affected by the type of the lesson, the type of the observation technique or by the characteristics of the observer.

Specific information (via checklist) about the focus of the observation

The results of the analysis of the checklist suggest that, when all pairs are taken into consideration, the POs agreed with each other more often than any FT-PO pair. This result may tentatively suggest that FTs cannot be as objective about themselves as POs can be about them, and that the POs could be more reliable when compared to the FTs. One more interesting result was that there were contradictory responses on nearly half of the interaction promoting behaviors, which was most probably because these behaviors consisted of expressions that could be interpreted differently by both POs and FTs. This possibility may suggest that a checklist that is open to interpretation might be useful as a “growth” and “learning” tool since it encourages teachers to discuss their impressions of how they interpreted the words. Another interesting result was that the same three interaction promoting behaviors received contradictory responses in both groups. This result again implies that checklist, consisting of behaviors open to interpretation, trigger interaction on the observation and contribute to teachers’ growth in teaching.

One exceptional result was that one of the POs in the second group had quite fixed responses; that is nearly all of his responses indicated that he observed the present behavior. He answered AVW for 13 of the 15 responses. This may be an indication that, having observed his observee before many times for other problematic reasons, this PO might either have become reluctant to observe or prejudged about his observee and lost the ability to discover new or different things during the observation.

Differences in word counts

The word counts in observation forms and open-ended questions reveal that the observation instruments, with different focuses, appear to affect the number of words written by FTs or POs.

In the observation forms, the FTs had the highest number of words, while in the open-ended questions, the highest number of words belonged to the POs. The consistency within the instruments may suggest that rather than the type of observation, the instrument used might have had an impact on the observers' word counts. Self-observers, seeing the general observation perspective prompted by the observation form as an opportunity to describe their actions, documented more specific teacher actions and this may account for the higher word count. It is possible the POs believed that being more critical would be more beneficial to their observee. The POs may have felt encouraged by the open-ended nature of the questions, and thought of the questions as the right place to become more critical. Therefore, they produced more evaluative words and they used more words while doing it. The difference in word counts between the observers might have also been affected by their competence in English. The observers with stronger ability to express themselves in English might have used more words and those who felt they were not very competent might have preferred to write less.

In terms of the similarities and differences between the information provided by self and peer observation, as regards the first type of information, documentation/interpretation, in general, the self observers documented more actions, but both the self and the peer observers documented more reported actions than interpreted actions. In the second type of information, the evaluation of what was observed,

generally, peer observers used more evaluative words and in their evaluative words, they used more positive words. In contrast to peer observers, self observers used more negative words in their evaluative words. In the third type of information, suggestions and ideas given, there was no observable pattern seen for either peer or self observers. In the fourth type of information, accuracy as to the focus of the lesson, POs gave more accurate responses when compared to FTs. In the fifth type of information, word counts, both POs and FTs had high word counts, but in different instruments.

One interesting result about peer observer reliability is that the POs usually agreed with each other when using the checklist, but they did not praise or criticize the same things, they did not offer suggestions about the same things, and they did not document similar numbers of specific teacher actions or interpreted or reported actions. Generally, they seem to pay attention to different things, and respond to different instruments in different ways. This seems to suggest that an observer may be unique in the quantity and type of the information he provides regardless of what kind of observation he is involved in or what type of an observation tool he uses.

To what extent do peer and self observation contribute to reflective thinking? Are there any differences in their contribution to reflective thinking?

In order to answer this question, the reflective writings of both POs and FTs were analyzed according to the topics reflected on, the amount of reflection and the levels of reflection. The amount and levels of reflection were identified with the use of a framework for levels of reflective thinking developed by another researcher (Hasanbaşoğlu, 2007).

The differences in the number of topics and the amount of reflection provided through the reflective writings of the observers seem to indicate that it was harder for the POs to write very much in reflection. This may be because the POs perceived themselves as less important members of the observation. They may have tried to provide more information for the observees rather than try to benefit from the observation by reflecting on themselves. Many studies (Martin & Mayerson, 1992; Smith, 1991; Yip, 2006) warn the practitioners about this possibility, pointing out that both the observee and the observer are expected to benefit from peer observation.

The FTs had the highest number of topics addressed in the reflective writings and the greatest amount of reflection. The reason might be that, as the FTs were provided with the opportunity to reflect after watching their own recorded lesson, their memories were vivid and hence productive, but the POs had to reflect perhaps by making a comparison between the lesson they had observed and their own lesson they had in their mind. The POs apparently were required to reflect without refreshing their memory, instead just retrieving as much as they could, and this might have made it difficult for the POs to produce more topics to comment on. It is a strong possibility that, if the POs had also been provided with their own recorded lessons, they could have refreshed their memories and they could have compared the two lessons with more topics and more reflection. Another possibility is that, as the FTs were aware of their position in the observation, for they were the ones whose lessons were evaluated, they forced themselves to reflect more than the POs did. Possibly, the POs would pay more attention and exert more effort to reflect more if their recorded lessons had also been a matter of concern. One other possibility is that, as the FTs chose their own peer observers on whom they counted, they were more comfortable and more desirous of

being reflective. This finding is also agreed on in the literature, as Göde (1999) states that inappropriate conditions and unfriendly observers may hinder teachers' reflectivity in their observations.

Unlike the pattern observed between the FTs and the POs in terms of the number of topics addressed in the reflective writings and the amount of reflection, no such pattern was seen between the FTs and the POs in terms of level of reflective thinking. Two POs reached the fourth level, planning, but only one FT reached the third level, bridging; one PO and one FT reflected at three levels. This lack of an observable pattern seems to suggest that the level of reflective thinking is affected more by who the observer is rather than the type of observation the observer is involved in. In addition, one PO with less experience of teaching had a higher level of reflective thinking than other observers with more experience in teaching. The same result was also reflected in another study by Hasanbaşıoğlu (2007), who points out that. "a teacher's years of experience do not necessarily lead to higher levels of reflective thinking" (p. 101).

The reflective writing of one PO from the second group was not included in the analysis, as this observer did not reflect on his own teaching but preferred to solely comment on the teacher he observed. It would not be right to accept this observer as an unreflective teacher, as Zeichner (2006) points out that "there is no such thing as an unreflective teacher" (p. 207). This teacher's lack of reflection may be due to a misunderstanding about the nature of the task and/or the nature of peer observation. He may have had a problem relating the idea of peer observation to possibly improving his/her own teaching. He/she seemed to think that the sole purpose was to comment on the observed teacher. This may suggest that peer

observation might not always lead to reflective thinking about one's own teaching as self-observation would do. This possibility contradicts what is stated in the literature, that observing others' teaching promotes reflective thinking (Askew, 2004). It seems vital that in order for peer observers to become reflective thinkers, they should be introduced to peer observation as a reflective model in which not only the observee, but also the observer is valued.

The language of the task was English. Hence, the observers' reflective thinking might have been affected by their level of English, as some might have found it hard to describe a situation and preferred to not address it, and some observers, thanks to their competence in English, might have been able to express their reflective thoughts better than the others. This may indicate that in such situations in which the language ability might have an effect on the task, the teachers should be permitted to use their mother tongue to be more productive and informative. Furthermore, the POs' reflective writings might have also been affected by the wording of the task, in that the wording may have confused, or inhibited the reflectivity of the peer observers. In addition, the difference between the tasks might have caused the POs and the FTs to reflect differently. These possibilities may suggest that it is necessary to design the same tasks to compare the reflective thinking of peer and self observers.

These findings suggest that observers involved in self observation are more aware of their reflective actions, as they observe their own recorded lessons. In contrast, POs may not be as conscious of reflective actions as FTs, since peer observers are asked to think about a lesson that does not belong to them, but instead, that is related to the practice of someone else. Hence, the nature of peer observation may keep its observers from seeing a very intimate connection between the observed

lesson and reflections on their own teaching. On the other hand, it seems that, in terms of level of reflective thinking, it is the observer, rather than the kind of observation, that determines how deeply the observer is able to reflect.

Limitations

In this case study, three observation instruments were used to examine the similar and different types of information emerging from peer and self observation. Using more or different instruments might have affected the type and the quantity of the information. If some other instruments had been used, some other different and similar information related to self and peer information could have been discovered.

Thinking that the participants would get bored while waiting for one another, as there was no more than one DVD player at school, each participant was given a copy of the videotaped lesson to observe at his/her home. It would be better if each participant could be provided with a DVD player and they could watch and observe the lessons at the same time at school under the supervision of the researcher to ensure that they are not affected or distracted by anyone or anything.

In order to achieve reliability, the researcher asked another researcher to act as a blind rater to code the reflective writings. Having additional raters to also categorize the other documented information would have increased the reliability of the data analysis.

Another limitation was the nature of the camera. The existence of the camera might have still affected both the observed teachers and the students although the observed teachers claimed that they and their students were both aware of the reason for its presence and therefore were not affected by it. Additionally, as videos are

physically incapable of catching everything that happens in the classroom, having observers observing in the class rather than through the videos might have provided more efficient results related to observation.

In this study, it was seen that some observers wrote more than the others when using the instruments, and in the reflective writing task, some observers' level of reflective thinking was thought to be affected by their language ability. Therefore, if the observation instruments had been filled out in the observers' native language, the observers might have expressed their feelings and thoughts more easily and clearly.

Implications

The most generalizable result of this study is that there seem to be many variables affecting the kind of information provided by peer and self observation. In addition to the types of observation, the personalities of the observers, the type of the lesson and the observation instruments used might have an effect on the kind and amount of information provided by peer and self observation. Thus, it may not be possible to expect a certain kind of information depending on only one observation type; the potential effect of these variables should be kept in mind.

The different natures of observation forms and open-ended questions encouraged observers to document different kinds of information. This seems to indicate that each instrument may be particularly specialized in encouraging observers to elaborate on a certain aspect of a lesson. Martin and Mayerson (1992) emphasize this same point, saying that each observation instrument is useful for providing particular information about one specific area. Furthermore, Richards and Farrell (2005) explain which observation instrument is particularly useful for collecting what

kind of information and how the observation instruments can be structured according to teachers' needs and interests.

As the kind of information provided by peer observation is somewhat different from the information self observation provides, and as peer and self observers have different strengths and weaknesses, it may be possible to say that one type of observer may miss what the other discovers. Therefore, the best solution for both sides seems to be to cooperate and share their findings to gain broader information about the observed lesson. For example, focus teacher (FTs) can be supported with the comments and ideas of the peer observers after each observer conducts an observation, since post-cooperation seems to be the best way for peer observers to transfer their objective and broader views on the observation to the self observers.

As the observation form had a section for suggestions and ideas, more suggestions and ideas were documented in this instrument. This indicates that it would be better if an instrument that explicitly shows what the major concern of the observation is chosen. It might also be a better idea to choose the instrument according to the purpose of the observation (Siddiqui, Jonas-Dwyer & Carr 2007). The opinions of some observers on the focus of the lesson, interaction, differed in the observation forms and in the open-ended questions. In the open-ended questions, they changed their ideas. This also supports what was mentioned above, that selecting the instrument that is most convenient for the purpose of the observation is important to avoid wrong or missing information about the observed lesson.

One observer had quite fixed responses in the checklist. One possible reason for that was thought to be his being a standard observer of the observee. This result implies that observers, after some frequent observation of an observee, may become

blind and lose their sight to capture different or new interpretations, behaviors or actions and may lack the ability to produce new and different ideas about what he observes. Therefore, it would be beneficial for the observee to be observed by different observers after some time. New cooperation for observation seems to be more fruitful for the observee.

One observer appeared to have a problem relating the idea of peer observation to possibly improving his/her own teaching. This result suggests that peer observers should be trained with the reflective model of observation, in which both the observee and the observer mutually benefit from the lesson observed. Many studies (Göde, 1999; Farrell, 2001) warn the practitioners about this possibility, pointing out that both the observee and the observer should mutually benefit from peer observation and think of it as a tool for the reflective thinking of both.

It is also advisable that observers are trained to gain higher reflective thinking abilities in their intuitions to become better reflective practitioners. Teachers can first be introduced the framework of levels of reflective thinking and can be trained to use this framework to assess and enhance their reflective thinking in the teacher observations (Hasanbaşoğlu, 2007).

Suggestions for Further Study

Considering the findings and the limitations of this study, it is possible to make suggestions for further research. One possible option would be to add a longitudinal perspective, by training both self and peer observers for a term and comparing the results emerging before and after the training in terms of the

similarities and differences between the types of information provided by both of these observers.

It is also possible to conduct the same study by having peer observers and the self observer switch their roles to find out the similarities and the differences between the types of information provided by peer and self observation. Another possible further research topic would be to expose some teachers to peer and self observation and then compare their perceptions of the observation methods.

One more possible study that could be conducted is related to reflective thinking. Comparing the reflective thinking levels of both peer and self observers before and after being trained about being reflective thinkers would help to see how training affects the reflective thinking of peer and self observers.

In addition to these, as a further study, the effect of culture on the perceptions of teachers of peer observation or self observation can be investigated. This may provide information about whether teachers from different cultures perceive observation types differently. Additionally, it would be interesting to study whether the language they use affects how they record what they observe and their level of reflective thinking.

Last, some other tools of observation can be compared to see the similarities and the differences or the amount of efficiency or effectiveness of these tools. For this, peer and learner observation or self and learner observation can be compared.

Conclusion

This study investigated the similarities and differences between the types of information provided by peer and self observation and the extent to which peer and self observation contribute to reflective thinking, including whether there are any differences in their contribution to reflective thinking. The results showed that there are similarities and differences in terms of documentation and interpretation of teacher actions, evaluation of what is observed, suggestions and ideas given, and specific information (via the checklist) about what is the focus of the observation. The results also showed that observers involved in self observation are generally thinking more reflectively.

No matter which observation tool is used, both peer and self observation are invaluable tools to enrich reflection in teaching. As Underhill (1992) suggests, “teacher development is no different from personal development, and such can only be self-initiated, self-directed and self-evaluated. No one else can do it for us, though other people can be indispensable in helping us to do it” (p. 79). They both provide useful information for the teachers, but teachers should keep in mind that the amount and the type of information they provide may be affected by variables such as the personal characteristics of the observer, the observation instruments and even the type of the lesson observed.

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APPENDIX A - OBSERVATION FORM

TEACHER: _____ OBSERVER: _____
 CLASS/LEVEL : _____ DATE: _____ TIME: _____
 NUMBER OF STUDENTS IN CLASS: _____

FOCUS OF THE LESSON: INTERACTION

CATEGORIES	POSITIVE ASPECT	SUGGESTIONS&IDEAS
PACE OF THE LESSON		
TEACHER PRESENTATION		
CLASS MANAGEMENT		
TEACHING AIDS		
STUDENT PRODUCTION		
MAIN ISSUE TO BE OBSERVED: INTERACTION		

Overall impression:

APPENDIX B: OPEN-ENDED QUESTIONS AND CHECKLIST ABOUT
INTERACTION

- 1- Describe the instructor's effort in creating interaction.
- 2- How much interaction occurred during teaching?
- 3- Describe the form and extent of student interaction?

INTERACTION	Not observed	More emphasis needed	Accomplished very well
Encouraged student questions			
Encouraged student discussion			
Maintained student attention			
Asked questions to monitor students' progress			
Gave satisfactory answers to student questions			
Responded to nonverbal cues of confusion, boredom, & curiosity			
Gave students enough time to respond to questions.			
Encouraged students to answer difficult questions			
Encouraged students to respond to other's questions			
Allowed relevant student discussion to proceed uninterrupted			
Presented challenging questions to stimulate discussion.			
Respected diverse points of views.			
Asked probing questions when student answer was incomplete			
Restated questions and answers when necessary			
Suggested questions of limited interest to be handled outside of class			

APPENDIX C: REFLECTIVE WRITING QUESTIONS

Reflective Writing Question for the Focus Teacher

What did you learn that was useful from observing your own lesson?

Reflective Writing Question for the Peer Observer

What could you say about the lesson you observed when you relate it to your own usual teaching practices?

APPENDIX D: FRAMEWORK FOR LEVELS OF REFLECTIVE THINKING

1. Portrayal of the lesson

Depicting the lesson and emotions without analysis

Giving information about self (teacher)

Giving information about learners

2. Understanding

Identifying strengths and weaknesses, and explaining reasons

Giving the rationale for activities and materials used

3. Bridging

Making links between past and present

- Focusing on similarities or differences between this lesson and previous lessons with respect to:
 - (a) methodology (approach, methods, techniques, activities)
 - (b) student responses
- Explaining how the previous feedback helped the teacher

4. Planning

Referring to what really did not go well in the lesson

- Explaining what should have happened
- Planning further action

Referring to what really went well in the lesson

- Coming up with actions for future lessons with a similar focus

APPENDIX E: COMPLETE CODED REFLECTIVE WRITINGS FOR A FT AND

A PO

FT

It was the first time in my teaching that I observed my own lesson (1). I was a little bit frightened at the beginning of the lesson because of my attitude to camera (-). I don't like cameras, but as the lesson progressed, I felt more relaxed and behaved as if there wasn't a camera in the lesson (-).

I must admit that I've never thought that it would be such a useful thing (1). There are some points I want to mention.

Teacher talk is more than it should be (1). I felt as if I was competing with the Ss to answer the questions (1). I sometimes did not wait the students to finish their sentences. I just finished it for them (1). I was impatient (1).

I always thought that I was speaking very fast so Ss weren't able to understand me (1). However, from the observation, I was slow and the Ss were able to catch up with me (1).

The classroom atmosphere is motivating (1). I encouraged the students to join the lesson (1). They felt calm (1). Although Ss made mistakes, I didn't correct them. While they were talking in order not to distract and demotivate them (2).

While student were talking in order to confirm them I nodded my head. I believe that Ss are encouraged with this gesture (2).

PO

All the things that were done or performed in class by the teacher were similar to my experiences (1).

Apart from these, if I am to talk what is different from my classes was lack of enthusiasm. Very often I try to make jokes or tell something funny to get students' attention (4).

One other point, in my opinion, it is really motivating to talk in mother tongue when you first enter the classroom as a teacher . Because students think that it is more natural to greet by using mother tongue (2). It should be followed by an effective transition method for the beginning of the lesson (2).