ENAD ONLINE
EĞİTİMDE NİTEL ARAŞTIRMALAR DERGİSİ
Journal of Qualitative Research in Education
Cilt 4 / Sayı 2, 2016
Eğitimde Nitel Araştırmalar Dergisi - ENAD
Journal of Qualitative Research in Education - JOQRE

Maintaining the Efficacy of Warm-up Activities in EFL Classrooms: An Exploratory Action Research

İngiliz Dili Eğitimi Sınıflarında Ön-Hazırlık Faaliyetlerinin Yeterliliklerinin Sağlanması: Keşif ve Eylem Araştırması

Hasan Savaş[4]

To cite this article/Atıf için:
Savaş, H. (2016). Maintaining the efficacy of warm-up activities in efl classrooms: An exploratory action research. *Eğitimde Nitel Araştırmalar Dergisi- Journal of Qualitative Research in Education*, 4(2), 65-85. [Online]: http://www.enadonline.com
http://dx.doi.org/10.14689/issn.2148-2624.1.4c2s4m

Abstract. The current study is an Exploratory Action Research and was carried out for the purpose of enhancing the efficacy of warm-up activities used in EFL classrooms. The participants of the study were A2 (pre-intermediate) level English preparatory students at a foundation university in Turkey, and their ages ranged from 18 to 21. The data were gathered through two different questionnaires in the form of students' reports in order to provide answers to two research questions. First, an Exploratory Practice (EP) was carried out with the participation of 32 students from two skill-based listening and speaking classes by using the first questionnaire as the data collection tool. The aim was to understand what warm-up activities/practices meant to students and to investigate students' perceptions on the use of warm-up activities as tools to increase participation in classes. Following the findings of EP, an Action Research (AR) was carried out in one of the classes with the participation of 21 students for a four-weeks period. The AR study was the implementation of the emerged themes from the EP in the form of redesigned warm-up activities. Following the classroom implementations, the second data collection tool, which was the second questionnaire, was distributed to the students. The findings of the second questionnaire provided the reflections of the students on the AR study. The collected data were content analyzed and the teacher researcher provided reflections on the overall process.

Key Words: Exploratory practice, action research, EFL classrooms, teacher's self development

Özet. Mevcut çalışma bir keşif ve eylem araştırmasıdır ve İngiliz dili eğitimi sınıflarında uygulanan ön-hazırlık faaliyetlerinin yeterliliklerini geliştirmek amacı ile uygulanmıştır. Çalışmanın katılımcıları Türkiye'de bir vakıf üniversitesinde İngilizce hazırlık okulu'nda öğrenim gören A2 (alt orta seviye) kuru öğrencileridir. Katılımcıların yaşları 18 ile 21 arası değişmektedir. Çalışmada veri iki adet araştırma sorusuna cevap aramak için öğrenci raporları şeklinde iki farklı anket formu kullanılarak toplanmıştır. Ilk önce birinci data toplama aracı olarak kullanılan anket formu 32 öğrencinin katılımıyla keşif araştırması şeklinde uygulanmıştır. Amaç ön-hazırlık faaliyetlerinin öğrenciler için ne anlama geldiğini anlamak ve sınıf içi katılımı artırmak için kullanımlarında öğrencilerin algılarını araştırmaktır. Keşif araştırmasının bulguları üzerine 21 öğrencinin katılımı ile bir sınıfta eylem araştırması dört hafta boyunca uygulanmıştır. Eylem araştırması keşif araştırması sonucu ortaya çıkan temalar üzerine dizayn edilmiş ön-hazırlık faaliyetlerinin sınıf içinde uygulanması şeklinde yürütülmüştür. Sınıf içi uygulamaları sonrasında ikinci data toplama aracı olarak kullanılan anket formu öğrencilere dağıtılmıştır ve sonucunda öğrencilerin eylem araştırması sonrasındaki algıları araştırılmıştır. Toplanan tüm veriler içerik analiz edilmiştir ve öğretmen-araştırmacı tüm süreç ve çalışma çıktıları üzerine değerlendirmelerini yapmıştır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Keşif araştırması, eylem araştırması, İngiliz dili eğitimi, öğretmen gelişimi

[4] Hasan SAVAŞ, Istanbul Medipol University, Language School, Kavacık-Beykoz / Istanbul, e-mail: hsavas@medipol.edu.tr

Introduction

For almost all skill-based practices for EFL classes, warm-up activities are suggested (Almarza, 1996; Royka, 2002; Rinvolucri, 2003; Deng & Carless, 2009). Gathering the attention of students and getting them participate in such practices may turn into a challenge for English instructors. In my own context, I mostly attempt to use warm-up activities to engage my students into the topic and build schemas within my classroom. Although I implement a variety of warm-up activities to motivate my students to feel more ready for the activity, as Maznevski (1996) suggests teachers can have a clear opinion of the students' level of absorbing the concept that is taught, I have rarely seen so far that such practices work well. Whether I implement the warm-up practices in course books and/or use the ones I prepare by myself, my students are most of the time unwilling to participate in such classroom practices.

The unwillingness of my students to participate in warm-up activities puzzled me for a period of time, and I decided to investigate the reasons behind with the active participation of my students. With such a puzzle in my mind, my intention was first to discover the possible ways to enhance active student participation in warm-up activities and next to investigate what students' perceptions would be on the use of redesigned warm-up activities based on the discoveries. On this, Mustapha, Rahman and Yunus (2010) state, "by striving to provide a more supportive, non-threatening and open learning environment, educators would make students feel comfortable in letting their voices be heard" (p. 1083). For Belchamber (2007), students may need to be noticed; their interests and ambitions are key points (p. 60). By keeping those in mind, my research questions are:

1. *What are EFL students' perceptions on the use of warm-up activities to increase participation?*
2. *How does implementation of redesigned warm-up activities make a change in EFL students' attitudes?*

Literature Review

In this particular study my aim is first to start with an exploratory practice together with my students and turn the whole understandings into an action research. For this, it could be reasonable to mention teacher practitioner types and provide some background to the study. Accordingly, the importance of warm-up activities in EFL classrooms needs to be considered.

In an experimental study conducted by Estalkhbijari and Khodareza (2012) at a university in Iran, 60 EFL students were grouped as an experimental and a control group in order to investigate the effects of warm up tasks as classroom activities on foreign language written production. The experimental group received treatments on warm-up tasks, and the control group received placebo. Two paragraphs of 150 words writing tasks were used as pre- and post-test. Three experienced teachers graded the student papers. The results of the study provided that the experimental group showed better performances in writing. The authors drew attention to the role of warm up tasks as facilitators for student involvement in the class work in the forms of sharing answers, trying to participate, paying attention, giving the answers, encouraging to take part in the lesson, participating as volunteers, working on the exercises, drawing, and writing the exercises (p. 197).

Hansen and Liu (2005) point to the significance of warm-up activities in another study, which aims to present guiding principles that teachers can utilize in their own planning and student training for effective peer response. The authors state that in order to create an environment wherein students feel

more comfortable to engage in negotiation of meaning and provide each other with linguistic content, warm-up activities play supportive roles (p. 33).

On the other hand, in recent years, research area on and significance of professional development in language teaching platforms have dramatically increased. Small-scaled classroom practices and research related to teacher education/development have been considered as valuable educational progresses. Such studies play significant and additional developmental roles for teachers' professional development. Savaşkan (2013) puts emphasis on professional development of teachers and the benefits of research development conducted by teachers as part of their professional development in their own settings (p. 52). In this perspective, the need for local understandings of education and the need for closing the gap between academic research and classroom practice gain importance. Whitehead (1990) points to the failure of educational research by university academics to provide a base for professional practice (p. 27). Practitioner research (PR) is among the alternatives to provide teachers a platform on which they can move forward, integrate classroom practices into scientific concepts, or improve themselves both individually and collaboratively.

Nakamura (2014) draws attention to the three concepts of Practitioner Research (PR) as Action Research (AR), Reflective Practice (RP), and Exploratory Practice (EP). The author mentions these are all natural and logical components of continuous professional development and are methods that teachers observe, analyze, and improve their teaching in local contextual features (p. 105). Teachers as practitioners enhance improvement and context-specific environments in classroom with the help of research. Not just teachers, but also students get benefit of such a mutual development. The focus on quality of life in classroom, involving everybody as practitioners, and working cooperatively for mutual development are emphasized (Wu, 2006; Hanks, 2015). Collaboration between students and teachers is similarly voiced as unavoidable and inseparable from each other (Raimann & Mongomery, 2007; Dar & Gieve, 2013).

Smith (2015) takes practitioner research to another point and provides a well-directed description "Exploratory Action Research", which is directly related to this particular study. He sees exploratory action research as an eclectic combination of Exploratory Practice (EP) and Action research (AR), and describes it simply as a logical description (for teachers and mentors) of a form of practice (p. 42). He states:

> Exploratory AR can be characterized as a gradualist approach, developed to be useful for induction into teacher-research in difficult circumstances, whereby teachers are encouraged first of all to engage in research-based *exploration* of issues arising in their classrooms via means which do not interfere with their everyday teaching, rather than immediately plunging into action and attempted measurement of change. Only after a first exploratory research phase has been completed are teachers guided to consider trying to resolve emerging issues by implementing and evaluating new actions, which themselves are grounded in and justified by findings from the first, exploratory phase (p. 39).

Exploratory Practice (EP) emerged from two concerns "(a) the damaging split between researchers and teachers, and (b) the high risk of burnout associated with current proposals for teacher-based classroom research" (Allwright, 2005, p. 27). From these two concerns came what we see as an ethically motivated approach to create learning opportunities in the classroom for developing local understandings. Wu (2006) points to the basic understandings of EP as "quality of life, incommunicable understandings, and puzzlement" (p. 1). EP is the understanding of life in classroom,

it is questioning 'what is inherently so?' (Wu, 2006; Hanks, 2015). EP gives learners opportunity to rethink their goals, share their reflections with others in groups, use their own strengths, and explore their own ways of learning (Chu, 2013, p. 5). Allwright (2005) addresses EP as teachers and learners work together at the level of managing learning opportunities, and try to use them productively by working to deepen their understandings of life in the language classroom (p. 24). For Chuk (2003), EP brings together the research and pedagogy, relies on existing pedagogical practice as a research tool, and uses teacher and learner puzzles about classroom events. It seeks an understanding about what happens in classrooms (p. 57).

An EP study conducted by a group of English instructors at University of Wisconsin-Madison explores the ESL writing students' views on feedback (Best, Jones-Katz, Smolarek, Stolzenburg, & Williamson, 2015). In this study teacher researchers had semi-structured focus group interviews with 20 students in five focus groups. Participants were not enrolled in any classes, and they volunteered to participate. Each interview was conducted by one of the researcher. The reason they used focus groups was to create a collective dynamic and to open doors to students to provide their opinions, insights and perceptions in terms of the meaning of feedback and the course they received. The session of each group was audio-recorded which was 30-40 minutes long, and the facilitator of each group transcribed the recordings. The transcripts were interpreted in three phases of coding. The first phase revealed initial reactions, in the second phase initial codes were categorized into 30 categories and in the third phase three major themes emerged. In addition to their findings, the teacher researchers suggested other teachers and administrators to create more space for students to voice their views and insights. They conclude by stating "We believe in the need for us as individual teachers as well as whole programs to simply listen more to students and then pedagogically respond to what we hear" (p. 18).

Another EP study conducted by Pillai (2013) explores why students have low interest in learning vocabulary and have lack of lexical control when it comes to use in academic and personal growth. The participants of the study were a group of 20 students of a postgraduate management program. With the aim of understanding students' perceptions and needs on vocabulary learning, a questionnaire was first delivered to the participants. Following that a test was administered to students, which included finding the word and matching it with the correct meaning. Having analyzed the findings, the teacher implemented over a 20 hours of action research-based instruction with aiming to integrate a selected set of vocabulary items which would be useful for the students' present and future needs. After the application of the study, the researcher also conducted informal interviews and used questionnaires to understand students' perceptions/opinions on the practice of using games for the teaching of vocabulary. A posttest was administered to see how the study was effective on students' vocabulary use and recognition. The results of the study provided improvement for students in terms of words taught, interest in going to class, and interest and involvement in class. The study also revealed improvement in involvement of tutor and using different methods/games (p. 92).

It is clear that EP provides invaluable opportunities for both teachers and students to work collaboratively, to develop better understandings of classroom practices/materials, to construct knowledge together, and helps both sides improve quality of life in classroom.

On Action Research (AR), Rainey (2000) discusses two types, first of which is for "teacher's professional self-development" and the other is for "collaborative action research" resulting in critical reflection and, in turn, to change not just in the immediate environment, the classroom in the case of education, but in the wider community (p. 67). AR helps mutual development in collaboration, teachers improve their teaching, make important changes in practice, places emphasis on 'insider'

experiences, creates dialogic mediation among each other under a social constructivist perspective, and construct knowledge as both personally and collectively (Burns, 2015). Teachers as they take active roles in research construct new knowledge together with their students and colleagues mutually (Dikilitaş, 2015, p. 48). Atay (2006) similarly states in her article, in which pre-service and in-service teachers collaboratively conducted action researches, both pre-service and in-service teachers benefited from collaboration: "All participants indicated that this program was different from others, because they felt they were "doing" something" (p. 9). Teachers apparently need to be in search for research and improvement. Getting help and providing help mutually undoubtedly improve teachers. However, as the aim of this study fits more in the first scope of AR, focus will be put on teacher's professional self-development while further reviewing literature in this particular study.

Ellis (2012) sees AR as 'a form of self-reflective enquiry undertaken by practitioners in their own contexts of action' (p. 27). It is "inquiring into one's own practice through a process of self- monitoring that generally includes entering a cycle of planning, acting, observing and reflecting on an issue or problem in order to improve practice" (Farrell, 2007, p. 94). Curry (2006) adds AR can include colleagues sharing a similar question for research, and making the findings public to others help teachers be aware of new knowledge (p. 1). AR practice topics may vary based on teachers' different needs, questions, and/or problems. According to Farrell (2007), areas for teachers to reflect on their own context may include but not be limited to the following topics; teaching the four skills, classroom dynamics, learning language, grouping arrangements, use of materials, grammar and vocabulary, assessment policies and techniques (p. 96).

In order to conduct an AR, researchers mostly mention similar shared steps and procedures; Burns (1999), for example, points to exploring an issue in teaching or learning, identifying areas of concern, observing how those areas play out in the setting of the study, discussing how the issue might be addressed, collecting data to determine the action to be taken (e.g., student questionnaires, observation reports, journal entries), and planning strategic actions based on the data to address the issue. Farrell (2015) discusses that AR generally comprises one's own practice through a process of self-monitoring, which includes a cycle of planning, acting, observing and reflecting on an issue or problem in order to improve practice (p. 94). According to Farrell (2015), the literature provides an overall understanding of AR for language teachers as the followings:

- It involves collecting information about classroom events (in the classroom), through observation or through collecting information in other ways, such as through interviews, questionnaires or recordings of lessons.
- It involves careful and systematic collecting of that information.
- The research involves some kind of followup action.
- This action involves some change in practice, and monitoring the effects of such change.
- The results are owned by teachers, rather than the research community.
- The results of the research can be reported at a staff meeting or through a written report.
- It seeks to build up a knowledge base about teaching based on practitioner's knowledge, rather than expand the knowledge base developed by academics and theoreticians outside of the school context (p. 96).

Among the goals of AR, the researcher also specifies the followings:

- To develop research skills useful for classroom inquiry.
- To bring about changes in classroom teaching and learning.
- To develop a deeper understanding of teaching and learning processes.
- To empower teachers by giving them the tools which they can use to further impact changes within the profession in which they work (p. 96).

In their study Haley, Midgely, Ortiz, Romano, Ashworth, and Seewald (2005) discuss the effectiveness of teacher action research (TAR) for classroom practice. The study, under the guidance of professor Haley, provides action research stories conducted by four language teachers. Having conducted the action researches the teacher researchers emphasized growth and development of themselves by means of TAR when compared to one-day staff development workshops. By answering their own puzzles in their minds with the help of TAR, the teacher researchers reported to have made benefit of personal growth as a better teacher. Haley states that all four teacher researchers actively engaged in classroom-based research, examined and questioned their own assumptions, were critical with regard to ways to do things differently in both teaching and assessment practices. Haley concludes "teachers acting as researchers can create thought-provoking environments that allow the teacher to become the learner by constructing an individualized informative study that often yields powerful results".

Another study by Yeşilbursa (2009) took place at a state university in Turkey. Three ELT teachers participated in the study as teacher researchers. Yeşilbursa, the researcher, provided the teachers the Language Teachers Beliefs System (LTBS) from Richards and Lockhart (1996) in order to learn what they believed about learning, the role of teachers, and the role of students. Based on findings of the questionnaire, each teacher held conferences with each other to discuss their problematic issues in their own teaching. Each teacher prepared an action research plan. They video-recorded their classes, held pre- and post-observation conferences with each other as a circle. Besides, they asked open-ended questions to students to understand how they thought about the practices, which were implemented. The researcher analyzed the post observation conference recordings and kept reflective journals to the overall aim of the AR process. As a conclusion, Yeşilbursa points to the individual tendency in teachers' beliefs, which were reflected in their own classroom practices. It was also made clear by the researcher that peer observations and being both an observee and an observer offered them alternative views on their problems, and helped them discover the solutions.

Conducting an AR in any type seems to be providing mutual development for both teachers and students. Benefits emerging from such studies undoubtedly play important roles in improving teachers' own capabilities and self-awareness in teaching. The outcomes additionally have positive influences on students and their learning.

Methodology

Participants

As the first step in order to explore the puzzle, which is to discover the possible ways to enhance active student participation in warm-up activities, 32 A2 (pre-intermediate) level students from two skill-

based listening and speaking classes participated in the Exploratory Practice study. They were studying at English preparatory school at a foundation university in Turkey and were supposed to study either at School of Medicine or at School of Dentistry the year following their completion of English prep school. Their ages ranged from 18 to 21.

For the second step, which was the application of the outcomes of the Exploratory Practice (EP) as an Action Research (AR), 21 A2 (pre-intermediate) level students from one of the previously mentioned classes were the participants.

Data Collection Instruments

During the study, two different questionnaires in the type of students' reports were used as data collection instruments. The first questionnaire was used for the EP study and aimed to provide possible answers to the first research question. The purpose was to investigate students' perceptions on the use of warm-up activities as tools to increase participation in class.

The second questionnaire was used for the AR study and aimed to find answers to the second research question. The questionnaire investigated how students perceived the process and what changes occurred in their attitudes towards the use of redesigned warm-up activities in classes during AR study.

Data Collection Procedure

During the first step (EP), the students were handed in three formerly prepared questions in the first questionnaire, and they worked individually to react to the questions as a sample of students' reports. In pairs the students went through all three questions one by one in two-class-time period and tried to explore the puzzle together. Pairs discussed about their shared opinions. Each pair compared their notes with each other and prepared a short speech for the main themes emerged from their notes. Pairs gathered two by two and presented their themes on each question to each other. This continued as a circle of pair-exchange until the whole class examined all the conclusions. The following seven steps were followed during the EP study process:

Step 1 (26th of November, 2015): I introduced my puzzle to the class that I would like investigate possible ways to enhance participation in warm-up activities. I told my reasons/opinions why I would like to study on this specific issue together with them.

Step 2 (27th of November, 2015): The following day after the introduction, the EP study took place. In pairs my students first took individual notes on a paper answering the following questions in the first questionnaire:

- *What does warming-up mean to you?*
- *What specific warm-up activities/practices can work well in class?*
- *What specific warm-up activities/practices do not work in class?*

Step 3: Each pair compared their notes with each other and prepared a short speech for the main themes emerged from their notes.

Step 4: Pairs gathered two by two, and presented their themes on each question to each other. They went through the questions one by one.

Step 5: In a circle, a whole class discussion was made to come to possible conclusions. The ideas/opinions shared for each question were written on the board.

Step 6: The teacher collected and kept record of all written data for further use.

Step 7 (27th and 28th of November, 2015): The teacher content analyzed the data and specified the themes emerged from the EP study.

The following five steps illustrate the Action Research (AR) process. For four weeks from 02nd of December 2015 to 04th of January 2016, the AR study prepared by the teacher researcher was carried out in classes. Having eight hours of a skill-based listening and speaking class in a week, the themes emerged from the EP were integrated into classroom practices and used as redesigned warm-up activities with the participation of the students. Following the implementation of the AR, the teacher researcher collected students' reports through the second questionnaire with the aim of finding answers to the second research question.

Step 8 (29th and 30th of November, 2015): The teacher prepared an action plan based on the themes emerged.

Step 9 (02nd of December, 2015 - 04th of January, 2016): The themes were integrated into classroom practices and used as warm-up activities. This process was the implementation of the AR study for four weeks.

Step 10 (05th of January, 2016): In order to understand the students' attitudes towards the use of redesigned warm-up activities, the students individually provided their opinions over the implementation of the AR. The second questionnaire was delivered to students in the form of students' reports. The questionnaire included the following four questions:

- *What do you think changed in your mind about the warm-up activities that we used during classes?*
- *What were the beneficial sides and the advantages of the activities? Please provide details and examples.*
- *What were the useless points and the disadvantages of the activities? Please provide details and examples.*
- *Can you provide any other suggestions? If yes, what are they?*

Step 11 (08th of January, 2016 – 10th of January, 2016): The teacher content analyzed the students' reports in order to come up with the results of the study.

Step 12 (18th of January, 2016): The findings and the results of the study were shared with the students.

Data Analysis

Following the EP study, the teacher researcher monitored the process and collected all the students' reports in order to analyze the content, create the coding system, and specify themes emerged from the first questionnaire. Following the AR study, the teacher researcher collected all the students' reports

from the second questionnaire and analyzed the data by implementing the same analysis methods as in the EP study.

Findings

Findings of the EP study

Findings for Question 1 in the Questionnaire

Two themes emerged for the first question in the questionnaire; "*What does warming-up mean to you?"* The themes were "Definitions as motivation" and "Lack of necessity". Some quotes and the frequencies of the themes mentioned by the students are provided as the percentages. 19 out of 32 students answered this question.

Table 1.
Findings for Question 1 in the Questionnaire

What does warming-up mean to you?	*Percentages*	*Number of Responding Students*
Definitions as motivation	25 %	8
Lack of necessity	34 %	11

Eight students provided "definitions as motivation" and the percentage was 25 %. For these students, warm-up activities meant practices to serve a preparation for the unit beforehand. Warm-up activities meant to help teachers increase motivation of students:

> *I think warm-up is something that you do to prepare yourself for an activity.*
>
> *It is a kind of motivation for students.* (Student Comment)

The second theme was related to "Lack of necessity" of the warm-up activities. 11 students, which accounted for 34%, reported warm-up activities in the course book were not necessary and we did not need to implement such practices. They were easy and mostly time wasting:

> *They are not good because they show us the photo, and then show us the vocabulary. It is wasting our time and so easy.* (Student Comment)
>
> *It is simple and not necessary. For example, it is like "Look at the picture and which of the people are famous in your country?"* (Student Comment)

Findings for Questions 2 and 3 in the Questionnaire

This section provides findings for the second and the third questions, *"What specific warm-up activities/practices can work well in class?" and "What specific warm-up activities/practices do not work in class?"* These two questions were illustrated in the same themes as because they were related to each other and almost most of the students provided similar answers to these questions. The emerged themes and some quotes from the students' reports are provided with the percentages as the followings.

Table 2.
Findings for Questions 2 and 3 in the Questionnaire

What specific warm-up activities/practices can or do not work well in class?	*Percentages*	*Number of Responding Students*
Relevance to real life	31.25 %	10
Using pictures/visuals	25 %	8
Using videos	25 %	8
Recent social events	16 %	5
Vocabulary	13 %	4
Story telling and sharing memories	13 %	4

First theme was related to "Relevance to real life". 10 students out of 32 (31.25%) reported that the practices needed to be relevant to their lives. It was mentioned that they felt more comfortable and ready when the topics were more in relation with real life experiences:

> *Everyday parts are very important. We watch the video and catch useful samples from the conversations.* (Student Comment)

> *Pictures are not realistic. It looks like a book for children.* (Student Comment)

Using "Pictures/visuals" and "Videos" were two other themes emerged from the students' answers with 25% for each. Eight students suggested using more pictures that were related to the topics before we started the unit. The reason was, visuals might help them create ideas beforehand. Meaningful visual aids could give them chance to produce more vocabulary during discussions and learn new words from each other. Students suggested watching videos to generate interest for the topics. As because the videos of the course-book did not seem realistic and were most of the time similar to each other, my students pointed to the need for variety in videos. For them, classes could be more enjoyable and help them focus more on the topics in this way:

> *I think we should use visual activities because they are beneficial. I learn vocabulary from pictures.* (Student Comment)

> *Just pictures can work well because we see it for the first time and talk about it. We hear different ideas and learn different vocabulary from our friends.* (Student Comment)

> *We should watch more videos about the topic. We understand better in this way, and lesson becomes fun. It is practical.* (Student comment)

Another theme was integrating "recent social events" into our classes. Five students (16%) reported that we needed to make connections between the topic of the unit and social cases. In that way, according to my students, classes could become more active and interesting for them:

> *Using recent social news or events are more interesting.* (Student Comment)

> *We should use current articles about the topic.* (Student Comment)

The next theme was "Vocabulary" with 13%. Four students mentioned adding some extra vocabulary practices to warm-up activities. Rather than learning only the target vocabulary that were presented in the unit, these four students suggested adding more vocabulary practices to the topic while we were

practicing warm-up activities. During the EP study, they mentioned learning more vocabulary in general perspective could help them speak more comfortably:

> *There should be useful and unknown vocabulary parts, puzzles, or cartoons. We can talk about a famous person's quote.* (Student Comment)

> *Highlighted words are very attractive, so maybe before activities, we can talk about these words. We can have dialogues about them.* (Student Comment)

"Story telling and Sharing Memories" was the last theme emerged from the EP study. For four students (13%), creating fiction and/or nonfiction stories from the topics could work well. Sharing their memories and experiences from past could create curiosity for the topic beforehand:

> *I think asking students about memories is a good idea because they have to think about it. Also, they can find funny things; everyone can have an interesting story.* (Student Comment)

> *For example, the topic is life experiences. We can talk about our lives; it can be an event or a memory.* (Student Comment)

Implementation of the Emerged Themes as Redesigned Warm-up Activities

The application of the AR mostly took place by adhering to the themes emerged from the EP findings. Before listening and speaking activities in the course-book, the themes such as "Pictures/visuals" and "Videos" in the form of YouTube videos or Google images were used as redesigned warm-up activities. Similarly, story-telling practices, sharing memories from past, and/or associating topics with real life experiences, which were also the other emerged themes, were integrated into the redesigned warm-up activities. On the other hand, eleven students mentioned during the EP study that warm-up activities in the course book were easy and mostly time wasting. Therefore, I decided not to prepare extra warm-up activities for some unit topics. I just used the ones that the course-book provided basically as a short warming-up because such practices either fitted in our AR implementation purposes already or were clear enough for students to discuss on. My choices and planning were most of the time effective to decide whether to use or not to use redesigned warm-up activities for classes; the reason was that lesson planning needed to be prepared before the classes, and additionally I was already and previously informed of the students' expectations from the EP study findings.

The following sample practices are from the AR study that I implemented through the process:

On the 9th of December 2015, the topic was "animal conservation" in the book unit. The unit aimed to get students to watch and understand a video about a wildlife organization. Before we started the unit, I used Google images that were related to animal conservation and helped my students to be familiar with the term. In pairs, my students discussed the pictures about different types of animal conservations. They gave samples from their own lives to each other and shared their experiences. In this way, they had the chance to relate the topic to the real life. That activity was a sample of "Story Telling and Sharing Memories", "Relevance to Real life" and "Pictures/Visuals" themes emerged from the EP findings.

On the 15th of December 2015, the topic was "customs and traditions in Japan". The course-book unit aimed to provide listening, speaking and vocabulary practices to students. As a pre-listening warm-up activity, we first talked about our own country's and hometowns' customs and traditions in a whole class discussion. In pairs, my students shared customs, traditions, daily lives in their hometowns with

their partners. They used the dictionary applications in their smart phones to learn related vocabulary with their own customs and traditions. Some pairs shared their opinions with the rest of the class after they had discussed with their partners. Different experiences from a variety of students were revealed. The whole class mentioned customs and traditions from several locations/places such as Isparta, Balıkesir, Trabzon, Bulgaria, and Kazakhstan. It was a sample implication of "Relevance to real life" and "Vocabulary" themes.

On the 28th of December 2015, the topic was "phobias". It was supposed to be a speaking practice after having listened to a specific kind of phobia type in the class. The listening included comprehension questions and was a while-listening activity. It helped my students to get ready for the speaking activity. Before they began to speak in pairs, we used Google images and Wikipedia explanations to be familiar with some of the phobia types in the unit and commented on them as a whole class. Next step was using their own smart phones to find related vocabulary and images on the phobia type they chose and discuss it with their partners. Google images and Wikipedia helped them get prepared for the speaking task more effectively. It was a sample implementation of "Pictures/Visuals" and "Vocabulary" themes into warm-up activities.

On the 25th of December 2015, for example, we did not use any warm-up activity for the listening and speaking practices. The topic was "social-networking websites". As because the topic was so related to real life and all students were mostly familiar with the topic, we preferred not to focus on warming-up. Rather than that we listened to audio recordings in the book and held group and whole class discussions related to the topic. During those post-listening speaking practices, my students and I shared our experiences over the use of social-networking websites in our own lives. Another sample was on the 4th of January 2016. The topic was "volcanoes in eastern Russia", and the unit aimed to teach related vocabulary and to help students discuss on the topic. Similarly, I did not implement any redesigned warm-up activity for this topic for the reason that the course book provided realistic pictures and a related video on the topic. After one to two minutes long warming-up practice for the topic, we began to watch the video in the unit. Following that, my students held discussions in pairs as a post-listening activity. Such two cases were sample practices of "Lack of Necessity" theme emerged from the EP study.

Findings of the AR study

Having implemented the AR study for a four-weeks period in classes; the second questionnaire was distributed to the students in order to understand how they perceived the process. The following sections illustrate the themes emerged from the questionnaire and the quotes from the students. The questionnaire consisted of three questions. The aim was to find out overall reflections of the students over the classroom implementations and to see whether students' attitudes changed towards warm-up activities. The following three sections provide the findings for each question in the questionnaire. The frequencies of the themes, including the percentages of how many students mentioned them, are included.

Findings for Question 1 in the Questionnaire

Three themes emerged for the first question in the questionnaire "*What do you think changed in your mind about the warm-up activities that we used during classes?"* The themes were "Increase in creativity and interest", "Change in awareness", and "Attention".

Table 3.
Findings for Question 1 in the Questionnaire

What do you think changed in your mind about the warm-up activities that we used during classes?	*Percentages*	*Number of Responding Students*
Increase in creativity and interest	33 %	7
Change in awareness	24 %	5
Attention	19 %	4

First theme emerged from the question was "Increase in creativity and interest". Seven students (33%) stated the practices made them feel more comfortable during classes, created interesting classroom atmosphere, and helped them be more creative in classes. They had positive attitudes towards the AR implementations:

> *They made us more creative and force us to think in English.* (Student Comment)

> *In the past, I used to get nervous when I had to talk in front of the class. However, after we started to do warm-up activities I got used to talk and now I feel more comfortable when I'm answering teachers' questions.* (Student Comment)

The next theme was on the "Change in awareness" of the practices on the students. Five students (24%) found the practices practical and stated such practices would provide further positive benefits to their learning. Because the practices brought variety to the classes and were mostly designed based on the students' own needs, not just for this class but for future learning they thought they could also benefit from the practices:

> *First I was thinking that they were not beneficial, but as we went on I realized that I was developing.* (Student Comment)

> *For a while ago I thought that warming up activities were unnecessary, but now I consider that they help to understand the lesson more.* (Student Comment)

Another theme was related to "Attention" of the students. Four students (19%) reported that the practices were beneficial and helped them gather more attention before we started the class. The reason might be that during the study I planned my warm-up activities based on the EP findings and practiced them with the students accordingly. They were most of the time participative in the practices:

> *They helped me to pay my attention to the class more.* (Student Comment)

> *It is beneficial to get attention of the class.* (Student Comment)

Findings for Question 2 in the Questionnaire

The second question was *"What were the beneficial sides and the advantages of the activities? Please provide details and examples".* After content analysis of the questionnaire, four themes emerged for this question; "Relevance to real life", "Improvement in vocabulary", "Effectiveness of visuals", and "Bringing variety to classes". Almost most of the students reported the practices prepared them to the topic of the units. They felt more comfortable and were ready to listen and speak about the unit topics. The following comments are from two students:

In your class with the help of this kind of activities not only I really enjoyed but also I am able to understand most of things during the lecture. (Student Comment)

It helped us to be prepared for class. For example, we had some ideas about the unit that we were going to start. (Student Comment)

Table 4.
Findings for Question 2 in the Questionnaire

What were the beneficial sides and the advantages of the activities? Please provide details and examples	*Percentages*	*Number of Responding Students*
Improvement in vocabulary	48 %	10
Relevance to real life	38 %	8
Effectiveness of visuals	29 %	6
Bringing variety to classes	14 %	3

10 students (48%) mentioned the positive effects of the warm-up activities on their "Improvement in vocabulary". The students mostly thought they became familiar with the related vocabulary of the units and also learned additional words that were not among the target vocabulary. The warm-up activities provided extra vocabulary practice to my students and they also had opportunity to turn passive vocabulary into active:

We can learn more words except the Unlock's (the course-book) vocabulary part and when we use these words while speaking with our partner the new words will be permanent. (Student Comment)

It helps us to be familiar to the new topic's vocabulary. Also, you have an opinion before you read the text. It helps us to predict unknown verbs. (Student Comment)

"Relevance to real life" was the second theme that was mentioned most by the students. Eight students (38%) reported that the practices had positive effects on their language skills because those were the topics related to their own lives. They enjoyed connecting the topics with real life situations. Mentioning memories from their past and/or finding relations with their own settings facilitated the participation:

I noticed that while I was telling about a topic that I had lived sometime, I was a faster speaker. For example, we mentioned our flight experiences, it was good for me, because I had a lot of experiences and I told them quickly. (Student Comment)

Sometimes I don't have ideas about some topics but when it's related to our lives I have ideas to share and these activities help me to express myself easily. (Student Comment)

The theme "Effectiveness of visuals" such as Google images and YouTube videos seemed to have helped some students. Six students (29%) reported that they found them effective and they were good alternatives to the warm-up questions in the book's unit. Commenting on Google images that were related to the topic of the units seemed to guide them to get prepared. Visualization of the unit topics mostly generated interest in the classes. In addition, the students found watching YouTube videos practical. Such videos, according to the students, brought variety to classes and were practical in use:

Instead of trying to answer the questions like 'what do you think about the Chinese culture?' It is

quite better to look at the photos that are about Chinese culture and to comment about the photos. (Student Comment)

We learned parts of a car... You showed us parts of a car one by one on the pictures. It was more understandable. (Student Comment)

Showing photograph and watching video prevented boredom. It is good way to learn. If you came to the class and said, "Come on, do this, read this, listen!" It would be the worst thing that you could. (Student Comment)

The last theme emerged from this question was related to "Bringing variety to classes". Three students (14%) reported accordingly. As it is mentioned before, the AR study consisted of several pedagogical practices. For this reason, the students thought implementation of such a variety of activities in class brought variety to the classes. They had mostly positive attitudes towards the practices:

They are both about our lives and not just one type. We did not change the topic by doing the same things. It made us more willing and curious. (Student Comment)

It made lessons different from the others. (Student Comment)

Findings for Question 3 in the Questionnaire

This section provides the findings for the third question, "*What were the useless points and the disadvantages of the activities? Please provide details and examples"* Nine students stated two different disadvantages for the AR implementations. Two themes emerged as "Topics of the units" and "Time problem".

Table 5.
Findings for Question 3 in the Questionnaire

What were the useless points and the disadvantages of the activities? Please provide details and examples	*Percentages*	*Number of Responding Students*
Topics of the units	24 %	5
Time problem	19 %	4

The first disadvantage was related to "Topics of the units". Five students (24%) mentioned this theme and thought some topics were not interesting or not easy to discuss even in their native language. It was not because of the activity type, but some topics of the units themselves were not attractive for them. They would not like to listen to or speak about those topics.

Maybe for some people the title could be dull or something. (Student Comment)

Some subjects are difficult to speak even in Turkish. I think this is the only one disadvantage. (Student Comment)

The next theme as a disadvantage was "Time problem". According to four students (19%), the practices took more time than they needed to. They thought we had spent too much time on warming-up, and that prevented us from following the syllabus as scheduled.

The useless points and disadvantages of them are that they take some time and cause to be late and slow for schedule. (Student Comment)

Sometimes we spend a lot of time in one unit. (Student Comment)

On the other hand, almost all students reported they were satisfied with the practices. Many of them mentioned there were not particular disadvantages. They stated they did not meet any impractical points in the study.

I have not noticed any disadvantage with the practices. (Student Comment)

I think there is nothing useless with the activities we did. (Student Comment)

As I said before I don't think it has any disadvantages. (Student Comment)

Findings for Question 4 in the Questionnaire

Most of the students avoided suggesting further ideas for the last question in the questionnaire; "*Can you provide any other suggestions? If yes, what are they?"* 13 students (62%) reported they did not have any further suggestions. On the other hand, eight of the students (38%) added the practices were beneficial; however, they did not provide any reasons why.

Table 6.
Findings for Question 4 in the Questionnaire

Can you provide any other suggestions? If yes, what are they?	*Percentages*	*Number of Responding Students*
No Suggestions	62 %	13
Practices were beneficial	38 %	8

No suggestions come to my mind. I think the methods we are practicing in class are sufficient for now. (Student Comment)

I think it is very beneficial. I haven't got any suggestions. (Student Comment)

Reflection

With the help of such a study, my students and I experienced a change in learning and teaching. For my students' side, they were mostly positive with the whole process. They eagerly volunteered to help me conduct the research and actively participated in every step. After the EP study was completed, I changed my lesson planning and began to integrate the themes emerged from EP findings into my warm-up activities. I never encountered unwillingness from my students as we continued to have our regular classes and conduct the AR at the same time. That might be because the AR implementations all came from my students' opinions and suggestions. I planned the warm-up activities for the classes by keeping in mind the outcomes of the EP findings and tried to use them accordingly as much as possible. I designed the materials and the activity types by adhering to my students' responses in the first questionnaire. These all gave me an insightful understanding that my classes could turn into atmospheres where student-teacher collaboration ends up with more efficacies. On this point, Congmin (2013) suggests that communicative interactions between teachers and students need to be taken into

consideration (p. 26) and they are essential for teachers to work towards pedagogical achievements while contributing to students' language learning (Consolo, 2006, p. 51).

In classroom applications my students mostly tended to participate in practices during which visual materials were used and topics were related to real-life experiences. The study helped me understand that my students were pleasured to have taken a part in decision-making process, and following that their enthusiasm towards active participation in warm-up activities increased. It was a significant change for me to see my students participating in warm-up activities. The whole process facilitated mutual understanding, and my students positively welcomed the outcomes.

As can be inferred from the second questionnaire, the study helped my students feel more comfortable and creative with the help of redesigned warm-up activities. They showed more enthusiasm for warm-up activities and changed their attitudes towards such practices. One of the themes "Change in awareness" might also be a good sample for the positive effects of this study on my students, as they tended to believe warm-up activities could turn into educative pedagogical tools. In addition, as the warm-up activities were varied and different for almost each unit topic, my students benefited the diversity in the practices while improving their vocabulary in several different topics. These changes and developments were all consistent with the findings of the study.

In this study, on the other hand, creating a knowledge-shared classroom helped me as the teacher researcher become more socially constructed and attribute to a collaborative platform with my students. The process, in my opinion, drew special attention upon teacher identity as because it may be constructed and maintained through teacher-student relations. Such an experience provided me a supportive advantage while shaping my own perceptions towards teaching as an individual teacher. Wallace (1998) discusses the relation between AR and teacher development, and points to the effectiveness of AR as a professional development strategy for teachers in addition to practices such as membership of a professional association, informal discussions with colleagues, or attendance to conferences (pp. 4-6).

Such a study may be counted as one of the inquiry-based approaches to professional development. It aimed to create an environment in which dialogic mediation took place. Together with the active participation of my students, I formulated the everyday concepts by redesigning the lesson plans and the classroom materials with the help of classroom discussions. When given opportunities to discuss on and investigate their own learning, students welcome power and responsibility of being decision-makers of their own learning (Po-Ying, 2007, p. 240). In my opinion, these were all quality outcomes that meant opening doors to my students for declaring their thoughts in decision-making process. I as the teacher researcher provided guidance to my students during information-sharing process, opened them up opportunities to work collaboratively and share knowledge on the way they actually desired.

Implications of the study may reveal another advantage that I achieved a goal-directed action. Besides improving the quality of life in my classroom, which is an indication of EP, the study helped me and my students come up with mutually predefined classroom activities and materials. Rather than using only regular warm-up activities in the book, which are mostly similar to each other, a variety of warm-up activities were used in the classes. Hearing the students' voices and responding them back are both undoubtedly the quality outcomes for teachers' self-development. Applications of the findings of the EP study in my classes and besides considering them as innovative classroom activities/practices were reasonable. Exploratory AR gave my students and me opportunities to experience mutual understanding and to take specific aspects of collaboration into consideration in classroom.

Initial/pre-service education may not be enough to become effective teachers in dynamic educational developments. It is so clear that conducting Practitioner Research (PR) studies such as Action Research (AR), Teacher Research (TR), or Exploratory Practice (EP) and so forth are among the options to enhance teacher development because the nature of these mentioned practices are all contextual and specific to teachers' own teaching environments. Conducting such context-based studies, as it is in this particular study, help us as teachers improve our teaching, expand our theoretical knowledge, and see what really happens in our own classrooms. In a study conducted by Atay (2008) with eighteen English teachers as the researchers, EFL teachers' attitudes towards classroom research and its effects on teachers' instructional practices were investigated. Five themes were emphasized that emerged from the teacher researchers' journals. In the study, the author drew attention to the themes after analyzing and constructing categories. Themes such as "development of research skills", "increased awareness of the teaching/learning process", "renewed enthusiasm about teaching", "collaboration with colleagues", and "general problems with research" were all based on the teacher researchers' perceptions after attending the courses given by the author and conducting studies (p. 144). The first three themes of Atay's study in my opinion may fit in my case through this particular study, as I believe I became more aware of my own teaching, and I understood the importance of classroom-based research one more time.

Consequently, Anwaruddin and Pervin (2015) argue the ineffectiveness of research done in academic world. They discuss that teachers do not always have chance to get access to studies, find academic articles related to their own classroom environments, and they see academic articles too theoretical to comprehend (p. 22). Teachers sometimes tend to continue teaching with the knowledge that they were inherited from their educational background. Burns (2010) points to this by stating "many teachers have been put off research and the theories about teaching they were taught in teacher training courses, because they find out that when they get into the classroom the theory does not match the reality" (p. 6). The more teachers are engaged in research the more qualified they are in teaching. These may be the results of knowledge and consciousness they have gained through research engagement in field. Teachers undoubtedly become aware of the necessity and the benefits of professional development by conducting practitioner research types.

Limitations and Implications

This particular study used only student reports as the data collection tool during both EP and AR implementations. In order to provide more insight to the findings, semi-structured interviews with the students and/or focus group interviews could have been held with the participation of the students. In order to investigate this particular study topic with a different perspective, gathering data from EFL teachers could also contribute to gaining more comprehensible and in-depth knowledge.

The study, together with the EP and the AR implementations, took approximately one month in total. For this reason, it would be not wrong if we saw the study as a plot study because of the time constraint, limitation of data collection tools, and the number of participants, which were the members of relevant population. Application time period can be kept longer. Such a research can be turned into an experimental study. By constructing an experimental group and a control group, for instance, the causal effect of the study on different learning and teaching outcomes can be measured.

References

Allwright, D. (2005). From teaching points to learning opportunities and beyond. *Tesol Quarterly*, *39*(1), 9-31.

Almarza, G. G. (1996). Student foreign language teacher's knowledge growth. *Teacher learning in language teaching*, 50-78.

Anwaruddin, S. M., & Pervin, N. (2015). English-language teachers' engagement with research: findings from Bangladesh. *Professional Development in Education*, *41*(1), 21-39.

Atay, D. (2006). Teachers' professional development: Partnerships in research. *Tesl-Ej*, *10*(2), 1-15.

Atay, D. (2008). Teacher research for professional development. *ELT journal*, *62*(2), 139-147.

Belchamber, R. (2007). Overcoming Asian stereotypes: Opportunities for enhancing learner participation in Chinese ELT classes. *Reflections on English language teaching*, *6*(2), 59-63.

Best, K., Jones-Katz, L., Smolarek, B., Stolzenburg, M., & Williamson, D. (2015). Listening to Our Students: An Exploratory Practice Study of ESL Writing Students' Views of Feedback. *TESOL Journal*, *6*(2), 332-357.

Burns, A. (1999). *Collaborative action research for English language teachers*. Cambridge University Press.

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

Burns, A. (2015). Renewing classroom practices through collaborative action research. In K. Dikilitaş, R. Smith, & W. Trotman (Eds.), *Teacher-researchers in action*, (pp. 9-17). England: IATEFL.

Chu, P. Y. (2013). *How students seek for realisation through exploratory practice: a journey of teaching, learning and growing together* (Doctoral dissertation, University of Leicester).

Chuk, J. Y. P. (2003). Promoting learner autonomy in the EFL classroom: the Exploratory Practice way. In *Supporting independent learning in the 21st century. Proceedings of the inaugural conference of the Independent Learning Association, Melbourne*, 57-74.

Congmin, Z. H. A. O. (2013). Classroom Interaction and Second Language Acquisition: The More Interactions the Better?. *Studies in Literature and Language*, *7*(1), 22-26.

Consolo, D. A. (2006). Classroom oral interaction in foreign language lessons and implications for teacher development. *Linguagem & Ensino*, *9*(2), 33-55.

Curry, M. J. (2006). Action research for preparing reflective language teachers. *TESOL HEIS (Higher education interest section)*, *25*(1).

Dar, Y., & Gieve, S. (2013). The use of Exploratory Practice as a form of collaborative practitioner research. *ISEJ*, *1*(1), 19-24.

Deng, C., & Carless, D. (2009). The communicativeness of activities in a task-based innovation in Guangdong, China. *Asian Journal of English Language Teaching*, *19*, 113-134.

Dikilitaş, K. (2015). Professional development through teacher-research. In K. Dikilitaş, R. Smith, & W. Trotman (Eds.), *Teacher-researchers in action*, (pp. 47-55). England: IATEFL.

Ellis, R. (2012). *Language teaching research and language pedagogy*. Malden, MA: Wiley-Blackwell.

Estalkhbijari, Z. P., & Khodareza, M. (2012). The effects of warm-up tasks on the Iranian EFL students' writing ability. *International Education Studies*, *5*(2), 190-203.

Farrell, T. S. C. (2007). Action research in language teaching. *Reflective Language Teaching: From Research to Practice*, 94-106.

Farrell, T. S. (2015). *Reflective language teaching: From research to practice*. Bloomsbury Publishing.

Haley, M. H., Midgely, A., Ortiz, J., Romano, T., Ashworth, L., & Seewald, A. (2005). Teacher action research in foreign language classrooms: Four teachers tell their stories. *Current Issues in Education*, *8*(12).

Hanks, J. (2014). 'Education is not just teaching': learner thoughts on Exploratory Practice. *ELT Journal*, 1-12.

Hanks, J. (2015). Language teachers making sense of Exploratory Practice. *Language Teaching Research*, 1-22.

Hansen, J. G., & Liu, J. (2005). Guiding principles for effective peer response. *ELT journal*, *59*(1), 31-38.

Maznevski, M. (1996). Grading Class Participation. Teaching Concerns: Newsletter of the Teaching resource Center for faculty and Teaching Assistants. *University of Virginia.*

Mustapha, S. M., Rahman, N. S. N. A., & Yunus, M. M. (2010). Factors influencing classroom participation: a case study of Malaysian undergraduate students. *Procedia-Social and Behavioral Sciences*, *9*, 1079-1084.

Nakamura, I. (2014). A Discussion of Practitioner Research: How Are Reflective Practice, Action Research, and Exploratory Practice Diffrenret?. *Bulletin of higher education, Okayama University*, *10*, 105-114.

Pillai, N. (2013). Integrating games and vocabulary teaching: An Exploratory Study. *ELT Voices-India*, *3*(2), 84-94.

Po-ying, C. (2007). How students react to the power and responsibility of being decision makers in their own learning. *Language Teaching Research*, *11*(2), 225-241.

Rainey, I. (2000). Action research and the English as a foreign language practitioner: time to take stock. *Educational Action Research*, *8*(1), 65-91.

Reimann, N., & Montgomery, C. (2007). Reshaping boundaries between teaching and research: an example of collaborative research in 'Assessment for Learning'.

Rinvolucri, M. (2003). *Humanising your coursebook*. English teaching professional.

Royka, J. G. (2002). Overcoming the fear of using drama in English language teaching. *The Internet TESL Journal*, *8*(6).

Savaskan, I. P. (2013). Readiness for Action Research: Are Teacher Candidates Ready to Become an Agent of Action Research?. *International Journal of Innovative Interdisciplinary Research*, *2*(12), 49-63.

Smith, R. (2015). Exploratory action research as workplan: why, what and where from?. In K. Dikilitaş, R. Smith, & W. Trotman (Eds.), *Teacher-researchers in action*, (pp. 37-45). England: IATEFL.

Wallace, M. J. (1998). *Action research for language teachers*. Cambridge University Press.

Whitehead, J. (1990). How Can I Improve My Contribution to Practitioner Research in Teacher Education? a Response to Jean Rudduck. *Westminster Studies in Education*, *13*(1), 27-36.

Wu, Z. (2006). Understanding practitioner research as a form of life: an Eastern interpretation of Exploratory Practice. *Language Teaching Research*, *10*(3), 331-350.

Yeşilbursa, A. (2009). Language Teaching Beliefs, Problems and Solutions: Reflecting and Growing Together. In *Proceedings of the 10th METU ELT Convention*.

Author
Hasan Savaş completed his BA degree in the department of English Language Teaching at Anadolu University and his MA degree in the department of English Language Education at Çağ University. He is now a PhD student in the department of English Language Education at Bahçeşehir University Graduate School of Educational Sciences and works as an English Instructor at Istanbul Medipol University.

Contact
Istanbul Medipol University
Language School, Kavacık-
Beykoz / Istanbul,
Email: hsavas@medipol.edu.tr

Appendices

Appendix A: Questionnaire for Exploratory Practice

1. What does warming-up mean to you?
2. What specific warm-up activities/practices can work well in class?
3. What specific warm-up activities/practices do not work in class?

Appendix B: Questionnaire for Action Research

1. What do you think changed in your mind about the warm-up activities that we used during classes?
2. What were the beneficial sides and the advantages of the activities? Please provide details and examples.
3. What were the useless points and the disadvantages of the activities? Please provide details and examples.
4. Can you provide any other suggestions? If yes, what are they?