

**Investigating the Contribution of Blogging
Interactions to Preservice English Language
Teachers' Reflection and
Construction of Teacher Identity**

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Submitted to the
Institute of Graduate Studies and Research
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

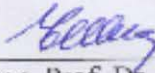
Doctor of Philosophy
in
English Language Teaching

Eastern Mediterranean University
January 2018
Gazimağusa, North Cyprus

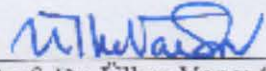
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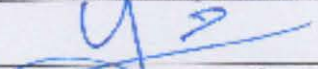
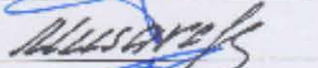

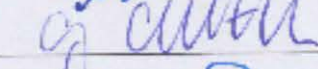


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ABSTRACT

The purpose of the study was to investigate the contribution of blogging to preservice teachers' reflection and construction of teacher identity. A blog tool was integrated in the Teaching Practice course in order to address the need for more interaction caused by limited in-class hours. An action research study was carried out in two cycles, in the fall semesters of 2011-2012 and 2012-2013, with a total of 15 preservice teachers studying at the Foreign Language Education Department of Eastern Mediterranean University. Data comprised semi-structured interview reports and preservice teachers' blog posts (i.e., teaching practice lessons reflection blog entries, movie critiques, final reports and comments).

Frequency analysis was conducted to find out about the preservice teachers' blog participation. The results show that all the preservice teachers in the first cycle took part in the blogging by posting the required blog tasks. However, since participation was on voluntary basis in the second cycle, not all participants posted their blog tasks. Preservice teachers' interactions with one other on the blog were found to be at different levels. A number of hindering reasons such as lack of participants' familiarity with and attitudes towards the blog tool, perceived adequacy of written expression, and group dynamics were discovered. An adapted framework was used to reveal the levels of reflections in preservice teachers' teaching practice lessons reflection blog entries. The results indicated that most of the participants' reflections were at descriptive level which included their feelings and teaching practice experiences. It should be noted that only a few participants linked these to theories and elaborated on their future plans for improvement.

Possible-selves theory guided the analysis of data to understand the contribution of preservice teachers' blogging interactions to construction of their teacher identity. According to the results, sharing reflections on teaching practice experiences and reflecting on various teacher characteristics influenced how they shaped their concepts about qualities of good teachers. This in turn led to the emergence of expected and feared possible selves. Preservice teachers mostly articulated what kind of teacher they expect to be and avoid becoming, in the areas of interpersonal relationships, instructional strategies and classroom management. Little emphasis on professional qualities was stated. Based on the results, more structured scaffolding and training on reflective practices were proposed. Also, integration of professional qualities into instruction of formal education courses was suggested to promote professional qualities of teachers.

Keywords: preservice teachers, blogs, reflection, teacher identity construction, possible-selves theory

ÖZ

Bu çalışma Öğretmenlik Uygulaması dersindeki öğretmen adaylarının zaman azlığı yüzünden sahip olamadıkları birbirleriyle daha fazla iletişim kurma ortamlarını artırmak amacıyla derse eklenen ağ günlüğü (blog) aracını kullanımlarının, onların yansıtıcı düşüncelerine ve öğretmen kimliğini oluşturmalarına olan katkısını incelemiştir. Çalışma iki fazlı bir eylem araştırması şeklinde 2011-2012 ve 2012-2013 akademik yıllarının güz dönemlerinde, Doğu Akdeniz Üniversitesi'ndeki Yabancı Diller Eğitimi Bölümü, İngilizce Öğretmenliği Programında lisans eğitimi alan 15 öğretmen adayıyla gerçekleştirilmiştir. Öğretmen adaylarıyla yapılan görüşmeler, yansıtıcı ağ günlüğü yazıları ve yorumları bu çalışmanın veri toplama yöntemlerini oluşturmaktadır. Tüm ağ günlüğü içerikleri ve röportajlar nitel açıdan incelenmek üzere word belgelerine aktarılarak kaydedilmiştir.

Katılımcıların ağ günlüğü katılımlarını keşfetmek amacıyla frekans analizi uygulanmıştır. Bulgular çalışmanın ilk fazında tüm katılımcıların ağ günlüklerini kullandıkları yönüyle, ikinci fazda katılımın gönüllülük esasında olmasından dolayı düştüğü yönündedir. Katılımcıların ağ günlüklerinde birbirleriyle olan iletişimlerinin farklı seviyelerde olduğu saptanmıştır. Katılımcıların ağ günlüğü araçlarına karşı aşinalık ve tutumları, ağ günlüğünde yer alan İngilizce yazılı anlatımın yeterliliğine ilişkin algıları, ve katılımcıların kendi aralarında oluşturdukları grup dinamikleri ağ günlüğündeki iletişimi engelleyen faktörler olarak ortaya çıkmıştır. Katılımcıların yansıtıcı düşünce düzeylerini analiz etmek için, çalışmanın amacına uygun olarak uyarlanan bir kuramsal çerçeve kullanılmıştır. Sonuçlar, katılımcıların çoğunun duygularını ifade ettiklerini ve uygulama dersinde

edindikleri deneyimlerini tasvir ettikleri yönünde olmakla birlikte, çoğu öğretmen adayının öğretmenlik deneyimine ilişkin tecrübelerini ilgili teorilere bağlamadıklarını ve geleceğe dönük planları üzerinde durmadıklarını işaret etmektedir.

Olası-benlikler kuramından yararlanılarak yapılan nitel analiz sonuçları, öğretmen adaylarının ağ günlüklerindeki paylaşımları, öğretmenlik deneyimleri ve filmlerde izledikleri çeşitli öğretmen karakterleri üzerine gerçekleştirdikleri yansıtıcı düşüncelerin, onların “iyi öğretmen nitelikleri” ile ilgili kavramlarını şekillendirmede etkili olduğu, ‘olmak istedikleri’ ve ‘olmaktan kaçındıkları’ olası benliklerini ortaya çıkarmıştır. Bulgular, öğretmen adaylarının sahip olmak istedikleri ve olmaktan kaçındıkları öğretmen özelliklerini, yoğunluklu olarak kişiler arası ilişkiler, öğretim stratejileri ve sınıf yönetimi alanlarından ifade ettiklerini, fakat mesleki niteliklere fazla vurgu yapmadıklarını göstermiştir. Bu sonuçlara göre, pedagojik etkilerin iyileştirilmesi adına, öğretmen adaylarına daha etkili destekleyici sorular ve yansıtıcı düşünce üzerine verilecek eğitimler ile, programda yer alan derslere ek olarak öğretmen adaylarının mesleki niteliklerinin gelişmesine yardımcı olacak konuların eklenmesi önerilmiştir.

Anahtar kelimeler: öğretmen adayları, ağ günlüğü, yansıtma, öğretmen kimliğinin oluşumu, olası benlikler kuramı

To my beloved parents

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

First and foremost, I would like to express my deepest gratitude and greatest gratefulness to my supervisor, Prof. Dr. Ülker Vancı Osam. Without her supervision, encouragement, patience, and continuous feedback, I would have never produced this work. Her endless support encouraged and refreshed me to go on my academic life even at times when it was very hard for me to continue. I should also acknowledge her for all her contributions to my academic and personal development. She has been a great role model for me both as a person and an academician.

I would like to express my deepest thanks to my thesis committee members, Prof. Dr. Gülşen Musayeva Vefalı and Prof. Dr. Yaşar Özden, who made valuable contributions to this thesis and to my professional development. I would like to extend my appreciation and thankfulness to jury members, Prof. Dr. Yasemin Bayyurt and Prof. Dr. Gölge Seferoğlu. Their suggestions and constructive feedback helped me to improve this work.

My special thanks go to preservice teachers who participated in this study who became a part of this study and voluntarily accepted my request to video record their teaching practice lessons while teaching in their practicum. I would also like to extend my sincere thanks to the cooperating teachers who welcomed me warmly in their classroom and the school administrators, who granted me with the permission to conduct the study, for their cooperation and collaboration.

I am grateful to my dearest friends and colleagues for their endless support and encouragement. They have always been motivating even when I was so exhausted. Without their unconditional love and faith in me completion of his work would not be possible.

Last but not least, I owe my greatest debt to my family for everything they have been and always will be for me. Without their great love, never-ending care, vigorous support, and presence in my life, I would never endure the challenges standing before me. Finally, my dear parents, who have sacrificed their life, so to say, in order to bring me up and who have endlessly given me their unconditional love and constant support, deserve my deepest gratitude. To them, I dedicate this dissertation.

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Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Overview

This chapter commences with background to the study. It is then followed by a detailed description of the problem that prompted the initiation of the action research. The chapter is finalized with the purpose and the significance of the research study.

1.2 Background to the Study

Teacher education programs aim to equip preservice teachers with a spectacular array of knowledge and skills that they are expected to have and use in their future work. Teacher knowledge and skills in the field of English Language Teaching (ELT) cover knowing the subject matter (i.e., English), different learning theories, classroom management principles and strategies, aids and resources, learner variables, as well as study skills, observational skills, and team skills (Roberts, 1998). Preservice teachers are offered formal education where they are introduced to theoretical concepts. They blend these with their previous life experiences (e.g., apprenticeship of observation) (Lortie, 1975), observations and interactions with peers and establish their beliefs and values about teaching and learning (Levin & He, 2008).

Owing to uncertainties and unpredictability of teaching-related processes such as learners' reactions and individual learning outcomes (Williams & Burden, 1997), preservice teachers need to be trained to reflect critically on their actions before,

during, and after their teaching practice lessons so that they are able to make better-informed teaching decisions. Reflecting on their beliefs, values, and teaching practice experiences will help the preservice teachers to interpret their actions, reactions, thoughts and feelings to discover more about themselves and enhance their practices (Husu, Toom, & Patrikainen, 2008). Reflection is defined as a series of cognitive processes that are carried out in order to learn from experiences individually or in collaboration with others (Schön, 1983). According to Dewey (1933), meaningful reflection takes place when one's values, beliefs, and attitudes are involved in practice, which eventually leads to one's growth. This is best achieved when reflection is done in interaction with others so that individuals have the opportunity to learn from experiences, share ideas, and develop perspectives (Leijen, Valtna, Leijen, & Pedaste, 2012; Procee, 2006).

In addition to formal education in teacher education programs, the practicum is also a very important opportunity for preservice teachers to develop their teaching knowledge and skills as well as their teacher identity. Practicum is believed to be an essential component in teacher education where preservice teachers are placed in schools in which they can experience teaching and have the chance to apply theories, test their beliefs and values in real-world-situations (Kim & Hannafin, 2008; Kärkkö et al., 2016; Turunen & Tuovila, 2012). Through practicum, preservice teachers experience teaching in a real classroom settings, use teaching theories and transfer practical teaching ideas to classrooms, expand views on teaching and teachers through conducting classroom observations, and learn from experienced teachers. Also, they learn to plan lessons and improve their lesson planning skills, selecting and adapting materials for certain teaching practice lessons. Additionally, they grow

professionally by reflecting on self and practice as a teacher (Gebhard, 1999b). Furthermore, practicum programs help preservice teachers to reflect on and articulate their beliefs about teaching and learning. Also, they develop values and set future goals which result in awareness of their self-images as future teachers. According to Flores and Day (2006), the process of becoming a teacher involves evaluating and making sense of own values and experiences. This unique experience of teaching has an impact on preservice teachers' sense of self and influences how they perceive themselves as teachers. Overall, through formal education and practicum, preservice teachers establish some concepts as regards what being a teacher and teaching is like (Körkkö, Kyrö-Ammala, & Turunen, 2016).

It is argued that interpretation and reinterpretation of preservice teachers' teaching experiences as an ongoing process affects how they perceive their professional teacher selves (Kerby, 1991, as cited in Beijaard, Meijer & Verloop, 2004). As soon as preservice teachers start teaching, they have a chance to refine their professional identity construction by reviewing their teaching experiences and becoming aware of their values, aims and commitments as future teachers. This ongoing and dynamic process can best be observed when preservice teachers deeply reflect on their teaching experiences, share them with others, and get feedback.

Exploring preservice teachers' construction processes of teacher identity during the practicum is important in order to understand how they establish their teacher selves and identify what teacher selves they would expect to project and avoid displaying. The construction of teacher identity may be observed by looking at various sources. For example, preservice teachers may be asked to extensively reflect on their

“societal views of profession”, “memories of their own teachers’ practices when they were at school” and “prior notions about what they wish to achieve” (Kosnik & Beck, 2009, pp. 130-131). However, when they start teaching and gain understanding of what teaching really involved (i.e. experiencing various problems in class, interacting with their students, and so on), they may add on to their prior concepts, or attempt to modify and redefine them. Therefore, constant dialogue with peers and reflection are essential activities for preservice teachers to understand how this process takes place.

Changing times and the increased use of technology in instruction have made communities of practice a popular activity for reflection. Blogs, among many other technological tools, have gained popularity and have been used in the field of education due to their affordances. For example, they provide preservice teachers opportunities to share and actively engage in learning (Duffy & Cunningham, 1996). Since blogs have made sharing with and learning from others’ experiences possible, they are extensively used to encourage interaction and reflection. Furthermore, positive effects of blogs such as enhanced collaboration, interaction and reflection skills were reported in related studies conducted in different contexts (Deng & Yuen, 2011; Wang & Hsua, 2008).

1.3 Statement of the Problem

Given that the use of blogs for reflective practice is a new phenomenon in preservice teacher education, only a handful of studies (for example, Deng & Yuen, 2011; Stiler & Philleo, 2003; Wang & Hsua, 2008; West, Wright, & Graham, 2005) have been conducted on how blogging activities promote interaction and reflection. However, these research studies only reported general results about how blogging led to

interaction and reflection. Therefore, more research on how blogging activities of preservice teachers contribute to their interaction and reflection is needed.

Likewise, research to date on teacher professional identity construction also suggests that the number of related studies is limited and more research in this area is needed (Hamman, Gosselin, Romano, & Bunuan, 2010). One of the rationales behind this call for more studies is to better understand how teacher identity develops as it is still blurry and significant results have yet to be yielded (Rodgers & Scott, 2008, as cited in Hamman et al., 2010). Furthermore, due to the fact that previously conducted related studies tended to neglect teachers' future actions in their reflections placing primary focus on their past experiences, what constitutes professional identities has not been theorized yet (Beijaard, Verloop, & Vermunt, 2000). Hence, more studies are needed on preservice teachers' teaching-related experiences and future actions in order to gain more insights into their teacher identity construction (Urzua & Vasquez, 2008).

ELTE 406 Teaching Practice course, which is offered to preservice teachers at the Foreign Language Education Department of Eastern Mediterranean University (EMU) in North Cyprus. The course is conducted via a traditional vis a vis and has weekly three-hour in-class contact. It is highly practical by its nature and requires preservice teachers to accomplish a number of tasks. Once they are allocated to classes in the English Preparatory School of EMU and state secondary schools in Famagusta district, they start carrying out the required tasks. Preservice teachers are expected to complete four classroom observations to be familiar with the classroom environment and its pupils. They are then required to prepare and conduct two mini-

teaching sessions, which may last 15-20 minutes. Additionally, they are required to prepare lesson plans and get their course instructor's feedback before each formal teaching practice. Then, they conduct four teaching practice lessons (i.e., formal teaching) and are evaluated by their course instructor. After each formal teaching session, they receive feedback from the course instructor who observes them while teaching and assess their performance. After each observation, post-lesson meetings are held where preservice teachers reflect on their lesson and are given feedback on their strengths and areas to improve in their teaching. Furthermore, preservice teachers are required to reflect on their teaching practice experiences and write a report by answering a set of guiding questions. When the above mentioned tasks and required interactions are considered the time allocated for the course in the weekly schedule appears to be very limited and the course instructors have to arrange extra class hours. However, due to other commitments the preservice teachers and the course instructor it is difficult to make these arrangements. Moreover, weekly contact hours do not seem to allow preservice teachers to share their teaching experiences. Thus, they do not have the opportunity to share with and learn from each other.

Given that blogs have the affordances to facilitate interaction, communication and reflection, integration of a blog feature to ELTE 406 Teaching Practice course an online component would help facilitate interaction, and communication among the preservice teachers. What is more, preservice teachers would share their experiences and reflections with one another and learn from each other's experiences. To this end, a blog tool was added to one of the three groups of ELTE 406 Teaching Practice course in the fall semester of 2011-2012 academic year. It was assumed that providing preservice teachers with an online environment where they could access

course-related content, share their teaching experiences, and express their opinions about teaching-related matters would encourage communication and interaction. Furthermore, preservice teachers would learn about their peers' teaching practice experiences by reading their blog entries. They would also interact with each other by sharing opinions and commenting on posts. Therefore, the present study was conducted in order to explore how a blog component would contribute to preservice English language teachers' interaction, reflection and construction of teacher identity.

1.4 Purpose of the Study

Given the scarcity of the pertinent research to date, the present study aims to explore how introduction of blogging activities contributes to preservice teachers' interaction, reflection. Also, it aims to investigate blogging interactions of preservice teachers contribute to construction of their teacher identity. The following research questions guide the present study:

1. How do blogging interactions of preservice teachers contribute to their reflection?
2. How do preservice teachers' blogging interactions contribute to their teacher identity construction?

1.5 Significance of the Study

The present study can be considered significant in a number of ways. Firstly, it collected extensive data from 15 preservice teachers who were enrolled into ELTE 406 Teaching Practice course. It is, therefore, hoped that the findings will contribute to the body of knowledge in the field of preservice teacher education literature, especially when we consider the scarcity of studies on the contribution of blogs to

interaction, reflection and construction of professional identity in preservice teacher education contexts (Romiszowski & Mason, 2004).

Moreover, to the best of the researcher's knowledge, no study on blogs and teacher identity construction has been conducted in any English Language Teaching Departments in Northern Cyprus. It is assumed that the present study will therefore be one of a kind in this context.

Additionally, this study may provide important findings that will shed light into how teaching experiences influence preservice teachers' construction of teacher identity by investigating their expected and feared teacher selves. In other words, the results may lead to a better understanding of preservice teachers' professional self-image and how it comes into being (Bullough & Knowles, 1992) through their teaching practice and blogging experiences. Understanding preservice teachers' teacher identities can be a fundamental factor in learning about teaching, and the main features of the construction of teacher identities at different stages of their education. These insights can be considered while planning and implementing the syllabus of ELTE 406 Teaching Practice course at the Foreign Language Education Department. Thus, the findings may provide guidance to relevant departmental courses and insights to what expected and feared teacher selves preservice teachers may generate.

Finally, the present study is highly context-bound. Thus, the generalizability of the findings to wider educational contexts may not be possible. Nevertheless, the empirical findings of the study may contribute to similar practices regarding design and implementation of blogs as an online educational tool within other contexts.

Chapter 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Overview

This chapter starts with an overview of the scholarship on teacher education and domains of teacher knowledge. The chapter then proceeds with related studies on teaching practice, reflection and feedback in teacher education. The second part of the chapter focuses on teacher identity construction and related frameworks, such as sociocultural view and possible-selves theory. The chapter is finalized with studies pertinent to blended learning, reflection and teacher identity construction in preservice teacher education contexts.

2.2 Teacher Education

Quality of education that provides necessary skills and knowledge is vital in this fast-changing world. Teachers have a very important role in providing these through promoting learning (Darling-Hammond & Youngs, 2002). In this regard, teacher education gains an utmost importance in conveyance of quality of education to future teachers (Iradale, 1996). Despite some common problems that arise from teacher education programs (Darling-Hammond, 2006), formal education in upbringing of teacher candidates is still considered an essential element (Cruickshank, Jenkins, & Metcalf, 2009). In search of better quality of teacher education, trends have been shifting inevitably. One major theoretical shift is considered to be from ‘behaviorism to constructivism, which led to a change in view of learning from a consumer of the

knowledge that the teacher candidates receive to a practitioner who constructs knowledge through experience (Richards, 2008). The latter trend valued preservice teachers' prior knowledge and beliefs about teaching and learning. Thus, teacher education programs promoted learning through modelling of innovative methods of instruction to cater for preservice teachers' needs (Crandall, 2000). Reflective practice then became one of the essential components along with experiential practice, which stemmed from the need to make teacher education programs more satisfactory to prepare preservice teachers ready for teaching in a real classroom setting. By this way, it was aimed to provide student teachers with the opportunity to learn from their experiences through inquiring their own beliefs and reflecting on them considering the contexts of teaching and learning. Thus, reflective activities became an essential component of teacher education programs (Wright, 2010).

In review of second language teacher education Richards (2008) indicates that it emerged as a field in 1960s when Audiolingualism and Situational Language Teaching became influential methodologies in designing programs to equip student teachers with the skills they need in classrooms. As Richards (2008) maintains, during this period, applied linguistics along with related theories, methodologies and language analysis were main components of teacher education programs with little emphasis on practice. However, in the beginning of 1990s, the distinction between theory and practice became one of the debates. Gaining practical skills in language teaching stood out as an essential component and through these discussions, language teacher education was dominated by socio-cultural theories. In this era, traditional views of language teaching and learning were challenged by social constructivist approach, which was based on Zone of Proximal Development

established by Vygotsky (Vygotsky, 1978). Unlike previous proponents of traditional views which advocated that teacher cognition develops through behavioristic approach or habit formation, social constructivist approach supported that learning takes place through social interaction and it is inseparable from culture, context, and identity (Hawkins, 2004).

Lev Vygotsky (1978), the founding father of social constructivism, proposed that social interaction is an essential part of learning. Vygotsky (1978) stressed that social interaction is a requirement for the development of cognition as individuals can only internalize their ideas and new knowledge through interaction and dialogue. In other words, construction of new knowledge is not a private and individual act; rather, people need to interact with others who have similar experiences to construct new information on the existing knowledge (Jordan, Carlile & Stack, 2008).

The theory of social constructivism has introduced various concepts such as the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD), cognitive dialogue, social interaction, culture and inner speech. According to Vygotsky (1978), learning in isolation cannot lead to cognitive development. He situated learning in ZPD, which means that if interaction between individuals takes place within the zone of an individual's potential development, this interaction contributes to his or her cognitive development (Jordan, Carlile & Stack, 2008). In short, social constructivist view supports that individuals need to interact with others in order to construct their ideas and knowledge through interaction (Powell & Kalina, 2009). Since social interaction is necessary for individuals to construct new knowledge, social constructivists strongly believe that social interaction and collaboration with more capable and more

knowledgeable others is essential for their cognitive development. Teacher knowledge and domains of teacher knowledge will be discussed in the next section.

2.2.1 Teacher Knowledge

According to Shulman (1987), a teacher needs to demonstrate certain domains of knowledge, namely content knowledge, general pedagogical knowledge, curriculum knowledge, pedagogical content knowledge, knowledge of learners and their characteristics, knowledge of educational contexts, knowledge of educational ends, purposes, and values.

Content Knowledge (CK) refers to teachers' knowledge about the subject matter that they are expected to know. Having the knowledge of content has utmost importance as each subject's content is different from each other, and teachers of different subjects are expected to be equipped with the knowledge of that specific content. Shulman (1987) states that content knowledge of a teacher should include relevant theories, concepts, and frameworks established for a specific field in which the teacher has received formal education. Teachers who are expected to display strong content knowledge in their areas of fields need to display the depth and breadth of knowledge of the fundamentals of the disciplines (Koehler & Mishra, 2009). For a teacher candidate, having strong content knowledge is essential as teacher may mislead students or give wrong instruction otherwise. Shulman (1987) points out that knowing the facts and concepts related to the content only does not mean that teachers have enough content knowledge. They need to display and explain the reasons behind the facts and show understanding of the rules and structures.

Pedagogical Knowledge (PK) refers to teachers' knowledge about the processes and practices of methods of teaching and learning. Shulman (1987) indicates the importance of having Pedagogical Knowledge as well as Content Knowledge, saying that "mere Content Knowledge is likely to be as useless pedagogically as content-free skill" (p. 8). Teachers who have Pedagogical Knowledge can display understanding of how students learn and gain skills in what they study. Moreover, teachers with Pedagogical Knowledge are expected to exhibit the knowledge of how to manage class based on various classroom dynamics, procedures to plan and implement lessons and different ways of assessing students' learning. Teachers who have Pedagogical Knowledge demonstrate successful management of lessons and students, as they have the knowledge of different methodologies and are able to boil them down to the specific classroom situation they have (Koehler & Mishra, 2008).

Pedagogical Content Knowledge (PCK) was suggested by Shulman (1987) as a third major component after content and pedagogical knowledge. It refers to what teachers know about procedures of teaching certain content and what they know about what they teach. In other words, as regards the procedures, PCK involves the knowledge about (a) procedures followed in class, (b) what strategies to follow in different teaching situations, (c) what students are interested and need to learn, (d) how students learn conceptual and procedural knowledge, (e) how students learn different skills (Chick, Baker, Pham, & Cheng, 2006) and so on. In addition, Koehler and Mishra (2006) state that PCK "goes beyond a simple consideration of content and pedagogy in isolation from one another. PCK represents the blending of content and pedagogy into an understanding of how particular aspects of subject matter are organized, adapted, and represented for instruction" (p. 1021). Table 2.1 presents

comprehensive definition of PCK with relevant categories (Chick, Baker, Pham, & Cheng, 2006). The first column depicts the categories of knowledge that is associated with PCK and the second column includes examples that a teacher who has PCK can demonstrate.

Table 2.1: Definition of PCK Category

PCK Category: Knowledge of ...	Definition: A teacher...
aims for learning	describes a goal for students
learning student thinking	discusses or addresses students' ways of thinking about a concept or recognizes typical levels of understanding
student's misconceptions	discusses or addresses the way to prevent student misconceptions about a concept
procedural knowledge	displays skills used for solving scientific problems
resources	discusses/uses the resources available to support teaching
classroom technique	discusses or uses generic classroom practices
purpose of content knowledge	discusses reasons for content being included in the curriculum or how it might be used
evaluation of student learning of conceptual knowledge	assesses students' understanding of a scientific concept
representations of concepts	discusses materials, pictures, or diagrams used to introduce a scientific concept

PCK has provided “understanding the complex relationship between the content of a subject and the teaching of a subject by using specific teaching and evaluation methods” (Chick, et al. 2006, p.85). In other words, it is a synthesis of all knowledge needed for teaching and learning a specific subject.

According to Shulman (1987) another essential knowledge that a teacher needs to demonstrate is curricular knowledge, which is “represented by the full range of programs designed for the teaching of particular subjects and topics at a given level,

the variety of instructional materials available in relation to those programs, and the set of characteristics” (p. 10).

Knowledge of learners, as Shulman (1987) points out, is ingrained in PCK. It refers to knowledge about learners’ characteristics, their background, interests and abilities. PCK also encompasses understanding of what students struggle with and what learning difficulties they exhibit, so that teachers plan adapt or formulate their teaching based on this knowledge (Angeli & Valnides, 2009).

In addition to these domains of knowledge, relatively more recent developments in instructional technology have necessitated the consideration of new knowledge types such as Technology knowledge, Technological Content Knowledge, Technological Pedagogical Knowledge, and Technological Pedagogical Content Knowledge for teacher education programs.

Technology Knowledge (TK) refers to “certain ways of thinking about and working with technology that can apply to all technology tools and resources” (Koehler & Mishra, 2008, p. 64). With the advancements of various technological tools that are integrated in instruction, the knowledge of technology apparently has gone beyond conventional concepts of computer literacy. TK now embodies the knowledge of applying different tools successfully in work and keep up with the changes in information technologies in the area of education. Therefore, TK no longer represents simple computer literacy. A teacher with TK is expected to “accomplish a variety of different tasks using information technology and to develop different ways of accomplishing a given task” (Koehler & Mishra, 2008, p. 65).

Technological Content Knowledge (TCK) refers to the ability to demonstrate the understanding of how to integrate technology within the content that teachers are expected to teach. Teachers who have TCK can present subject matter they teach and they are able to apply necessary and appropriate technological tools in the content they have already mastered. They can make the decision to select and decide on a particular technological tool. They can also demonstrate the understanding of the uses of particular technological tools and how they can be integrated in specific instruction (Koehler & Mishra, 2008).

Another domain of knowledge is Technological Pedagogical Knowledge (TPK) which pertains to knowing how to implement different technological tools in particular way in lessons. This type of knowledge indicates that teacher also knows the opportunities and restrictions of technological tool when designing a course. TPK gained importance as it is crucial to be able to adapt different technological tools for the purposes of the instruction. It is well known that many technological tools have not been designed for educational purposes. In order for managing to cater for the needs of students and brining innovation to instruction, having TPK is essential. Therefore, TPK necessitates “a forward-looking, creative, and open-minded seeking of technology use, not for its own sake but for the sake of advancing student learning and understanding” (Koehler & Mishra 2008, p. 66).

Technological Pedagogical Content Knowledge (TPACK) is an elaborated version of Shulman’s (1987) descriptions of PCK, which focuses on teachers’ knowledge of educational technologies and pedagogies for efficient implementation. The following figure (Figure 2.1) depicts that TPACK involves three main components of teachers’

knowledge: content, pedagogy, and technology. As it can be seen from the figure, each domain of knowledge has equal importance.

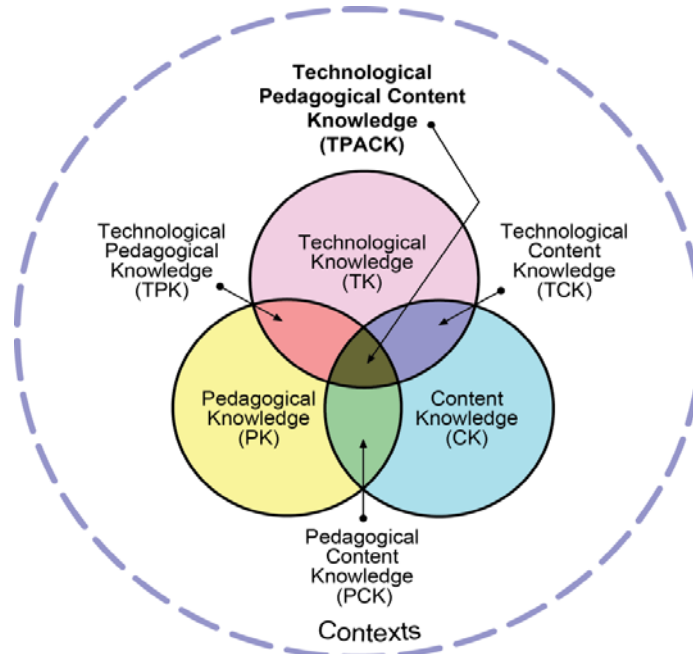


Figure 2.1: The components of the TPACK framework (<http://tpack.org>).

2.2.2 Teaching Practice

Teaching Practice or Practicum is considered as one of the essential components of teacher education programs. Owing to its practical nature, preservice teachers learn to transfer their formal education knowledge and skills into their teaching practices. They also have the chance to enact their professionalism by practicing their teacher roles. As Richards (2008) states, “becoming an English language teacher means becoming part of a worldwide community of professionals with shared goals, values, discourse, and practices” (p. 3). Therefore, in this period, preservice teachers construct their teacher identities. Teaching practice period is described as a journey of learning how to teach, which “is always the process of becoming: a time of formation and transformation” (Britzman, 1991, p. 31).

The journey to become a teacher is not an easy one. The route can be rather complex and full of obstacles. As Olsen (2008) puts it, the process of becoming a teacher involves a lot of private experiences, which are usually complex and not easily expressed. Practicum courses provide preservice teachers with the opportunity to experience teaching. This course is taken as “one of the most important aspects of a teacher education program” (Farrell, 2008, p. 226). Gebhard (1999b) points out that practicum courses aim to improve preservice teachers’ teaching practices. Through this course, preservice teachers observe experienced teachers, discover their ways of teaching and critically reflect on them. Also, they practice teaching in classrooms by applying teaching theories into their classroom teaching activities. What is more, they explore various teaching ideas which help them increase their awareness of several classroom teaching techniques.

When preservice teachers go into classrooms to practice teaching, they take with them their beliefs and attitudes, capacity, and knowledge about what they teach to class (Olsen, 2008). Their classroom experiences, interactions with their students and reactions towards certain events lead to some changes in the way they perceive their preconceptions throughout teaching practicum course. They constantly construct, deconstruct and reconstruct their teaching related beliefs, values and sense of selves (Timostuk & Ugaste, 2010). Therefore, it may be concluded that practicum course is considered as one of the important milestones in preservice teachers’ construction of teacher identities as their development of teacher identity is depended on how they interact with themselves, the school context they experience teaching and other activities they are involved (Timostuk & Ugaste, 2010).

2.3 Reflection and Feedback in Teacher Education

The concept of reflection is one of the most valued issues in teacher education context. Since teachers are considered as decision makers of their teaching practices, a critical consideration of actions is necessary before and after they are taken (Tan, 2006). The term reflection has been frequently defined and redefined by various practitioners. Although different perspectives put the term reflection in different frameworks, they are mainly based on two different views, which belong to Dewey and Schön. Dewey (1910) regarded reflection as the “active persistent and careful consideration of any belief or supposed form of knowledge in the light of the grounds that support it and the further conclusions to which it tends” (cited in Tan, 2006, p. 6). This view of reflection emphasizes cognition; where an individual deliberately uses his/her higher order thinking skills and knowledge to manipulate a problem or an event (Rosenshine & Meister, 1992). However, Schön (1987) had a different view of reflection. Unlike Dewey, Schön (1987) described reflective activity in two different concepts: reflection-in-action and reflection-on-action. Reflection-in-action denotes that people can monitor and evaluate their actions and decisions without stopping the action. It is also possible to critically review the actions after they have taken place judging how effective or right decision they were or any changes would be done in the future. Schön (1987) called this concept of reflection as referring to critical views on the activities that have taken place.

Owing to its highly complex nature, reflection may not take place if not carefully guided. According to Colton and Sparks-Langer (1993), effective reflection requires critical thinking, cognition and narrative inquiry in teacher education contexts. In order for teachers to reflect on their practices, they need to have pedagogical

knowledge, which refers to cognition. On the other hand, depending on their teaching experiences, values and beliefs, teachers may make use of their critical thinking skills to reflect on their practices. Likewise, teachers need to have stories to tell which are personal and specific to their classroom contexts. Unless teachers have experiences of teaching, knowledge and skills in this area, they are unlikely to have narratives to share.

In preservice teacher education contexts, lack of experience and limited pedagogical knowledge seem to pose some problems when higher level reflection is considered (Tan, 2006). In order to facilitate reflections of preservice teachers, it is suggested that they are provided with scaffolds which include a set of guiding questions to help them to reflect on their actions more deeply (Tan, 2006).

Reflective practices are one of the vital components of preservice teacher education courses. It is stated that reflective practice has an important place in the improvement of instruction and professional development (Harris & Johnson, 1998) since teachers can gain better understanding of their current practices through reflective dialogue. In other words, sharing experiences or activities, and reflecting on practice critically enable teachers to express their beliefs and understand the reasons behind their activities (Liou, 2001). However, adopting a critical perspective towards own practice is not easy. Once quality of reflection is produced, Killeavy and Moloney (2010) state that “the close link between teacher personal identity and their classroom practice, the absence of certain professional dispositions, or the culture of isolation within teaching” may be discovered (p. 1071).

How can the quality of reflection be improved, then? Different methods have been used to help preservice teachers produce quality of reflection. Some of them include providing preservice teachers with a set of questions to help them reflect on their practices on their own. Studies in preservice teacher education revealed that teacher candidates tend to produce better-quality, higher level reflections when they are provided support structures (Gelfuso & Dennis, 2014). Such support structures may involve journal entries on critical incidents that include guiding questions, and self-assessment documents. Tan (2006) reported that providing scaffolds to preservice teachers enhanced higher level reflections. In other words, they produced longer reflections due to greater number of questions they were required to answer to provide evidences to their reflections. Likewise, Dawson (2006) reported that compared to the preservice teachers who were not given any scaffolds, those who were given support structures, such as guiding questions, produced higher levels of reflections. Yet, how much to get out of such support structures to reflect on own practice is up to the individual teacher candidate. In other words, it is the preservice teachers who will decide on which guiding questions to answer thoroughly and genuinely and which ones to deal with on the surface level, or even skip, as their perceptions of what to express and how much of it to share may vary. Furthermore, the quality of reflection relies on preservice teachers' understandings and of what teaching and learning is. Finally, according to social-constructivist view of learning, better quality of reflection is produced when there is peer feedback and conversation with more knowledgeable peer takes place.

Another method to improve the quality of reflection is using videos. Since reflection on action takes place after teaching practice is over, teachers have to rely on their

memories and recollections. Assisting reflection by providing video of preservice teachers provides support for the preservice teachers to reflect on their practices. However, Yeşilbursa (2008) reported that such a practice does not always guarantee high level of reflection.

Changing times and increased use of technology in instruction have made communities of practice a popular activity for reflection. One of the technological tools that have gained interest is the blogs, are considered as one the most utilized web 2.0 tools that first came out in the late 1990s (Matheson, 2004). They are online journals that enable blog users to add, edit, or delete any topic. These tools are mainly used as social diaries to share opinions and views, their potential to be used as a reflective tool in education has been discovered, as well. Since blogs bring people together to share their opinions and exchange views on common practices, they are very suitable tools for technology-facilitated interactions in educational contexts, as advocated by Wenger (1999).

2.4 Language Teacher Identity

Language teacher identity is yet another area which has been explored in recent years; however, only a handful of studies have focused on the preservice teachers' construction of teacher identity in the context of English language teaching (Cross & Gearon, 2007). In simple terms, identity refers to “our understandings of who we are and who we think other people are” (Danielewicz, 2001, p.10). One common definition indicates that it is fluid and complex. This complex nature of identity makes it “multiple, shifting and in conflict” (Varghese et al. 2005, p. 22) as well as “ongoing and dynamic” (Friesen & Besley, 2013, p. 25).

In educational contexts, teacher identity is defined as a continuous integration of personal and professional side of being or becoming a teacher (Aslup, 2006). Teachers' personal beliefs about themselves and teaching itself shape how they perceive their teacher identities (Mayer, 1999). Although the complexity of identity poses a great challenge for researchers, the issue has been approached from various perspectives. A variety of factors such as school context, culture, students, and colleagues have been reported to influence teacher identity construction (Beauchamp & Thomas, 2009; Danielewicz, 2001; Duff & Uchida, 1997). Teachers' daily occupations, their perceptions of events may have an impact on how they perceive themselves as teachers. Also, their reactions to the classroom events, successes and failures in their lessons and communications with other teachers within the school context and their interactions with students play role in how teachers construct their identities (Beijaard et al., 2004; Chong, 2011; Chong et al., 2011; Meijer, et al., 2011; Schepens et al., 2009; Singh & Richards, 2006).

In preservice teacher education, preservice teachers are given opportunity to learn to teach and gain professional experience during practicum. As Britzman (1991) states, "learning to teach - like teaching itself - is always the process of becoming: a time of formation and transformation, of scrutiny into what one is doing, and who one can become" (p. 8). During the practicum, preservice teachers work with the class teachers, observe their lessons, negotiate what aspects of language to teach, communicate with their course instructors, their peers and most importantly, with their students. Like all other teachers, preservice language teachers also have similar experiences during their practicum period (Tsui, 2003). They tend to construct their daily discourses based on their teaching practice experiences (Beijaard et al., 2000).

These little steps into the profession contribute to the process of becoming teachers (Liu & Fisher, 2006; Williams & Ritter, 2010).

Preservice teachers' reactions to what they experience within the school context as well as their communications with other teachers and students influence their perceptions of themselves as future teachers. Thus, they attempt to "define themselves to themselves and to others" based on their experiences (Lasky, 2005, p. 901). Therefore, preservice language teachers tend to leave their student identities during the practicum period to construct their teacher identities (Izadinia, 2016; Lawson, Çakmak, Gündüz, & Busher, 2015; Trent, 2010). During this period preservice teachers attempt to establish self-images based on how they perceive themselves as teachers, images which they then present to others (Day, 2011). A review of the literature reveals that sharing teaching practice experiences and learning from each other's reflections contribute to preservice teachers' identity construction. To support this argument a number of research studies focused on preservice teachers' 'voice,' where they reflect on their teaching practice experiences to examine their teacher identity formation (Sutherland et al., 2010; Timostsuk & Ugaste, 2010; Yuan, 2016).

The next section will elaborate on the conceptual frameworks that have guided the research studies in the area of language teacher identity and construction of teacher identity.

2.4.1 Two Conceptual Frameworks to Teacher Identity

This study is based on two theoretical frameworks which are extensively used in researching teacher identity. The first one is the 'sociocultural view' of teacher

identity, which supports the concept of identity based on the social categories created by society (i.e., nationality, race, class, etc.) that are related to power and status. This theory recognizes the membership of individuals in groups. ‘Possible-selves theory’ is yet another theoretical framework that guided this study. This theory is originally used in the field of psychology (Markus & Nurius, 1986), and has become a commonly used theoretical framework to understand teacher identity in recent years. These two frameworks will be elaborated more closely in the following sections.

2.4.1.1 Sociocultural View of Teacher Identity

Sociocultural view of teacher identity considers that “people are products of their social histories and through things like hope, desperation, imagining and mindfulness” (Olsen, 2008, p. 24). This view also highlights that people’s learning experiences and their personal histories have direct influence on their choices of teaching profession. When preservice teachers’ development of teacher identity is considered, preservice teacher education courses gain a lot of importance as these courses enable them to experience teaching before they start profession. Research on the importance of teacher education courses and actual teaching practices impact on the way preservice teachers construct their teacher identities and influence their understanding of what good teaching and a good teacher is (Ottesen, 2007). In order to help preservice teachers learn from their personal experiences and help them better understand their developing identities (Olsen, 2008), teacher educators should provide support to their preservice teachers through effective tutoring and reflection methods.

A longitudinal study has discovered that when novice teachers start teaching, they realize gaps between real teaching environment and the formal teacher education

regarding good teaching (Horn, Nolen, Ward, & Campbell, 2008). This realization leads preservice teachers to reconsider their views of themselves and their understandings of good teaching that they gained from their observations and formal teacher education courses. Realizing such gaps that teaching in class is rather different from enacting it during their formal education period may also cause preservice teachers to experience great tensions such as denials of practices or certain changes. This is viewed as a declaration of their reconstructed identities by some researchers. For example, Horn et al. (2008) state that “preservice teachers’ stated reasons for adapting, rejecting or modifying practices are often rooted in their visions of good teaching as well as their perception of what is feasible” (p. 63). In the light of the results, the researchers concluded that identity refers to “the way a person understands and views himself and is often viewed by other, at least in certain situations” (Horn et al., 2008, p. 62).

Preservice teachers reconsider their beliefs and values as a result of their interactions with students and other agencies that take place within the school context, which changes how preservice teachers perceive their sense of teacher identity. Korthagen (2004) theorized these changes at six different levels. Korthagen (2004) determined that the levels of preservice teachers’ reflection change according to the attention they pay in different areas of their teachings during their teaching practice experiences. The changes take place at the levels of “(1) the environment, (2) behavior, (3) competences, (4) beliefs, (5) professional identity and (6) mission” (pp. 80-81). According to Korthagen (2004), only the changes in the level one (i.e., ‘the environment’) and level two (i.e., ‘behavior’) are observable. However, as Korthagen and Vasalos (2005) illustrate, the changes that take place in the last two levels (i.e.,

‘professional identity’ and ‘mission’) lead to changes in the core of teachers’ personalities, which further influence how they shape their teacher identities.

2.4.1.2 Possible-Selves Theory in Construction of Teacher Identity

As stated above, the present study has also been guided by possible-selves theory, which was originally applied in the field of psychology. By definition “possible selves are the ideal selves that we would very much like to become ... also the selves that we are afraid of becoming” (Markus & Nurius, 1986, p. 954). Future selves are one form of possible selves that people are likely to project to others based on perceptions of their current selves derived from their past experiences. That is, cognitive representations of self-relevant expectations of what the current self may become in the future, both positive and negative, make up imagined future selves.

As Bak (2015) states, “the concept of possible selves covers references not only to states that are positively evaluated and anticipated with hope but also to those possibilities that one would like to avoid, perceiving them as potentially threatening” (p. 650). As a result of these self-evaluation processes, individuals may decide on future actions and directions to achieve the “hoped-for visions of the self and to prevent the realization of the feared ones” (Bak, 2015, p. 651). Therefore, possible-selves theory may be used to establish a framework for assessing how the present-self acts as a motivational element to determine future actions and aspirations.

One of the initial studies that looked into identity construction based on possible-selves theory focused on ‘provisional identities’ that looked into selves that people adopt before they start their professions (Ibarra, 1999). The research further

investigated how people attempt to modify their provisional selves when they actually start performing their work.

In another study, Ronfeld and Grossman (2008) adapted Ibarra's conceptual framework into the context of preservice teacher education. The researchers suggested that as preservice teachers move towards the profession, they have the opportunity to 'observe and experiment with' and evaluate their 'provisional selves' as a part of their new identity, so that they adapt to their new roles and reconstruct a new identity through experiencing teaching and communicating with the school contexts (Ronfeld & Grossman, 2008). The researchers conducted a study to discover how preservice teachers negotiate their identities when they start work. They held focus groups and interviews with 86 preservice teachers from different departments. They asked the participants to articulate their beliefs about how their programs prepare them to become professionals, some significant influences their departments have on them and describe the image of themselves as professionals they hope to become and avoid becoming when they start work. They also took field notes of their course observations and fieldwork. The findings indicated that students met various possible-selves when they observed or interacted with their course instructors, other teachers in their school contexts while receiving formal education. The participants mentioned their instructors' 'compassion, charisma, integrity, nurturing, humor, openness, commanding presence, commitment and care' as their future possible-selves and images of professional identity (Ronfeld & Grossman, 2008). The authors further stated that students perceived their course work such as presentations, activities, discussions and so on as other images of positive possible-selves. In other words, students took the personal features of people they admired as aspects of their

future professional identities. The results also showed preservice teachers need to observe various teaching models and activities and do a number of teaching practices to be able to develop their 'provisional identities'. According to Ibarra's model of development of identity, students observe and filter what they like and what they do not want as a part of their identities in this process. Then, they reconstruct their 'provisional identity' when they actually start their profession.

Recent review of literature reveals that possible-selves theory has directed a number of studies to help understand how teacher identity construction takes place (Hamman et al., 2013b; Hamman et al., 2010; Mahmoudi-Gahrouei et al., 2016; Yuan, 2016). According to Hamman et al. (2010), the theory "describes the importance and dynamics of self-relevant, future-oriented self-concepts, and how these self-views are related to motivation for present and future action" (p. 1351). Therefore, this theoretical framework has made it possible to identify teachers' expectations and concerns about themselves. Hamman et al. (2010) also suggest that identity formation includes an emotional aspect. "Emotions as quality" are similar to "qualities or characteristics of identity (e.g., I am a caring teacher)" (p. 1357). They further relate emotions and identity within the framework of possible-selves theory to point out future goals and desires are constructed in the present through the use of strategies to achieve or avoid those (Hamman et al., 2010). Likewise, Beauchamp and Thomas (2009) demonstrated the importance of context and the new teachers' interaction within it and other people by making a link between the identity formation and emotions.

Nevertheless, the studies guided by possible-selves theory are scarce in the field of language teacher education. One recent study, however, applied possible-selves theory as a road map to understand how student teachers' future goals motivate their present selves to achieve future aspirations (Hamman, Coward, Johnson, Lambert, Zhou, & Indiatsi, 2013a). The researchers concluded that possible-selves theory can help to "understand how efforts to become a certain type of teacher in the future are deeply rooted in the emerging professional identity of the present" (p. 308). Thus, it is essential to examine preservice teachers' articulations of expected and feared teacher-selves to understand their motivations and future goals.

Another study by Conway and Clark (2003) found that preservice teachers experience transitions regarding teaching-related hopes and concerns. The researchers proposed that preservice and novice teachers' concerns shift from self-as-teacher to concerns about tasks and finally to concerns about students and the impact of teaching as they gain teaching experience. However, they also discovered that participants shift their concerns in the opposite direction; from concerns about managing the classroom to self as a teacher as a result of vigorous reflective practices (Conway & Clark, 2003). Not all preservice teachers have the same concerns, however, and research has shown that these may vary cross-culturally. Hamman et al. (2010) focused preservice teachers' expectations and concerns in a Western context and found that prospective teachers expressed concerns about task and instruction, which they called "task-focused selves." However, the results of a replicate study in an Eastern context discovered that prospective teachers articulated concerns about the impact of teaching (i.e., quality-focused selves) and concerns about tasks and instruction (i.e., task-focused selves) (Mahmoudi-Gahrouei et al.,

2016). Both studies indicate that findings can be useful for improving culture-specific teacher education courses and professional development programs.

There may also be critical periods for preservice teachers' identity formation. For instance, results of several studies indicated that the formation of teacher identity during the practicum period influences how preservice teachers see themselves as future teachers (Beauchamp & Thomas, 2009; Beijaard et al., 2004).

Reflection on emotions has also been another area of interest for researcher to understand how emotions influence the sense of self. As Hargreaves (1998) states, "emotions are at the heart of teaching" (p. 835). When preservice teachers are engaged in teaching at schools, they are not only affected by the school context but also their relationships with class teachers and students they teach have impact on their emotional status. Thus, they tend to make emotional investments in these relationships, because 'their sense of success and satisfaction depend on them' (Hargreaves, 1998, p. 838).

Based on the review of literature in the area of construction of teacher identity, the present study also looked into the articulations of preservice teachers' expected and feared possible teacher selves to understand how their teaching practices experiences and blogging activities influenced their formation of teacher identities. To bear in mind that the concept of identity is dynamic, fluid and influenced by context and individuals, the preservice teachers' possible-selves at this phase of their professional beings emerge in relation to their experiences.

2.5 Blended Learning

The concept of blended learning is derived from the idea that learning is not just a one-time event but a continuous process (Graham, 2006). In simple terms, blended learning (BL) combines face-to-face and online components. However, the emergence of the concept of BL in education context has become a buzzword. Many questions have been raised about blending the right ingredients in the right amount. Although various explanations on what ‘blending’ exactly refers to have been written in the literature, it is noted that these answers are accumulated around certain themes. These are stated as follows: (1) combining instructional modalities, (2) combining instructional methods, and (3) combining online and face-to-face instructions (Graham, Allen & Ure, 2003, in Graham, 2006). Based on these broad themes that attempt to clarify what ‘blended instruction’ refers to, Graham (2006) states that the first two are rather broad so they fail to specifically illustrate what instructional modalities or what methods are meant. Graham (2006) emphasizes the central role of computer-based technologies in blended learning, saying that “blended learning systems combine face-to-face instruction with computer-mediated instruction” (p. 5). He believes that his working definition “reflects the idea that blended learning is the combination of instruction from two historically separate models of teaching and learning: traditional face-to-face learning systems and distributed learning systems” (Graham, 2006, p. 5).

In higher education contexts, other terms such as ‘web-enhanced’, ‘technology-enhanced’, ‘hybrid or online’ learning are used interchangeably. As the term BL encompasses various types of education, which can range from totally traditional to totally online, it offers students the freedom to choose the most suitable one. For

example, Ross and Gage (2006) state that City University, London offers many of its degree programs in the form of BL. Students who join a blended degree program are not ‘traditional students’; on the contrary, they are free to select any type of program that suits their contexts or needs.

Flexibility of BL systems has generated a variety of approaches to its implementation. Due to vast variety of tools from simple power point presentations to video-conferencing technologies that can be added to typical classroom instruction, different types of delivery methods have been generated. As a result of his extensive research in this field, Driscoll (1998) identified four possible approaches to BL. These are ‘self-regulated’ approach, ‘pedagogical’ approach, ‘mixed’ approach, and ‘outcome-based’ approach.

Self-regulated approach proposes that learners use a range of technological tools such as web-based audio or video clips, simulations and virtual learning environments to achieve their goals independently. In pedagogical approach, teachers decide on certain pedagogical approaches to reach their set goals. In order to achieve the learning outcomes they set, they may integrate necessary instructional technology tools but this is not necessary. Mixed approach refers to the combination of face-to-face instruction with desired sort of technological tool in a flexible way. In outcome-based approach, the delivery mode, and type of technology and methodology are decided in accordance with the goals set (Driscoll, 1998).

2.5.1 Positive Effects of Blended Learning

An extensive review of literature on BL integrated instruction in educational settings has revealed that many instructors and students enjoy the benefits of this trendy

approach. For example, Garrison and Kanuka (2004) point out that “blended learning based instruction has the potential to support deep and meaningful learning” (p. 95). In another study, Osguthorpe and Graham (2003) highlight the following six reasons for redesigning instruction in BL format:

1. **Pedagogical richness:** In order to enhance student learning course designers or teachers use blended learning approach. For example, some pre-course tasks can be assigned through an online medium so that students and teachers can make the most out of the class hours.
2. **Access to knowledge:** It is claimed that blended instruction provides more opportunities for course instructors to help students to master course more efficiently by providing more examples other than the course books.
3. **Social interaction:** Blended learning instruction has the potential to enhance both face-to-face and online contact. Online medium seems to provide learners the opportunity to interact with their instructor and other peers.
4. **Personal agency:** It is suggested that blended instruction offers students more choices. They may choose a way to study or perform a task through an online medium. Personal agency refers to such a sense of self-directedness or learner control that students develop.
5. **Cost effectiveness:** Implementing blended system to courses may reduce costs as such systems offer students more flexible learning environment and less tuition fee. Likewise, fulltime faculty staff can be replaced by part-time faculty, which help institutions save money.
6. **Ease of revision:** In blended instruction, teachers can easily put resources online, change or update them before or after their lessons. Moreover, they can easily

respond to their students' queries or comments, which provides the potential for a 'flexible, responsive and spontaneous' learning environment (p. 232).

Further examinations of Graham, Allen and Ure (2003, as cited in Graham, 2006) revealed that BL systems are preferred due to the following three reasons:

1. Improved pedagogy: The use of BL in instruction allows both instructors and students benefit from a variety of pedagogies and tools. It adds a dimension to traditional classroom instruction and enables more collaboration.
2. Increased access and flexibility: Any online feature added to any instruction has the potential to make it more flexible and more easily accessible. As Graham (2006) states, many programs would not exist if an online component was not added. He says that any program offered in the form of BL tends to enable many users from remote areas to easily follow any course because of the easy access.
3. Increased cost-effectiveness: Any program that runs BL format seems to provide its participants the opportunity to reach a variety of online sources without any cost.

BL approach to learning and teaching is widely used in many educational settings because of the advantages it embodies. First of all, this approach enables learners to communicate with each other and their teachers without being restricted to fixed class hours. Online component provides freedom for both parties to interact with each other asynchronously. Communication and collaboration enhance learning and development of knowledge. Moreover, a wide range of materials may be presented to learners in different mediums enabling them to construct their knowledge through

interaction. Different media like blogs, bulletin boards, and e-mails may be used to encourage learners to reflect on their experiences and share with others.

A number of studies have proved that instruction delivered in BL modes have profound effects on learners' learning (Bonk, Malinoswski, Angeli & East, 1998; Ferding & Trammell, 2004; Kanuka & Anderson, 1998; Ross & Gage, 2006; Singh, 2003). To illustrate, the results of a study conducted at Stanford University revealed that implementation of BL instruction increased students' motivation and learning as they completed tasks in due time at their own pace. This was achieved by addition of online components (Singh, 2003).

It also is highlighted that through integrating technological advancements into their instructions, many of the universities and colleges have increased their competitiveness in the higher education market. For example, the results of another study indicate that BL instruction has an impact on the delivery methods of instruction in higher education context offering more flexible education opportunities and is able to address diverse students' needs. It is reported that adding various online components into face-to-face instruction, BL methods have made higher education system highly effective (Ross & Gage, 2006).

2.5.2 Blogs within the Premises of Social Constructivist Theory

Social constructivist theory argues that learning mainly takes place through interaction with the social surroundings and exchanging ideas and experiences (Burr, 2015). If blogs are considered from this perspective, this online tool can be used to share experiences and generate knowledge. Such a social communication tool may eventually lead to accumulating and advancing the levels of knowing (Ferding &

Trammell, 2004; Kanuka & Anderson, 1998). What is more, interactions and exchange of ideas through the use of blogs may stimulate cognitive conflict among the bloggers if set and facilitated within the premises of social constructivist approach (Johansen & Reeves, 1996).

According to the social constructivist view, learners need to be communicative in order to process new information and build up on their own learning. Therefore, it is suggested that they should be encouraged to be active and interact with their peers, share their experiences and knowledge, and reflect on their experiences (Duffy & Cunningham, 1996; Johansen, 1992). Since social constructivist view promotes the importance social interaction, various types of instructions have gone beyond traditional face-to-face interaction. They have used blogs as one of online tools to promote peer feedback, collaborative work and scaffolding (Bonk, Malinkowski, Angeli, & East, 1998).

2.5.2.1 Blogs in Preservice Teacher Education

Despite the popularity of blogs in the field of education, the review of literature reveals that only a handful of studies have focused on implementation of blogs in preservice teacher education. One of the recently conducted studies reveals that the use of blogs as a supplementary tool in a preservice teacher education program increased exchange of ideas in that they were able to extend restricted in-class discussions through their blog postings to share knowledge and experiences in addition to their feelings and thoughts (Wang & Hsua, 2008).

Blogs have been integrated into instruction for various purposes depending on the goal that set to be achieved. For example, if set in an interactive way, blogs can be

used as learning spaces for students, not only from their teachers but also from their peers. Also, these online medium enables sharing of ideas through blog posts and incoming comments to them. This feature of blogs enables students to become aware of multiple perspectives of their peers. Moreover, asynchronous nature of blogs allows each and every student to navigate through this online tool in their own time and learn at their own pace (Godwin-Jones, 2008).

Results of a recently conducted study highlighted that integration of a blog feature to a preservice teacher education course motivated preservice teachers to communicate with other users and their teachers more frequently through this medium (Wang & Hsua, 2008). Furthermore, preservice teachers seemed to write their blog entries with more care as they were aware that their blog posts would be available not only for their teachers and peers, but also other audiences who would be interested in reading their teaching practice experiences. Since all activities of blog users can be displayed on the blog in a reverse chronological order, instructors can easily monitor their students' progress. Additionally, Godwin-Jones (2003) emphasized the ease of evaluating students' work online as their blogs are "linked to a course as an electronic portfolio showing development over time" (p. 13).

As blogs provide a convenient way to share ideas and experiences introverted students feel more comfortable expressing ideas compared to face-to-face discussions. Based on the results of their study, Wang and Hsua (2008) indicated that if blogs are used appropriately they may provide an online environment for preservice teachers for exchanging ideas without time and place restriction, encourage introverted ones to express their opinions and experiences more

comfortably and be informed about the latest technological advances which they can integrate in their daily or professional lives.

Despite the fact that blogs offer a great deal of ease and innovation for the users, some internal and external challenges make the users feel frustrated and demotivated. In the context of preservice teacher education, Wang and Hsua (2008) discovered that when participants were not familiar with using them, they tended to feel frustrated. They reported that since blog users were not used to blogs, they seemed to consider writing their blog entries as a burden. Also, they perceived reading other blog postings and leaving comments as a waste of time. Such perceptions eventually led them to refrain from blogging. The researchers suggested that a period of time is needed for training for using various features of blogs as well as getting into the habit of posting in blogs regularly, visiting others' blogs and commenting on their postings (Wang & Hsua, 2008).

2.5.2.2 Blogging to Support Teacher Identity Construction

There is widespread use of blogs among teachers as a pedagogical support resource that promotes interaction, sharing, and learning from each other (Mompean, 2010; Wang & Hsua, 2008). Also, with the help of blogs, preservice teachers can create personal online spaces to share their work, feelings, and thoughts related to their teaching practice experiences and allow peers to leave feedback (Levy, 2009). Research results indicated that blogging activities may support development of teachers' professional identities by providing the "opportunity to be self-directed, to reflect and engage in meta-cognition, to further develop one's thinking because of interaction with an audience, to play the role of knowledge-broker, and to engage in identity work" (Luehmann, 2008, p. 335). Similarly, a recent study highlighted the

potential contribution of blogs to collaborative learning and knowledge-building among preservice teachers (Pavo & Rodrigo, 2015). That is, blogging provided a venue for preservice teachers to receive feedback and support from their instructors, as well as to both give and receive from their fellow students.

Given that the use of blogs in teacher education programs is a relatively new phenomenon, the impact of their use on teachers' professional development and identity construction processes requires further research. Particularly, the effects of sharing teaching practice experiences and how preservice teachers learn from their peers' reflections (when they share their experiences), which also contributes to construction of their own teacher identities, remain incipient.

2.6 Related Studies

This section presents a number of related studies that have been conducted on the use of blogs in reflective practices. To illustrate, the study conducted by Stiler and Philleo (2003) examined preservice teachers' perceptions of blogs as an individual reflection tool. The researchers asked a group of preservice teachers to keep their reflective journals on blogs during their course work. At the end of the study, the participants were given a survey the results of which indicated that learning how to use the blogs was easy for the participants and they found the tool practical. Nevertheless, they reported that they would not use them in their other courses due to technical difficulties. Also, preservice teachers' reflection entries were found to be "analytic and evaluative" (p. 795). However, the authors did not mention whether the preservice teachers were given scaffolding question for guidance. Based on the findings, the researchers proposed a theoretical framework in which reflection tasks and processes must be set.

Subsequently, Yang (2009) conducted a similar study with student teachers who received training to teach English. The study was guided by theories of reflection and community of practice and asked participants to share their learning experiences with each other. The qualitative analysis of the data revealed that the student teachers reflected on teaching theories and their practical implications in their future profession. They particularly found the discussion forms within the blog to be a useful platform which brought them together and enabled them to share their practice teaching experiences.

A recent study conducted by Dalioglu and Adiguzel (2016) examined “the change observed in self-efficacy beliefs and possible selves of teacher candidates” (p. 651) in a Turkish context. The researchers followed a mixed method approach in their study. The quantitative part involved a pretest and a posttest which were administered both at the beginning and the end of the semesters to identify change during teaching practice. Also, the participants were interviewed at the end of the term. The results showed that the participants did not improve their self-efficacy beliefs about their classroom management skills, but they felt that they enhanced their teaching strategies and rapport with their students. With respect to their expected selves, the data did not yield significant change unlike in Hamman et al. (2013a) and Itoi (2014), who reported influence of teaching practice experiences on expected and feared possible selves.

Another recent study was carried out by Miller and Shifflet (2016), which looked into preservice teachers’ past memories to understand how these memories shaped their future expected and feared selves. The researchers asked 69 preservice teachers

to write about their elementary school memories and then conducted a thematic analysis using possible-selves as a theoretical framework to reach conclusive results. The results showed that preservice teachers highly valued their memories, more than the content of their formal education courses. The findings also indicated that preservice teachers' memories were powerful and influential when they prepared their lessons.

Overall, this chapter started with an overview of the scholarship on teacher education and domains of teacher knowledge. The chapter then proceeded with related studies on teaching practice, reflection and feedback in teacher education. Then, the chapter focused on teacher identity construction and related frameworks, such as sociocultural view and possible-selves theory. The chapter was finalized with studies pertinent to blended learning, reflection and teacher identity construction in preservice teacher education contexts. The next chapter will present the method of this study.

Chapter 3

METHOD

3.1 Overview

This chapter gives a detailed account of the research design, the context, and the participants of the study. It also presents the data collection tools and procedures, methods of data analysis, as well as the ethical considerations of the study.

3.2 Research Design

As stated earlier, the purpose of the study is two-fold. First, it aims to explore how preservice blogging interactions contribute to their reflection. Second, the study seeks to find out how preservice teachers' blogging interactions contribute to their teacher identity construction. To investigate these issues, this study was designed as an action research within the qualitative research paradigm. To realize the research aims and obtain comprehensive results, the present action research study was conducted in two cycles. The first cycle of the study was conducted in the fall semester of 2011-2012 academic year. Having considered the outcomes of the first cycle of the action research, the second cycle was carried out in the fall semester of 2012-2013 academic year.

The present study is defined as an action research since it embodies its qualities. As stated by Bogdan and Biklen (1992), action research seeks to improve current practices. Likewise, the current study aims to improve interaction and communication among the preservice teachers by integrating a blog tool into ELTE

406 Teaching Practice course. Owing to its cyclical, dynamic and collaborative nature, action research involves “repeated cycles of planning, observing, and reflecting” (Hine, 2013, p. 151). Individuals who participate in an action research study can implement the changes required for improvement. Owing to collaborative nature of action research, participants who have shared concerns can undertake reflective inquiry, and work together to bring enhancement to their current practices (Kemmis & McTaggart, 1988). The collaborative aspect of action research was also highlighted by Reason and Bradbury (2011), who stated that action research aims to “bring together action and reflection, theory and practice, in participation with others, in the pursuit of practical solutions to issues of pressing concern to people, and more generally the flourishing of individual persons and their communities” (pp. 9-10).

Action research is a wide-spread method of research for teachers and other stakeholders as it provides practitioners with new knowledge and perspective to enhance educational practices as well as overcome problems in schools and classrooms (Mills, 2001). It gained acceptance in the field of education as a “systematic inquiry conducted by teacher researchers, principals, school counselors or other stakeholders in the teaching learning environment” for the purposes of “gaining insight, developing reflective practice, effective position changes in the school environment and improving student outcomes and the lives of those involved” (Mills, 2011, p. 5). These features of action research facilitate professional development of practitioners and empower them (Hine, 2013). Owing to the features of action research, practitioners also have the opportunity to grow professionally as a result of conducting action research studies. What is more, it enables educators to

bridge the gap between research and practice (Mills, 2011). According to Hensen (1996, as cited in Hine, 2013), action research

(a) helps teachers develop new knowledge directly related to their classrooms, (b) promotes reflective teaching and thinking, (c) expands teachers' pedagogical repertoire, (d) puts teachers in charge of their craft, (e) reinforces the link between practice and student achievement, (f) fosters an openness toward new ideas and learning new things, and (g) gives teachers ownership of effective practices (p.152).

As regards processes of conducting action research, its cyclical nature makes it possible to generate ways to solve the problem identified by presenting clearly defined steps. An action research starts with identification of a problem, which is followed by development of an action plan to solve it. The plan usually involves appropriate research tools and methodology for data gathering. Then, data analysis is carried out to interpret the results and take steps to act on findings for improvement of practices. Upon evaluation of results and reflections, further steps are taken to devise the second cycle of the action research study (Ferrance, 2000). This cyclical nature of action research is demonstrated in Figure 3.1.

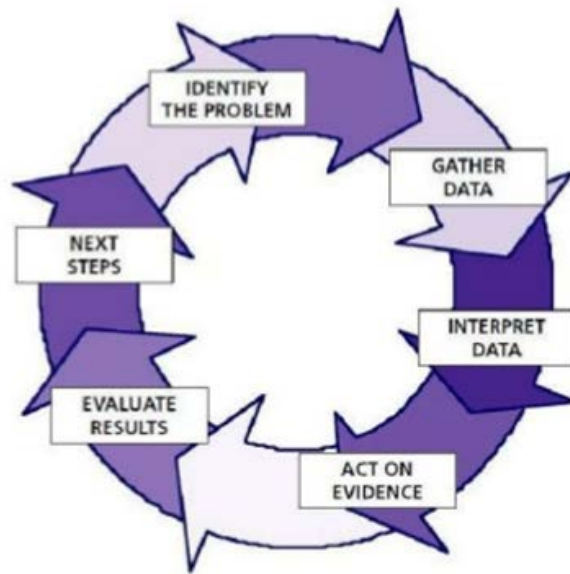


Figure 3.1: Cyclical pattern of action research (Ferrance, 2000)

The participants in action research distinguish itself from other experimental or a positivist research study in that participants belong to a specific group within the research context. In the present research context, participants are the pre-service teachers enrolled in ELTE 406 Teaching Practice course. Since an action research is carried out with a small number of participants, it presents a unique situation which enables in-depth investigation and more reliable data. Yet, because of the results gathered from a small group of participants, it is unlikely that they are generalizable to other contexts.

One of the underlying themes of action research is that it empowers participants as they research and acquire knowledge to bring solutions and improvement to current situation. Furthermore, action research embodies collaboration by its nature as it brings participants together to deal with problems and seek solutions. Researchers who are involved in action research support each other in the design, implementation and evaluation stages.

Action research has a lot of merits (Gebhard, 1999a). Firstly, the process of action research brings change and development to practices. It also has potential impacts on curriculum. Researchers who carry out action research investigate the educational practice systematically by employing appropriate research techniques to inform and bring change to current practices and enhance future practices (Carr & Kemmis, 1986).

Since the study is conducted in a natural setting, it also reflects the characteristics of qualitative research. One of the most distinctive features which separate qualitative research from quantitative research is that qualitative research is done in a natural setting (Bogdan & Biklen, 1982; Creswell, 2007). That is, researchers need to be present in the research context to observe, record any occurrences and be in close contact with participants. Furthermore, researchers should be in constant touch with the people who participate, closely observe them and be in the research setting to make note of any traits or changes that may take place during field work (Merriam, 1998). Therefore, researchers play a key role in data collection and analysis. It is important that the researcher is sensitive to the changes and reactions in a research context. As the study evolves, researchers have the opportunity to make use of any type of data for the analysis which may affect the direction of research.

When considering a topic of research or phenomenon, qualitative research focuses on the participants' views rather than that of the researcher. As Yıldırım and Şimşek (2005) state, qualitative research emphasizes the importance of “examining and understanding of social phenomena within the social environment it takes place” (p. 39).

Variety of data collection tools potentially improves the quality of data. Any pieces of data such as pictures, field notes, interviews, and artifacts can be worthy and significant for the qualitative researcher. Unlike quantitative research, theories, principles and questions emerge after the data analysis stage (Bogdan & Biklen, 1982; Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Since qualitative researchers do not have the intention to test a theory, they start with the “intention to explore a particular area” (Choudhuri, Glauser & Peregoy, 2004, p. 443). Then, they collect data and generate ideas from the patterns that emerge from it.

Also, due to its nature, qualitative research is context-bound. The present study is conducted with a small number of participants within a specific context, and in order to ensure the transferability of the results, a detailed account of context and participants is provided so that “others can see setting for themselves” (Gay, Mills & Airasian, 2009, p. 375). Thus, detailed information about the context, participants and data collection tools is presented in the following sections of the chapter.

3.3 The Context

The present study was conducted in the English Language Teaching (ELT) program of the Foreign Language Education Department at Eastern Mediterranean University in Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus (TRNC). Being one of the well-established departments of the Faculty of Education, Foreign Language Education Department is fully accredited by the Turkish Higher Education Council. In addition, in February 2014, the ELT program was accredited by AQAS (Agency for Quality Assurance through Accreditation of Study Programs), which is registered with the European Quality Assurance Register for Higher Education (Student Handbook, 2015-2016, p. 1). The department hosts majority of its students from Turkey and Turkish Republic

of Northern Cyprus (TRNC). It also has a student body of different nationalities (e.g., Iran, Iraq, Jordan, Oman, China, Kazakhstan, Turkmenistan, and Belarus). Since the medium of instruction is English, students have to take an in-house proficiency test and pass it with a minimum score that is equivalent to IELTS 5.5. Those who fail the test need to study at the English Preparatory School.

The ELT program of Foreign Language Education Department offers a wide range of courses which cover language work, approaches to ELT, school experience and practicum to equip the students with necessary theoretical knowledge, and skills inform them about the recent developments in the field of ELT and provide practical experience before they graduate. All of courses are delivered at the department and in a typical classroom setting. That is, the courses follow a face-to-face format without any online tool attached. However, the delivery mode of the ELTE 406 Teaching Practice course was modified for the research purposes of the present study and was offered in a blended form with a blog feature integrated.

Being one of the compulsory courses offered by the Foreign Language Education Department, the ELTE 406 Teaching Practice course is a fourth-year course which is taken either in fall or spring semester. As described on the course policy sheet approved by the Foreign Language Education Department, the course intends to “prepare prospective teachers for teaching in a real classroom environment” (see Appendix A). The course mainly focuses on lesson planning, lesson observation, teaching practice, and evaluation of classroom performance (e.g., reflecting on teacher activities, learning outcomes, classroom management). The intended learning outcomes of the course are as follows:

Preservice teachers will

- i. develop an understanding of basics of lesson planning;
- ii. plan and implement microteaching sessions in class;
- iii. observe a series of lessons at prearranged schools and reflect them considering a variety of aspects such as teacher performance, classroom management, error correction, and seating arrangement;
- iv. plan and teach a series of lessons in a real classroom environment;
- v. write reflection reports with regard to strengths and weaknesses (i.e. points to improve) after each teaching practice lesson; and
- vi. write a final report evaluating their overall practice teaching experience.

As can be seen from the intended learning outcomes stated mentioned, the course seems highly demanding for the preservice teachers as they need time to prepare their micro-teaching lessons, plan teaching practice lessons, meet with the course instructor before and after conducting their practice teaching lessons to receive feedback and guidance. The course is also demanding for the instructor as adequate time for meeting with the preservice teachers needs to be arranged.

3.4 Participants

The participants of this study were pre-service teachers enrolled in ELTE 406 Teaching Practice course at the Foreign Language Education Department of Education Faculty in Eastern Mediterranean University in the 2011-2012 academic year. In line with the sampling in qualitative research, the selection of the participants for the current study was convenience sampling as this was the easiest way and most readily available to the researcher at the time of data collection (Fraenkel & Wallen, 2006). Since the ultimate goal of the qualitative researcher is to

gain in-depth insights and understanding of the research context in question, working with a small number of participants in close contact is helpful in yielding more comprehensive data (Merriam, 1998).

Both in the first and the second cycle of the study, the participants' consent was asked for all of the blogging activities, including video-recording of two of their teaching practice lessons, and sharing 5-8-minute-segment videos on the class blog privately (e.g., videos were password protected). All of the participants consented to share their blog activities with the researcher and thus, became a part of the research study (see Appendix B).

3.4.1 Participants in the First Cycle

The first cycle of the study was conducted in the fall semester of 2011-1012 academic year. Nine preservice teachers in the researcher's class (i.e., the blended learning group) were the participants. Out of nine participants, seven were from Turkey, one was from Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus (TRNC) and one participant was from Russia. Three participants were male and six were female. Their age range was between 21 and 26 and language proficiency level ranged from Upper-intermediate to Advanced based on the proficiency test results that they had taken before starting the ELT program. When the researcher held the blog training session at the beginning of the semester, she found out that none of the participants were introduced to blogs and they had not had blogging experience before. All of the participants were placed at Foreign Languages and English Preparatory School (FLEPS) of Eastern Mediterranean University to fulfill the Teaching Practice course requirements. Background information about the participants is displayed in Table 3.1.

Table 3.1: Participants in the First and the Second Cycle of the Study

Cycle	Participant*	Gender**	Age	Nationality	Previous blogging experience
First cycle	P1	M	22	Turkish	No
	P2	F	26	Turkish	No
	P3	F	21	Turkish Cypriot	No
	P4	F	22	Turkish	No
	P5	F	22	Russian	No
	P6	F	24	Turkish	No
	P7	M	24	Turkish	No
	P8	M	24	Turkish	No
	P9	F	22	Turkish	No
Second Cycle	P10	F	21	Turkish	No
	P11	F	21	Turkish	No
	P12	F	21	Turkish	No
	P13	M	21	Turkish Cypriot	No
	P14	F	22	Turkish	No
	P15	F	23	Turkish	No

Note:

*P stands for ‘Participant’ and the accompanying number (1, 2, 3, etc.) indicates the individual participant’s number.

** M: Male, F: Female

The participants in the first cycle of the study were asked to perform the following blogging activities in addition to the requirements of the face-to-face class:

- sharing observation reflections,
- commenting on three movies,
- sharing the reflections of teaching practice lessons on their personal blogs (both vide-recorded and not recorded)
- viewing their peers’ video recorded teaching practice lessons and giving feedback on their teaching performances,
- writing the final report which evaluates the course and the blogging experiences.

At the end of the semester, face-to-face interviews were done with seven participants and two participants were interviewed on the phone.

3.4.2 Participants in the Second Cycle

The second cycle of the research was conducted in the fall semester of 2012-2013 academic year. As the researcher did not have a class of the ELTE 406 Teaching Practice course, upon the consent of the course instructors, she asked the preservice teachers who were enrolled in the course whether they would be interested in taking part in the study. Thus, six participants volunteered to be a part of the study in the second cycle. One of the participants was male and the other five were female. Only one participant was from the TRNC and the rest were from Turkey. The age range of the participants was between 21 and 23. Based on the proficiency test results, English proficiency level of participants ranged from Upper-intermediate to Advanced. Similar to the participants in the first cycle, the participants in the second cycle reported no previous blogging experience. Four preservice teachers were placed at two different public secondary schools and two of them were placed at FLEPS to complete the course requirements of ELTE 406 Teaching Practice course.

The participants in the second cycle of the study were asked to perform the following blogging activities in addition to the requirements of the face-to-face class:

- sharing reflections on their classroom observations,
- writing critique for three movies reflecting on the teacher characters,
- sharing the reflections of their video-recorded teaching practice lessons and those of their peers, and
- sharing their evaluation of the course and blogging experiences.

In terms of the number of the blog tasks, there was not a difference between the first and the second cycle of the study. At the end of the semester, the participants were interviewed by the researcher.

3.5 Data Collection Instruments

The present study employed multiple data collection instruments to obtain comprehensive data. These comprised the blog posts of the preservice English language teachers; namely, teaching practice lesson reflection blog entries, final report blog entries, movie critique blog entries, feedback lesson plans and video-recorded teaching practice lessons, and the semi-structured interviews. These All the data sources were qualitative in nature.

3.5.1 Blog Posts of the Participants

Throughout the fall semester of 2011-2012 academic year, the preservice teachers posted their assignments (both assessed and unassessed) on the blogs. They were required to post all aforementioned tasks on their personal blogs. Also, they were asked to visit their peers' personal blogs to read their lesson plans, teaching practice lesson reflection blog entries and movie critiques and leave feedback. Overall, the preservice teachers were required to post minimum of fifteen blog posts (i.e., one video critique, three movie critiques, four observation reflections, two mini teaching reflections, four reflections on their teaching practice lessons and a final report). The course instructor (i.e., the researcher) provided the preservice teachers with posted detailed information and guidelines for each task on the class blog.

At the end of the first cycle, the course instructor did some preliminary data analysis and discovered that the participants had not visited their peers' personal blogs to read their reflection blog entries and write feedback. So, before conducting the second

cycle of the study in the fall semester of 2012-2013 academic year, she made some changes by moving movie critique blog entries and feedback on video-recorded teaching practice lessons to the class blog. By doing this, the researcher aimed at increasing the amount of interaction. She thought that pooling the blog entries of these tasks on the class blog the participants would see their peers' entries on one platform and would feel more motivated to contribute through commenting. So, the participants would only post their lesson plans and teaching practice reflections on their personal blogs. However, due to administrative reasons, the researcher did not have a class of ELTE 406 Teaching Practice course. Thus, she asked the preservice teachers who took this course and had volunteered participants who had their own course instructors. Unfortunately, a few weeks after the study was conducted, the researcher observed that the participants had not used their personal blogs, despite her encouraging efforts. Therefore, she had to move those lesson plan and teaching practice reflection blog entries (i.e., all the blog activities) to the class blog in order to keep participants' activities on one platform. In other words, the participating preservice teachers in the second cycle of the study only followed the class blog and all the blog communications regarding the teaching practice reflections, movie critiques, feedback on teaching practice videos, final report evaluations and so on the took place on the class blog.

3.5.1.1 Video Critiques

Both in the first and the second cycle of the study, a previously video recorded teaching practice lesson of a preservice teacher from the previous semester was used for pedagogical purposes, after obtaining that person's consent. The purpose of this task was to give the participants some ideas about their future teaching practice experiences. After viewing the video, the participants were asked to write a short

reflection on several points they noticed regarding the strengths and points to consider in that preservice teacher's teaching practice. The course instructor (i.e, the researcher) posted the video-recorded lesson and the instructions on the class blog and asked the participants to post critiques on their personal blogs in the first cycle. In the second cycle of the study, however, the participants posted their critiques on the class blog due to the reasons explained above.

3.5.1.2 Movie Critiques

In the first cycle of the study, the preservice teachers watched three movies in a computer room arranged by the researcher on a day and time which was suitable for all the participants apart from the regular class hours. In the second cycle, however, the researcher could not arrange a time that suits all participants. Therefore, she asked the participants to watch the first and the third movies in their own time. In order to motivate the participants to use their blogs more frequently, the researcher invited the participants to her home to watch the second movie and share their initial reflections with each other before posting them on the class blog.

The movies that preservice teachers watched were 'Dead Poets Society', 'Dangerous Minds' and 'Freedom Writers'. These movies were selected due to their pertinence to the study. To illustrate, Dead Poets Society depicts an English teacher who has an influence on his students' life and their thoughts on learning process through 'unorthodox' teaching methods. The teacher "introduces his students to poetry, and his free-thinking attitude and the liberating philosophies of the authors he introduces to his class have a profound effect on his students". In short, he "urges his students to seize the day and live their lives boldly" (Rotten Tomatoes, 2010). The movie is a

very good example to show the preservice teachers that a teacher has the potential to change the life and perspectives of their students.

The second movie, *Dangerous Minds*, successfully pictures how a teacher communicates with a “classroom of tough, sullen teenagers, all from lower-class and underprivileged backgrounds, involved in gang warfare and drug pushing, flatly refusing to engage with anything” (*Dangerous Minds*, n.d.) by devising “classroom exercises that teach similar principles to the prescribed work, but using themes and language that appeal to the streetwise students” (*Dangerous Minds*, n.d.). The movie is a good example of various classroom management techniques which would potentially broaden the preservice teachers’ perspective and instructional repertoire.

The last movie, *Freedom Writers*, is an interesting movie which was based on a true story. The movie is “about an idealistic but strong-willed teacher who transforms a chaotic class of hardened inner city youths” by connecting them through their diaries, in which they sincerely share their real life stories (*Freedom Writers*, n.d.). The movie successfully illustrates that if a teacher is devoted and determined, they can achieve anything regarding their students’ achievements. The fact that this movie is based on a true story makes it more valuable to watch for preservice teachers.

In short, each of the movies briefly described above presented different characteristics of a teacher who treated their students differently and dealt with various issues, such as classroom management, lesson delivery, students’ personal problems and school policies in a particular way. The rationale behind the specific choice of these movies was to familiarize the preservice teachers with different

school settings, and teacher profiles, and encourage them to think critically and reflect on particular events regarding the teachers' behaviors in the movies. In order to achieve the above mentioned objectives, the researcher posted a set of guiding questions for each movie reflection task on the class blog for preservice teachers to answer while writing their movie critiques (see Appendix C). The preservice teachers in the first cycle were required to post their movie critiques on their personal blogs, and the participants in the second cycle were asked to post their movie critiques on the class blog within a week after viewing each one.

3.5.1.3 Feedback on the Lesson Plans

The preservice teachers were required to post their lesson plans two days before their teaching practice lessons to be able to receive ample feedback from their course instructor/researcher, peers and/or cooperating teacher.

In the first cycle of the study, the researcher held a session on lesson planning, and then presented preservice teachers with two sample lesson plans in one of the face-to-face class hours. In order to have preservice teachers to post their lesson plans on their personal blogs in a more appealing way, the researcher introduced the participants with a web tool called 'box', which could be reached at <http://box.net>. To help them use the tool efficiently, the researcher held a workshop, where they created an account in box.net and practiced embedding their lesson plans and other documents on their blogs. The participants who did not attend the workshop were given the same instruction in the researcher's office later. The researcher also posted a sample lesson plan on the class blog using the 'box' feature as well as a template lesson plan for preservice teachers to download and use it to write their teaching practice lesson plans.

In the second cycle of the study, the researcher provided a short training on how to post lesson plans on their blogs, too. However, since the researcher was not the instructor of the ELTE 406 Teaching Practice course, she had difficulty in having the participants use their personal blogs to post their lesson plans on their personal blogs. In other words, none of the participants in the second cycle of the study shared their lesson plans neither on their personal blogs nor the class blogs, and thus, they did not receive any feedback from their peers before their teaching practice lessons. On the contrary, preservice teachers met their course instructor in her office to receive feedback on their lesson plans prior to their teaching practice lessons.

3.5.1.4 Self-Evaluation Reflection Blog Posts

Both in the first and the second cycles of the study, the preservice teachers were required to write a detailed reflection blog entry on their teaching practice lessons. In both cycles, the researcher posted a set of guiding questions on the class blog for preservice teachers to refer to while writing reflections on teaching practice lessons (see Appendix D). They were instructed to respond to each question so as to provide a coherent and organized reflection blog posting. The aim of providing preservice teachers with guiding questions was to encourage them to reflect on their lessons providing evidence, and compose an organized blog post. In the first cycle, the participants posted these reflections on their personal blogs. However, in the second cycle, the participants posted their teaching practice lesson reflection blog entries under the teaching practice lesson videos that the researcher recorded and posted on the class blog. In order to facilitate communication among preservice teachers, the researcher encouraged them to view their peers' video-recorded teaching practice lessons and reflection posts to leave feedback.

3.5.1.5 Feedback on Video-Recorded Teaching Practice Lessons

Both in the first and the second cycles of the study, two preservice teachers' teaching practice lessons were video-recorded by the researcher and put on the class blog for other participants to view and leave feedback under the video. The researcher provided a short introduction about the video-recorded lesson and asked participants to view the video and give feedback on their peer's lesson regarding the strengths they noticed, and areas to improve by making suggestions to help them improve their teaching performances in the following lessons. Preservice teachers were familiar with the conventions of giving feedback as they also went through the same procedures in class while providing feedback on their peers' micro-teaching performances. For the purposes of privacy, all of the videos were password-protected and only the participants and the researcher were able to view them.

3.5.1.6 Final Reports

At the end of the semester, preservice teachers were required to write a final report / semester evaluation where they would extensively reflect on various issues addressed in the guiding questions. In the first cycle of the study, this was an assessed task. To prevent cheating, preservice teachers were asked to password protect their final reports. However, in the second cycle of the study, like all other tasks performed on the blogs, this task was not assessed either since the researcher was an outsider. What is more, the researcher had to give the task a different title because the task named 'Final Report' was already given to the preservice teachers by their course instructors but it did not include any significant reflection questions on preservice teachers' blogging experiences. Therefore, the researcher presented the task to the participants as a 'Semester Evaluation' (see Appendix E & F). Table 3.2 presents the components of the final task in the first and the second cycle of the study. As it is seen, most of

the tasks were the same. However, in the second cycle, none of the blog tasks were assessed.

Table 3.2: The Components of the Final Report in Two Cycles

Cycle one: Final Report	Cycle two: Semester Evaluation
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assessed • Password protected <p>The final report included the following topics:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Classroom observations • Lesson planning • Pre-observation meetings • Teaching practice lessons • Blogging experience • Final thoughts and feelings 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unassessed • Wasn't password protected <p>Semester evaluation report included the following topics:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Classroom observations • Lesson planning • Pre-observation meetings • Teaching practice lessons • Blogging experience • Final thoughts and feelings

While the preservice teachers in the first cycle posted their final reports on their personal blogs, the preservice teachers in the second cycle posted them on the class blog.

3.5.2 Semi-Structured Interviews

The aim of conducting semi-structured interviews was to gain insight into preservice teachers' blogging experiences, as regards their blogging interactions with their peers, challenges they faced and how this whole blogging experiences contributed to teacher identity construction. For this purpose, the researcher arranged face-to-face meeting with each participant after the teaching practice course was completed.

In qualitative research, conducting interview is very widespread as it is one of the main tools that enables researcher to collect more in-depth and detailed information useful to understand what is being researched. As it is suggested, interviews are done to understand other people's perspective and find out about their behaviors, feelings,

ideas, attitudes intentions, which is impossible for a researcher to observe (Patton, 1990).

Interviews may range from structured, semi-structured, to unstructured. Structured interviews include a number of questions that are made available before the interview. The interviewer strictly follows the question throughout the interview. Semi-structured interview is the type of interview which is commonly preferred as it includes guiding questions but at the same time offers the flexibility of changing the order and the wording of the questions to researcher according to the flow of the interview. Unstructured interview, on the other hand, is flexible, open-ended questions are prepared but the interview is more like a conversation (Meriam, 1998).

For the purposes of the current research, a number of open-ended questions were prepared. The researcher considered the research questions while constructing the interview questions. Mainly, the questions sought to get answers from the participants as regards their perceptions of the blogging experiences. Through the interview questions, the researcher intended to gather data about the participants' interactions with their peers. (i.e., if they were active bloggers, what encouraged them to do so, and if they were inactive, what factors discouraged them). Also, the researcher aimed to collect some in-depth information about how their teaching practice experiences affected construction of their teacher identities (i.e., whether their interactions with their peers, their teaching practice activities, and reflections on the movies and their own experiences helped them realize certain teacher qualities).

As Merriam and Tisdell (2015) stated, piloting interview questions helps the researcher to “quickly learn which questions are confusing and need rewording, which questions yield useless data” (p. 117). In line with Merriam’s (1998) suggestions the interview questions were piloted once they were constructed. The researcher asked her colleague who taught the same course to read the questions for the clarity of their meaning and provide feedback. Then, some questions were reworded and the ones that would not be relevant to the research questions were removed.

In the first cycle of the study, five of these semi-structured interviews (see Appendix G) were conducted in person in a private environment and were recorded with a sound recorder. However, since three other participants left right after the final examination week, they were interviewed on the telephone. Each interview lasted from forty to seventy-five minutes and they were transcribed carefully for data analysis. In the second cycle, the seven participants were interviewed in person. The researcher recorded each interview, which took around 25-30 minutes, with a sound recorder and transcribed them afterwards (see Appendix H).

3.6 Data Collection Procedures

As stated before, the researcher observed and experienced that time allocated (two hours per week) for the ELTE 406 Teaching Practice course in the curriculum was not adequate for discussing teaching related issues like lesson planning, sharing teaching experiences that pre-service teacher had, giving feedback on teaching practices and providing support for those who need it during the semester in the previous academic years. Therefore, she decided to integrate a blog feature as one of asynchronous online communication tools to overcome the problem.

In line with the conventions of action research, the current study has been conducted in two cycles in two different semesters. Table 3.3 presents a comprehensive outline of the data collection procedures according to chronological order both in the first and the second cycles of the study.

Table 3.3: Chronological Order of Data Collection in the First and the Second Cycle on Weekly Instructional Schedule

Weeks	In Class	Blogs
Week 1	Introduction to the course	Introduction to the course
Week 2	Ice- breakers; Lesson Planning (LP) Training: Setting up a blog	Signing up for the class blog
Week 3	Lesson planning (cont.) Classroom management	Reflecting on a sample lesson Movie critique-1- (Dead Poets Society)
Week 4	Grammar & Vocabulary SCHOOL – Observations	Classroom observations reflections
Week 5	Pronunciation & Reading SCHOOL - Observations	Classroom observations reflections
Week 6	Listening & Writing SCHOOL – Mini teachings	Movie critique-2- (Dangerous Minds)
Week 7:	Speaking & Integrated skills SCHOOL – Mini teachings	LP-1 (LP1)(1 st cycle of the study only) Share lesson plans & give feedback to peers
Week 8:	Revision	LP-1 (1 st cycle of the study only) Share lesson plans & give feedback to peers TPL 1 self-reflection & feedback to peers
Weeks 9 & 10	Midterm Examinations	Movie critique-3- (Freedom Writers) TPL 1 self-reflection & feedback to peers
Week 11	Demo Lesson SCHOOL – TPL	LP 2 (1 st cycle of the study only) Share lesson plans & give feedback to peers
Week 12	Demo Lesson SCHOOL – TPL	LPs for formal teaching-2 on blogs TPL 2-self-reflection & feedback to peers
Week 13	Demo Lesson SCHOOL – TPL	LP-3 (1 st cycle of the study only) TPL 3-self-reflection & feedback to peers
Week 14	Demo Lesson SCHOOL – TPL	LP 4 (1 st cycle of the study only) TPL 4-self-reflection & feedback to peers
Week 15	Assessment/remedial work & overall reflections	Final Report: Reflections on the course, blogging activities and your teaching practice experiences

The following sections aim to give a detailed account of the procedures followed in two cycles.

3.6.1 Procedures Followed in the First Cycle of the Study

As stated above, the first cycle of the study was conducted in the fall semester of 2011-2012 academic year. The actions taken while carrying out the research study are described below in detail.

3.6.1.1 Setting the Class Blog

Three months prior to the fall semester of 2011-2012 academic year, the researcher obtained a pro-membership from edublogs.org and set up a class blog for the ELTE 406 Teaching Practice course (<http://teachingpractice.edublogs.org/>). The pro-membership required a small amount of membership fee and it provided the researcher with some opportunities like uploading videos and files as well as enrolling up to 50 students to the class blog. As the researcher had not had any blogging experience before, she learned how to set up and use different features of a blog tool during 2011 summer period to gain knowledge about blogs. Figure 3.2 illustrates the home page of the class blog.



Figure 3.2: A screenshot of the class blog set up for the study

3.6.1.2 Preparing the Course in Blended Learning Format

Since the course was designed in a blended format, the researcher made some modifications to the existing ELTE 406 Teaching Practice course because of the blog feature she integrated. First of all, she made changes to the specific learning outcomes of the course. After setting up the class blog named 'teachingpractice.edublogs.org', the researcher identified the blog and class tasks. Afterwards, the researcher prepared a fifteen-week tentative weekly instructional plan and added it to the course policy sheet (Appendix A). In other words, she included the learning outcomes which referred to preservice teachers' blogging activities to overall learning outcomes of the course. The following revised objectives appeared on the course policy sheet of the ELTE 406 Teaching Practice course in the fall semester of 2011-2012 academic year. The learning outcomes that the researcher added and modified appear in bold and italics below (i.e., iv, vi, vii, and viii).

By the end of the course, students will have:

- i. demonstrated understanding of basics of lesson planning;
- ii. planned and implemented microteaching sessions in class;
- iii. observed three to five lessons at prearranged schools and reflected on different aspects such as teacher performance, classroom management, error correction, and seating arrangement.
- iv. *reflected on their teaching practice lessons (e.g., classroom management, error correction, delivering lesson and so on) on personal blogs following a guided scaffold;***
- v. planned and taught four lessons in real classroom environment;

- vi. viewed and provided feedback on peers' lesson plans, video-recorded teaching practice lessons and reflection blog postings;*
- vii. written a final report evaluating their overall teaching practice and **blogging** experience;*
- viii. developed an awareness of teaching in general; and constructing a sense of teacher identity as a result of teaching practices and interaction with students, peers, supervisor and cooperating teachers.*

Considering the popularity of social media, the researcher also established a closed group on Facebook, where she would provide instant support during weekdays for two hours out of school in case the participants would like to communicate with her.

3.6.1.3 Introducing the Study to Preservice Teachers

In the fall semester of 2011-2012 academic year, three groups of preservice teachers took the ELTE 406 Teaching Practice course. While two groups had the course in traditional face-to-face format with other instructors, the group of which the researcher was the course instructor was offered the course in the blended form. That is, in addition face to face interaction, the preservice teachers would use the class blog and their personal blogs during the semester (i.e., a fourteen-week period).

At the beginning of the semester, the course instructor (i.e., the researcher) gave preservice teachers information about the purpose of the research study, and then, held a training session in which she showed the class blog she had set up. After explaining the rationale behind adding the blog feature to the course, the researcher guided the preservice teachers to set up their personal blogs on which they were required to post relevant tasks. The participants were also informed that all their blogging activities would be used for the research purposes upon their consent.

As a part of the blogging activities, the participants were given information regarding what activities they were expected to perform on the blog. The following information was given to them: watching the three assigned movies and posting their critiques about them, posting lesson plans of four teaching practice lessons, sharing reflections of their teaching practice lessons, viewing their peers' video-recorded teaching practice lessons which would be posted on the class blog and giving feedback under it in the form of comments, and sharing the final evaluation report on the class blog. Finally, the participants were informed that they would be interviewed at the end of the semester.

3.6.1.4 Blog Training Sessions for the Participants

In the second week of the fall semester of 2011-2012 academic year, the researcher held the class in a computer room at the Foreign Language Education Department to give information about the blogs and the purposes of using blogs in general and particularly for ELTE 406 Teaching Practice course. The ultimate aim was to have preservice teachers set up their blogs. First of all, the researcher introduced the preservice teachers to the class blog and mentioned the advantages of using blogs as a part of the course.

Then, the researcher demonstrated the steps of setting up a personal blog using a computer that was connected to the data projector. She asked the preservice teachers to follow the same steps on their computers. Once the participants set up their personal blogs, they wrote their first blog entry. They shared some information about themselves and expectations from ELTE 406 Teaching Practice course. All of the participants posted their first blog entry at the end of the training session.

In week 3, the researcher held another one-hour training session in the same computer lab to present some other features of blogging to the participants. For example, they practiced creating categories like movie critiques, lesson plans, and formal reaching reflections and so on, as well as tagging the posts and adding a media such as pictures and videos in their blog posts. The preservice teachers who missed face-to-face class meetings were given the same training on blogs and provided guidance later in the researcher's office.

3.6.1.5 Getting Permission to Video-Record the Teaching Practice Lessons

In the first cycle of the study, all preservice teachers were allocated in classes at the Foreign Languages and English Preparatory School of Eastern Mediterranean University (FLEPS) to carry out their classroom observations, mini-teaching and teaching practice lessons.

Before placing preservice teachers to classes, the researcher wrote a petition to the FLEPS administration to request permission for video-recording two teaching practice lessons that preservice teachers would conduct, and asking for volunteer class teachers to act as cooperating teachers throughout the semester. The volunteering class teachers (i.e., cooperating teachers) were expected to guide preservice teachers during the selection of lesson content and join the observation and feedback processes, as well. After going through the necessary procedures, the school administration gave permission to the researcher to video-record two of the four teaching practice lessons and put them on the class blog for online discussion. Upon the approval of the request, the researcher contacted each cooperating teacher in person, gave detailed information about the process, and then she paired each

preservice teacher with one cooperating teacher. Afterwards, the researcher arranged a date and time for the pairs to meet and start working together.

3.6.1.6 Other Procedures Followed in the First Cycle

Upon completion of the training sessions, preservice teachers were able to use the class blog and their personal blogs to fulfill the course requirements. Preservice teachers were asked to follow the class blog on a weekly basis to be informed about any recent announcements and the tasks they were assigned to. In order to better help preservice teachers to organize the content of their blog posts, the researcher prepared a set of guidelines for each task and published them on the class blog. As the semester proceeded, the researcher posted on the class blog the 5-8 minute segments of video-recorded teaching practice lessons that preservice teachers conducted for the participating preservice teachers to watch and provide feedback on the strengths and areas to improve in their lessons.

In addition to the class blog, preservice teachers had their personal blogs. Accordingly, they were required to perform the following activities:

- a. watching a video of a former PST teaching in a real class and comment on his/her performance in general;
- b. watching three movies, each featuring a 'teacher' character with different personality attributes and different approaches to 'teaching' and 'classroom events', and then, write blog entry on the movie responding to the guiding questions prepared by the researcher (see Appendix C);
- c. posting their lesson observation reflections;

- d. preparing and posting their lesson plans in order to receive feedback from their peers and supervisors and revise their lesson plans according to the feedback received prior to teaching practice lessons;
- e. viewing the lesson plans of their peers in their group and posting feedback on strong points and areas to improve in their lesson plans;
- f. writing a post-lesson reflection after each teaching practice lesson and posting it on their personal blog within three days to share their teaching experiences based on the given guidelines; and
- g. writing a final report to evaluate the course and their teaching practice experiences.

As the researcher was also the course instructor, she frequently visited preservice teachers' blogs and commented on their blog posts to support and guide them throughout the semester. At the end of the semester, she evaluated preservice teachers' task performances both in class and on the blog. The preservice teachers were assessed on following components of the course:

- micro-teaching sessions in class,
- class participation,
- lesson plans posted in blogs,
- reflective reports in blogs,
- final reports, and
- blog participation (i.e., giving feedback to peers, posting in blogs in a timely fashion and in accurate and appropriate writing).

3.6.2 Procedures Followed in the Second Cycle of the Study

Upon the completion of the first cycle of the study, the researcher made some amendments and improvements in the blog. Then, the second cycle was conducted in the fall semester of 2012-2013 academic year. Some slight changes took place in the procedures followed in the second cycle of the study. These are presented in the following sections.

3.6.2.1 Revision of the Class Blog

Upon the completion of the first cycle, the researcher changed the theme of the blog to make it look more professional and comprehensible. Based on her observations and preliminary data analysis, she moved the movie critiques, classroom observation reflections, and reflections on teaching practice lessons blog tasks to class blog. By doing so, the researcher aimed at increasing the interaction among the participants by accumulating all the responses from the preservice teachers on the class blog instead of having them on their separate personal blogs. This change would help participants easily see what their peers shared about the given task on one blog.

Initially, the researcher posted a blog to greet the new participants. She also invited the participants in the first cycle of the study to share their blogging and teaching practice experiences as comments under that post. By doing this, she aimed at motivating the new participants. Some of the former participants of the study contributed to the interaction by posting their reflections on their experiences.

3.6.2.2 Getting Permission to Conduct the Second Cycle

Unlike the first cycle of the study, the researcher didn't teach a class of ELTE 406 Teaching Practice course herself due to logistics. Therefore, she wrote a petition to the head of the Foreign Language Education Department to ask for permission to

conduct the second cycle of the study with the course instructors and the participants (i.e., pre-service teachers) of ELTE 406 Teaching Practice. Having received the permission, the researcher contacted the course instructors to arrange date and time for visiting their classes to give information about the study and ask for volunteering participants. Then, she visited both classes separately in the last 30 minutes of their class hours in the third week of the academic semester. She gave information about the aims of the research and what they would be expected to perform should they agree to participate in the study. During her visit, she also presented the modified class blog to the participants and gave information about what a blog was and why she had set it up for this course. She also showed some of the personal blogs of preservice teachers who were the participants in the first cycle as examples. Then, the researcher introduced some of the blog tasks that the preservice teachers would perform. The participants in the second cycle were required to perform the same activities as the participants in the first cycle of the study. However, as mentioned before, some of the blog tasks had been moved from the personal blogs to the class blog with the expectation of increased interaction. Therefore, the researcher listed the tasks that preservice teachers were expected to perform as follows:

- setting up a personal blog in the first training session,
- writing a greeting blog post,
- sharing observation experiences on the class blog with other peers under the relevant post as comment,
- posting the lesson plans of two teaching practice lessons, which will be video-recorded, on their personal blog,
- posting two blog entries to share the reflections on the video-recorded teaching practice lessons on personal blog,

- posting to share brief reflection on video-recorded teaching practice lesson posted on the class blog with peers, and respond to the comments from peers and the researcher,
- sharing video critique posts under the relevant post on the class blog, and
- sharing their evaluation of the course on personal blogs.

Upon the aforementioned informative session, ten preservice teachers volunteered to participate in the study but a few weeks later, three preservice teachers decided to leave the study due to personal reasons. Unfortunately, one of the participants did not fulfill any of the blogging activities and thus, he was excluded from the study. Therefore, six preservice teachers in total participated in the second cycle of the study.

3.6.2.3 Getting the Consent of Preservice Teachers and Cooperating Teachers

Before conducting the second cycle, the researcher explained the purpose of the research and gave information about the procedures that the participants were expected to follow. The preservice teachers and the cooperating teachers consented to become a part of the study by signing the consent form to formally confirm that they had agreed to share all the documents with the researcher for the purposes of the research (see Appendix J).

3.6.2.4 Blog Training Sessions for Preservice Teachers

In the fourth week of the semester, the researcher held a meeting with the participating preservice teachers in a computer room at the Faculty of Education in order to introduce the class blog thoroughly, provide training on how to set up a personal blog, and give a hands-on practice to initiate the blogging activities. Five of the participants attended the training session. After, they were given information

about the class blog; they set up their own personal blogs and wrote their first blog posts. The researcher linked the participants' blogs to the class blog so that they could easily see their peers' blogs. The participants who did not attend the training session visited the researcher the following week to receive the same training. The researcher went through the same process in a computer room at the English Preparatory School where she taught English. The participants who missed this session were also given the same guidelines in the researcher's office later. Thus, the second cycle of the study officially started.

3.6.2.5 Getting Permission to Video-Record the Teaching Practice Lessons

Necessary permission was obtained from all related parties for video-recording the teaching practice lessons. In the second cycle of the study, only two of the preservice teachers were placed at the FLEPS for their practicum, while the other four were at two different secondary schools in Famagusta.

The researcher had to follow a number of steps to get the permission to be able to visit the classes at the secondary schools and video-record preservice teachers' two teaching practice lessons. First of all, she wrote a petition which gave detailed information about the aims of the research (see Appendix J). The petition went through the following channels: i) head of the Foreign Language Education Department, ii) dean of the Education Faculty, iii) Rector's Office, and iv) the Ministry of Education. The researcher's request to video-record the lessons at the secondary schools was approved on condition that the parents of the students in the classes also give consent to the researcher for video-recording. In order to get permission from the parents of the students, the researcher prepared a consent form. Then, she got appointment from the directors of the schools, to inform them about

the study and send the consent forms to the parents through the students. Also, she asked for permission to video-record preservice teachers' teaching practice lessons. The school directors gave permission to the researcher to do the recording only after she got permission from the students' parents, so, she distributed the consent forms to the students with the help of the English teachers of those classes. Finally, the researcher obtained the parents' consent for video recording. A few students whose parents did not give permission were seated at the back rows in the class and they were not video-recorded.

3.6.2.6 Challenges Faced During the Second Cycle

Working with participants from two different groups and two different instructors caused some strains on the researcher during the second cycle of the study. Firstly, the researcher could not make any changes to the course objectives and the course policy sheet because she was not the course instructor. She only had control on volunteered preservice teachers' blogging activities. Secondly, unlike the first cycle of the study, none of the blog activities were assessed in the second cycle as the course instructors wanted to apply a standard evaluation for all preservice teachers in their classes. Therefore, the blog activities totally remained a voluntary work, which necessitated some modifications on the research design, posing some challenges for the researcher.

Not having the opportunity of regular face-to-face contact with the participants was one of the biggest challenges for the researcher. In other words, since the researcher did not have a class of her own, she could not join any in-class sessions and follow the participants' progress.

Another challenge the researcher faced was that the participants were reluctant to use their personal blogs to post the assigned blog tasks. Therefore, the researcher moved all the tasks to the class blog to help preservice teachers to interact with each other on one blog. That is, unlike the first cycle of the study, the researcher asked the participants to post their reflections on classroom observations and teaching practice lessons as well as movie critiques on the class blog as comments so that everyone could easily see what other participants posted. By the same token, the researcher asked the participants to post their reflections on their teaching practice lessons and feedback on their peers' video-recorded teaching practices under the relevant post in the form of comments. With the modifications made, the participants could follow their peers' blog posts just by visiting the class blog, instead of visiting their peers' blogs.

In order to overcome the constraint of not having a face-to-face communication, the researcher set up a closed group on Facebook and named it ELTE 406_FALL12. She regarded this social network as an effective communication channel to contact the participants. Throughout the semester she shared every blog entry on the group's page on Facebook. She posted on this closed group's wall some reminders such as deadlines, tasks and meetings to inform the participants.

Owing to the fact that the researcher did not have the participants as her students in her own class, certain other issues appeared as further difficulties for the researcher. Since the participants were in different groups, they had different timetables. Therefore, the researcher could not arrange a specific time that fitted all participants' schedule to watch the movies. To overcome this challenge, she copied the first movie

on CDs for the participants to watch in their own time. However, having received the movie critique blog entries from only a few participants, she decided to invite them to her home to watch the second movie and encourage them to share their critiques on the blog. Although this strategy seemed to work at the beginning as the participants produced fruitful face-to-face discussions, this was not reflected on the blog posts as only a few contributed. For the last movie, she shared a link of the full movie on the class blog with the participants.

Another challenge was related to posting the lesson plans two days before the day of teaching practice lesson in order to receive feedback. Unfortunately, none of the participants posted their lesson plans on their blogs. Also, most of the participants usually informed the researcher quite late, only one day before their teaching about their teaching practice lessons which would be video-recorded. Therefore, the researcher did not have chance to encourage the participants to share their lesson plans on the blogs in advance. In short, the tasks of sharing lesson plans and giving feedback on peer's lesson plans as two of the required blogging activities were not performed by the participants in the second cycle of the study at all.

3.6.3 Teaching Practice Videos in Blogs

Both in the first and the second cycle of the study, the researcher video-recorded two teaching practice lessons the preservice teachers conducted. After video-recording the lessons, she viewed them to decide on which 5-8 minute segment to put on the class blog for other preservice teachers to view. While selecting the most appropriate segment, the researcher considered the parts where each preservice teacher was actively teaching, had some strong points and points to consider in their lessons. In other words, the segments that would help other preservice teachers to write

feedback on their peer's performances were selected deliberately. To post the videos on the class blog, she created a Vimeo account (www.vimeo.com), which enabled her to upload the videos and embed the links on the class blog. This activity prevented her from consuming the limited quota available on the class blog. Then, she added a short instruction to the video post to guide preservice teachers on ways of writing feedback on the videos they viewed. All of the videos were password-protected for privacy and ethical issues. Only the participants and the course instructor knew the password.

3.6.4 Pre- and Post-Observation Meetings

In the first cycle of the study, the course instructor (i.e., the researcher) held face-to-face pre-and post-observation meetings with participating preservice teachers. Since it was possible for the preservice teachers to receive feedback on their lesson plans through blogs, face-to-face pre-observation meetings were not compulsory. However, most of the preservice teachers preferred to visit their course instructor to ask questions, show their lesson materials, and receive feedback on their lesson plans. The post-observation meetings, on the other hand, were compulsory. Preservice teachers were given their video-recorded teaching practice lessons to watch and note down the strengths and areas to improve in their lessons before coming to the post-observation meetings. Each meeting was held in the researcher's office privately and lasted 40 to 60 minutes. At the end of the meeting, the course instructor/researcher shared the notes that she had taken during the lesson observation with the preservice teachers. However, in the second cycle, only a few preservice teachers visited the researcher for these purposes as they had their course instructors in order to discuss their lesson plans before conducting their lessons and receive feedback from them afterwards.

3.6.5 Transcribing the Blog Postings

At the end of the semester both in the first and the second cycle of the study, all of the blog entries posted by the participants were transferred on word documents. The documents were classified according to their nature and saved in different folders for data analysis (see Appendix L).

3.6.6 Semi-Structured Interviews

Upon the completion of the first cycle, at the end of the semester, eight preservice teachers out of nine were interviewed. One of the preservice teachers could not be reached. The researcher conducted face-to-face interviews with five of the participants and she conducted a telephone interview with three of preservice teachers as they had left Cyprus right after the final examination week.

When the second cycle of the study ended, six participants were given specific day and time for the interviews. Each participant joined the interview sessions. Each interview in both cycles lasted 30 to 60 minutes. They were tape-recorded and transcribed for data analysis (see Appendix H).

3.7 Data Analysis

Qualitative measures were applied to analyze the data comprising blog artifacts and interview transcripts. In order to discover whether the blogging interactions of the preservice teachers contributed to their reflections and construction of teacher identity, first, the researcher looked into the preservice teachers' presence in the blogs and quality of their interactions. Then, she examined the quality of their interaction by analyzing their comments and feedback posted for their peers. To analyze the levels of reflections in preservice teachers' reflection blog entries, researcher examined their teaching practice reflection blog entries. To understand

how preservice teachers' blogging interactions contributed to their teacher identity construction, whole data were qualitatively analyzed in accordance with possible-selves theory as a framework. A second coder, who had completed his PhD dissertation, followed the same steps to carry out the analysis. The second coder only analyzed the 25% of the data that comprised of randomly selected blog artefacts and one interview transcript. After coding the data separately, two coders shared their findings and found out that almost 89% of their analysis matched. Then, they discussed the sections that they coded differently to reach a consensus on the results. The following sections give detailed account on data analysis.

3.7.1 Analysis of Blogging Interactions of Participants

Content analysis was applied to analyze the quality of preservice teachers' discourse (Lipponen et al., 2003). For the analysis of the data the coding schemes were not pre-determined. Instead, the data were read and re-read for emerging themes. The comments of the preservice teachers were analyzed according to the scheme devised by Lipponen et al. (2003). This scheme was chosen due to the similarities it exhibits with the guidelines the preservice teachers were given to write their comments to their peers. The following criteria were considered while analyzing the quality of feedback that preservice teachers provided: (1) whether each comment was on-topic or off-topic, (2) whether the comment included positive feedback, negative feedback or was neutral, (Lipponen et al., 2003), and (3) whether the function of each comment provided information, opinion, support, praise, critical perspective or asked for clarification. In other words, volume, depth and relevance were considered when analyzing the quality of feedback. Figure 3.3 below illustrates a feedback dialogue between two participating preservice teachers.

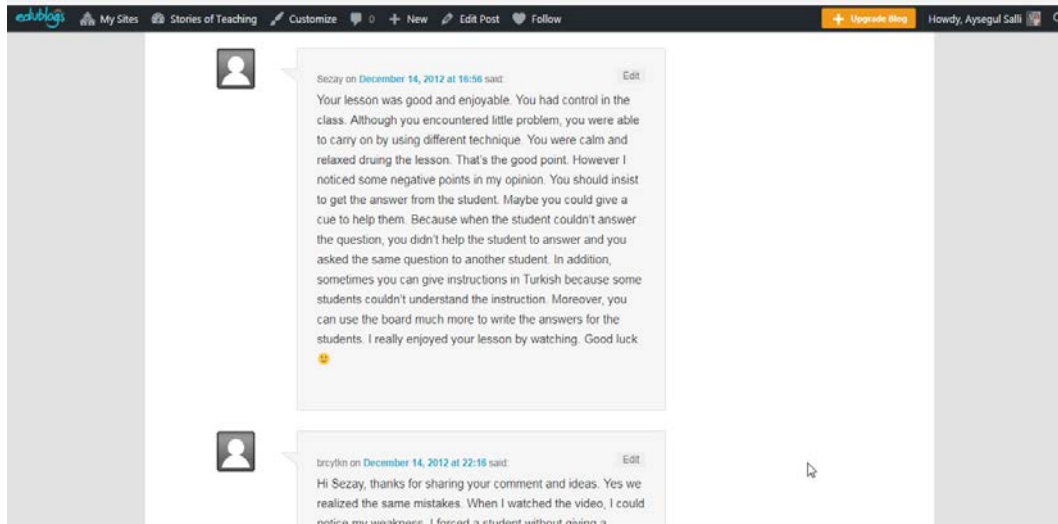


Figure 3.3: A screenshot from the blog that illustrates feedback dialogue

3.7.2 Analysis of Participants' Reflections on Their Blogging Interactions

In addition to the analysis of preservice teachers' reflective blog entries, their reflections of their blogging interactions and activities were qualitatively analyzed. For this purpose, data collected through the final reports and during the semi-structured interviews were looked into. As a result, the findings revealed that the participants who were active in their blogging interactions and the ones who were engaged in limited interaction held different views as regards the contribution of the blog tool to their online communications and development. What is more, both the participants who were in limited interaction and the passive bloggers attributed their reluctance to interact in blogs to certain factors. Then, these were put into different categories and presented in Chapter 4.

3.7.3 Analysis of the Levels of Reflection in Blogs

All blog artifacts that preservice teachers posted both on the class blog and their personal blogs as well as their comment postings were considered pieces of reflective writing. In order to encourage deeper levels of reflections in their blog entries, the preservice teachers were given a set of scaffolding questions for each task. In other

words, the tasks regarding the movie critiques, observation and teaching practice reflections and giving feedback to peers all included guiding questions (see Appendices C, D, E, and F).

To find out whether providing the preservice teachers with such scaffolding guiding questions to follow when writing their reflection blog entries and whether feedback and comments shared in blogs have led to deeper levels of reflection, two different reflection scales were combined and adapted in order to ensure comprehensive analysis. For the analysis of the blog entries and comment postings, the reflection rubric designed by Hawkes and Romiszowski (2001) and a reflection scale devised by Crotty and Allyn (2001) were used. Since these coding schemes have been designed to measure different aspects of reflection, both of them were made use of to reach comprehensive results and better understanding of preservice teachers' reflections.

The reflection scale that was designed by Hawkes and Romiszowski (2001) includes seven levels. Although this scale was actually designed for in-service teachers to help them reflect on their teaching practices, it could also be used for preservice teachers' reflections on their teaching practice lessons as they are engaged with authentic teaching activities. Table 3.4 shows the coding scheme designed by Hawkes and Romiszowski (2001, as cited in Tan, 2006).

Table 3.4: Hawkes and Romiszowski’s Seven-Level Reflection Rubric

Level	Description
1	No description of event. Message unrelated to practice.
2	Events and experiences described in simple, layperson terms, generally unattached to classroom activities.
3	Description of events employs pedagogical terms.
4	Explanation of events or experiences is accompanied by rationale of tradition or personal preference.
5	Explanation of an event or experience using cause/effect principle.
6	Explanation provided that identifies cause and effect factors while also considering non-imagined contextual factors.
7	Explanations of events, experiences or opinions that cites guiding principle and current context, while referencing moral and ethical issues.

The reflection scale that was taken from Crotty and Allyn (2001) is actually based on Bloom’s Taxonomy (as cited in Tan, 2006). This scale measured reflection as cognition, which was missing in the scale of Hawkes and Romiszowski (2001). Table 3.5 gives an overview of the reflection scale designed by Crotty and Allyn (2001).

Table 3.5: Crotty and Allyn’s Reflection Scale for Novice Teachers

Cognitive Level	Description
1. Knowledge	Briefly describes the relevance of the evidence or artifact.
2. Comprehension	Demonstrates an understanding of student development and relevant instructional plans.
3. Application	Connects college coursework concepts with practical classroom applications.
4. Analysis	Shows evidence of taking a teacher’s perspective.
5. Synthesis	Establishes short terms goals based on perceived strengths and weaknesses.
6. Evaluation	Includes an awareness of their own professional development as a teacher.

As mentioned above, the descriptions of each level in these two scales were combined. Then, the new scale was further modified by adding the description of

feelings that the preservice teachers included in their reflections at different levels (see Appendix I). Before utilizing the scale to determine the levels of reflections in the reflective blog entries of the preservice teachers, expert opinion was received, as well.

3.7.4 Analysis of Language Teacher Identity Construction

In order to analyze whether the blogging experiences of the preservice teachers and their teaching practice experiences have contributed to their construction of professional language teacher identity, qualitative techniques were applied. For the purposes of analysis, preservice teachers' blog postings, their interactions and the interview transcripts were analyzed following sociocultural theories, emotions and possible-selves theory as a framework (Markus & Nurius, 1986; Olsen, 2008; Zembylas, 2003; Hamman et al., 2010). Based on the data collection protocol developed by Oyserman (2004), the participants were asked open-ended questions during the interviews.

The amount of the data, including blog entries, interviews, and written reflections, was 87920 words on 157 single-spaced, single-sided pages for all participants. The amount of data for an individual participant, however, ranged from 3380 words on 6 single-spaced, single-sided pages to 5720 words on 11 single-spaced, single-sided pages. These multiple data sources were used for triangulation purposes and to ensure that the study captured a robust manifestation of the phenomena under study. Table 3.6 provides a summary of data collection tools, medium, and purpose of data collection.

Table 3.6: Summary of Data Collection Tools, Medium, and Purpose

Data tools	Medium	Purpose
Written reflection on movies	Blogged - Reflect on teacher features in the movies (blogged)	- Explore teacher identity features and reflect on self as future teacher - Explore others' reflections on teacher characters
Written reflection on teaching practices	Blogged - Reflect on own teaching practice lesson - Reflect on and evaluate own video-recorded lesson - Reflect on peers' video-recorded teaching practice lessons(i.e., give feedback) - Read and respond to peers' reflection blog entries	- Explore and articulate self as a teacher - Explore others' practice and reflect on self - Be informed about others' experiences view of self and reflect on self- views
Semi-structured interviews	Verbal - Reflect on and evaluate all the processes in which they were engaged	- Elicit students' views on self / identity

Data was analysed qualitatively following the stages recommended by Markus and Nurius (1986) and Saldana (2015). Transcripts were read several times independently by the each of the authors for consistency in the initial step of coding. Expressions pertaining to 'selves' were coded according to the *Teacher Possible Selves Measure and Coding Manual* (Hamman, personal communication February 9, 2015). Codes were then clustered into meaningful segments (Merriam, 1998) to obtain categories

of expected and feared teacher-selves. Coding was carried out and standardized by multiple coders to minimize potential weaknesses such as personal bias or subjectivity in data analysis.

3.8 Researcher's Role in the Qualitative Study

Unlike quantitative research in which analysis is led by the researcher's etic view, qualitative research aims at capturing the emic view. That is to say, the researcher is not an outsider but an insider. In relation to the aforementioned purpose, characteristics of a qualitative research are distinguished from quantitative research with respect to the context in which the study is carried out, the role of the researchers, the influence of theory and tacit knowledge (Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

Qualitative research involves open-ended data collection procedures in an effort to collect emic perspective. The nature of qualitative research potentially influences the role of researcher and participants. Nastasi and Schensul (2005) suggest that the researchers are considered as "the primary instruments of data collection" (p.181). This means that the nature and the quality of data depend on how skillfully the researcher collects, analyzes and interprets data. What is more, due to the nature of qualitative research, the researcher is in constant interaction with the participants. Therefore, the researcher's interpersonal skills gain importance since they involved in the study context, data collection and interpretation.

As the present study was conducted within qualitative research paradigms, the researcher was involved in the research process. Especially in the first cycle of the study, the researcher was the course instructor of the participants and she was the one who modified the Teaching Practice course and set up the blog and the blog tasks. In

order to eliminate bias that may have arisen and to ensure trustworthiness, the researcher provided a detailed description of the context and the participants. What is more, she made use of different data collection tools such as preservice teachers' teaching practice reflection blog entries, movie critiques, final reports and their feedback to their peers along with interviews. Furthermore, the researcher asked a colleague to code 25% of the data. Initially, the researcher discussed the analysis of this data with the second coder, who had recently completed his PhD dissertation, to negotiate different interpretations before analyzing the entire data. Then, the second coder followed the same steps to carry out the analysis and analyzed only the 25% of the data that comprised of randomly selected blog artefacts and one interview transcript. After coding the data separately, two coders shared their findings. It was found out that almost 89% of their analysis matched. Then, they discussed the sections that they coded differently to reach a consensus.

3.9 Compliance with Ethical Standards

To address ethical concerns (Denscombe, 2002), ethical approval and permission to conduct the action research was granted by the Rector's Office at Eastern Mediterranean University. Following this, the researcher received consent from the directors of the schools as well as the English teachers in whose classes the participants' teaching practice lessons would be video-recorded (Appendices B & J). When recruiting participants, the course instructor provided detailed information about the study requirements and assured participants that their participation, or non-participation, would not have any effect on the grade they received in the class, but that participating in the study was consistent with course learning outcomes and could provide an opportunity that could improve their overall performance in the course. Before asking the preservice teachers' consent, the researcher assured them

that they have the right to withdraw from the study at any time, and for any reason, without penalty. After obtaining the consent, she trained the participants to set up and use blogs, and started planning both the interviews and the teaching practice lessons.

This chapter provided a detailed account of the research design, the context, and the participants of the study. It also presented the data collection tools and procedures, methods of data analysis, as well as the ethical considerations of the study. In the following chapter, the results will be reported.

Chapter 4

RESULTS

This chapter presents the results obtained in the study. It starts with the findings of the first research question, which regard the results pertaining to the preservice teachers' blog participation, blogging interactions, quality of feedback and the levels of reflections. The chapter then displays the findings related to the second research question which investigates the preservice teachers' construction of teacher identity. Lastly, the chapter is finalized by a brief summary of all results.

4.1 Research Question #1: How do blogging interactions of preservice teachers contribute to their reflection?

To find out the levels of reflection the preservice teachers produced during their teaching practice, all blog entries including the reflection tasks and interactions with their peers were looked into. The findings as regards preservice teachers' participation in blogs revealed that almost all of the participants completed and posted their blog tasks in the first cycle of the study. However, the participants in the second cycle of the study exhibited less presence and posted less number of blog tasks most probably due to the fact that the researcher was not the course instructor and thus, participation was on a voluntary basis in the second cycle of the study.

In the following sections of this chapter, the participants will be mentioned as P1, P2 and so on in order not to reveal their real identity. They will appear at the beginning of the interview extracts and samples of blog interactions. Also, they will be

mentioned at the end of the excerpts taken from the blog artefacts such as final reports and teaching practice reflections.

4.1.1 Findings of Blog Participation in the First Cycle

In the fall semester of the 2011-2012 academic year, preservice teachers were assigned eight different blog tasks to complete in 14 weeks. First, the task fulfillment was looked into to gain an understanding of the blog participation of the preservice teachers. The number of assigned blog tasks and the number of blog entries (i.e., completed blog tasks) were calculated manually. Then, the percentages were generated to reach the results.

Table 4.1 gives a detailed account of the blog tasks. The first column shows whether the blog tasks were assessed or not assessed. The second column indicates the type of each blog task and how many times the same task was assigned (i.e., x4). The first number in the third column indicates the number of assigned blog tasks and the second number represents the number of performed tasks (i.e., the number of blog entries). Finally, the last column depicts the frequency results of each blog task posted by the preservice teachers. The last row depicts overall results of task fulfillment in numbers and percentage.

Table 4.1: Blog Tasks Assigned and Completed in the First Cycle

Blog Tasks		No of completed tasks & total tasks	%
Assessed	• Final reports (x1)	9/9	100%
	• Teaching practice reflections (x4)	35/36	97.2%
	• Lesson plans (x4)	25/27	96%
Total assessed tasks		60/63	97.73%
Unassessed	• Tasks (x2)	11/18	61%
	• Classroom observation reflections (x3)	15/27	55.5%
	• Movie critiques (x3)	13/27	48.1%
	• Video critiques (x1)	4/9	44.4%
	• Mini teaching reflections (x3)	11/27	40.7%
Total unassessed tasks		57/108	49.94%
Total Tasks:		143/198	70.8%

According to the findings presented in Table 4.1, overall blog task completion is 70.8%. As the table shows, preservice teachers completed 97.73 % of the assessed blog tasks. Compared to unassessed tasks, they completed higher number of assessed tasks, namely final reports (100%), teaching practice reflections (97.2%) and lesson plans (96%). Among the assessed tasks, the final report is the only task that was completed by all of the preservice teachers. It seems that all participants attached great importance to the final report task due to its relatively higher percentage (10%) as a single report in the grading schedule. On the other hand, they were less willing to perform the unassessed blog tasks as it remained at 49.94%. For example, the tasks (61%), classroom observation reflections (55.5%), movie critiques (48.1%), video critiques (44.4%), and mini teaching reflections (40.7%) were completed by around half of the participants.

In addition to the final report blog task, the other assessed tasks (e.g., teaching practice lesson plans and the reflection reports) were completed by the participants at

a high percentage. Ninety-six percent of preservice teachers posted their teaching practice lesson plans on their personal blogs before doing their teaching practice lessons. Likewise, 97% of the preservice teachers posted their teaching practice lesson reflections on the blog.

4.1.2 Findings of Blog Participation in the Second Cycle

The second cycle of the study was conducted in the fall semester of 2012-2013 academic year. Due to the fact that the researcher was not teaching ELTE 406 Teaching Practice course that semester, she asked the other course instructors whether the preservice teachers who were enrolled into this course would be willing to participate in the study. Upon an informative session about the study, six participants volunteered to participate in the second cycle.

Since the researcher was not the course instructor of the participants, she did not have the opportunity to hold face-to-face sessions with the preservice teachers. However, she was granted permission to observe and video record two teaching practice lessons of the participants. Therefore, unlike in the first cycle of the study, she asked the participants to share only the lesson plans and reflection reports of the video recorded teaching practice lessons on the blogs. In other words, the participants posted only two lesson plans and only two reflection blog entries on their teaching practice lessons. Also, they were asked to share their final reports at the end of the semester. The researcher asked the participants to watch three movies and write their reflections following the guiding scaffolding questions they were provided with, and then post them in the blogs. This task was the only extra task that the participants were assigned. Due to the role of the researcher, she could not assess any of the blog tasks of the participants in the second cycle.

Based on the number of assigned and completed blog tasks in the second cycle, Table 4.2 presents some details and provides a general picture as regards the blog participation of preservice teachers. The first column presents the types of the blog tasks and how many times they were assigned. The first number in the second column indicates the total number of expected blog tasks to be posted and the second number shows the actual number of posted blog tasks by the preservice teachers. For example, each participant was expected to post their final report at the end of the semester. Considering the number of the participants in the second cycle, six final report blog tasks were expected. However, only one participant posted this blog task on the class blog. Finally, the third column shows the frequency results of each and overall blog task completion in percentages.

Table 4.2: Blog Task Completion in the Second Cycle

Blog tasks (all unassessed)	No of completed tasks & total tasks	%
Final reports (x1)	1/6	16%
Lesson plans (x2)	0/12	0%
Teaching practice reflections (x2)	7/12	58%
Movie critiques (x3)	6/18	34%
Total	13/48	27%

As illustrated in Table 4.2, preservice teachers did not post any of their lesson plans in their blogs and only one of the participants posted the final report. However, not sharing these tasks (i.e., the lesson plans and the final reports) in the class blog may not indicate that the participants did not complete these tasks. Obviously, they preferred to submit them to their own course instructor only. As the frequency results indicate, 58% of the participants shared their reflections in the class blog, and only 34% of the participants posted their movie critiques. Finally, out of 48 assigned blog

tasks, only 13 were posted. Overall task completion in the second cycle of the study remained at 27%.

4.1.3 Findings of the Nature and Quality of Blogging Interaction

In order to investigate the nature and quality of preservice teachers' blog interaction, the researcher needed to determine the degree of their blog interaction. With this purpose in mind, the patterns of interaction among the preservice teachers both in the first and second cycles and the quality of their interaction were examined. More specifically, the comments that the preservice teachers made on their peers' lesson plans, formal teaching reflection blog entries and comments on video-recorded teaching practices were examined with the help of a case-by-case matrix. This matrix was devised to see the density of interaction among preservice teachers and identify the participants who were actively involved in blogging interaction, as recommended by Lipponen et al. (2003). Afterwards, the content of the preservice teachers' blog postings was analyzed. For this purpose, the nature and quality of blog interaction in both cycles of the study was scrutinized through the application of qualitative content analysis considering the volume, depth and relevance. The coding schemes were not pre-determined but rather emerged through the data. Comments that the preservice teachers made on their peers' blog entries and video-recorded teaching practice lessons were analyzed based on the scheme devised by Lipponen et al. (2003). As regards the scheme used by Lipponen et al. (2003), the following were considered: (a) whether the comment was on-topic or off-topic (i.e., relevant or not), (b) whether the comment included positive feedback, negative feedback or was neutral, and (c) whether the function of each comment provided information, opinion, support, praise, critical perspective or asked for clarification. Likewise, the preservice teachers were given guidelines to follow while writing their feedback on their peers'

lesson plans and video-recorded teaching practice lessons. They were asked to (a) mention strengths of the lessons they noticed, (b) point out areas that would be improved and, (c) suggest ideas to work for their improvement. The reason why the scheme devised by Lipponen et al. (2003) was chosen as a framework was that it was similar to the guidelines that the preservice teachers were given.

The examination of the feedback threads in blogs revealed that the preservice teachers who were engaged in interaction with their peers attempted to provide constructive feedback by suggesting ideas and asked some questions. The following interaction thread was taken from the personal blog of P3. It is seen that she initiated the discussion by giving a brief overview on her lesson plan she posted on her blog and inviting her peers to give her feedback. P4 gave her feedback and in return, P3 responded to her. It is also seen that the class teacher with whom P3 worked also went through the lesson plan and left her comments for her.

P3 wrote: (Wednesday December 7, 2011)

Dear my teachers and my friends;

This is my first teaching practice lesson plan. I am going to do my first teaching practice lesson on Friday at 12.30. I appreciate if you give me some feedback on my lesson plan.

At the end of the lesson, I decided to do listening activity with this video (the link of video is attached). First they watch the video, and then they fill the blanks)

P4 wrote: (Wednesday December 7, 2011)

Hi P3, I read your lesson plan and I like starting the lesson with pictures. I think that you think a good way to take students' attention at the beginning of the lesson, it is very effective. I wonder that will you explain the phrasal words directly or indirectly (sic). I don't know how your students' book gives phrasal words but if you have any chance you can teach phrasal words indirectly. You can ask some questions like do you know the meaning of this? Let's guess the meaning together. You can give some clues and then you can explain. Lastly; I like your post activity. I used a song in my mini teaching and students liked it very much. At the end of the lesson, they will be tired and they can be relaxed with the song. Good luck.

P3 wrote: (Wednesday December 7, 2011)

Thanks for your comment P4. I prepared colorful cards. I will stick them on the board. Then I will ask them if they know the meaning or not. If they don't know, I explain the meaning by giving example. For example; I will explain "pass an exam" showing an exam paper which student get 55 out of 100 from the exam. I will explain "fail an exam" meaning showing them an exam paper which student got 20 out of 100.

P4 wrote: (Wednesday December 7, 2011)

Thanks for reply. Your examples are very meaningful. Students will be enjoying your lesson.

Class teacher wrote: (Wednesday December 7, 2011)

Hi P3,

Thank you for your lesson plan. In general, it sounds good but I have some concerns about it. For example, the students will probably reply to your questions as 'yes' or 'no'. I think you had better ask some concept questions and/or personal questions about the phrasal verbs such as 'what did you get from your midterm exam?', 'did you pass your midterm exam?' and write their grades on BB so that they remember what 'pass' or 'fail' is. In my opinion, the idea of using a video clip is great and the choice of the song is a perfect match with the content of the lesson. However, I am a bit worried about how the students will be able to watch the video, listen to the song and fill in the blanks at the same time. Will you be using your laptop for the video? I wish you had extended the time dedicated to the song and exploited it a bit more. How will you deal with the unknown words and will you ask any questions about the content of the songs if the students could comprehend it or not? Let's wait and see. I wish you good luck. See you tomorrow.

P3 wrote: (Wednesday December 7, 2011)

Thanks for your comment. In listening part, first they just watch the video. Then I will give them a handout and they fill the blanks. They will just listen and write. They will not look at the screen in the 2nd listening.

P3 was one of the most active blog users. She posted comments on some of her peers and responded back to the feedback she received. The above extract illustrates that she received some positive and encouraging feedback from her peer and the class teacher. What is more, her responses seem to indicate that she feels confident about

her lesson. Receiving feedback from an outsider (i.e., the cooperating teacher) seems to be an advantage presented by the blog.

In addition to the lesson plans, preservice teachers exhibited interest in their peers' video-recorded teaching practice lessons. The results show that preservice teachers posted more number of comments on their peers' video-recorded teaching practice lessons compared to the lesson plans. The analysis revealed that majority of the participants used positive and encouraging expressions in their feedback posts. As they started their comments by praising their peers and mentioning what they found successful in their peers' teaching practices, it is possible to state that they were generally supportive. Furthermore, the preservice teachers used encouraging and positive language to mention what they think their peers needed improve in their teaching practice. However, such suggestions for improvement were on similar issues such as minor language mistakes, voice and posture. As regards whether the feedback posts were on or off topic, the findings revealed that all of the feedback posts were relevant to the blog entries and teaching practices of the preservice teachers. Findings also indicate that some of the preservice teachers received feedback on their teaching practice from their peers and/or the researcher but they did not respond to it.

The following interaction taken from the class blog demonstrates the nature of interaction that preservice teachers were engaged in to provide feedback on their peer's (P2) teaching practice video. The thread illustrates that P2, who was another active participant, initiated the discussion. She provided an overview of the part of

her video-recorded teaching practice, and then invited her peers to watch it and give her feedback.

P2 wrote: December 20, 2011 @ 20:03

My lesson aims are: Use these vocabulary items to complete the writing activity, categorize these vocabularies (sic) under the headings, and revise their vocabulary knowledge which had learnt last lesson and also develop their vocabulary. The part that you are watching is focusing on the activity. I was eliciting the answers and there was one wrong answer and I made the correction with the whole class. Later on you will see the last writing activity. You can see my interaction with the students please watch it and share your ideas with me.

Many thanks xxx

P6 wrote: December 21, 2011 @ 19:59

The first thing that takes my attention those colorful cards stick on the board (sic). If I were your student, I would definitely join your class. Your tone of voice is very good, and most important thing is, which I am lack of it (sic). You praise your students after each question. The way you use the language is very good. You will be a very good teacher in the future.

P2 wrote: December 21, 2011 @ 20:22

Thank you P6.

It is really nice to hear your comment. I notice that I prefer to use praise for students work to encourage them. I know in the future you will use lots of praise for your students work. The way you use the language specially using some literature makes your language more interesting and lovely. Thank you so much.

Lots of love xxx

P3 wrote: December 26, 2011 @ 22:34

Dear P2,

I watched your second teaching practice lesson. First of all, I want to say you use your voice and everybody can hear you. You use reinforcement. I like your colorful materials. You use body language while saying coming I like it. :) And also, you give time your students to answer the questions.

P9 wrote: January 14, 2012 @ 16:39

Dear P2;

Firstly, I can say that I loved your materials on the board. I'm sure that your materials were very useful in your teaching because it was (sic) remarkable. Secondly, I can say that your position in the class. You stood in the middle

of the class. So, you controlled your class very effectively. Thirdly, you used reinforcement during the lesson such as “well done”, I can understand that your students were very happy while they answering your question. Another good point is that you used your body and gesture during the lesson. I think that it was very good and you smiled to your students during lesson. So, I believe that your students were very comfortable in your lesson.

Finally I can say that I agree with P6 you will be a good teacher in your future.

The interaction patterns above illustrate how some of the preservice teachers communicated their ideas in blogs. It seems that the interaction took place in a sincere and friendly atmosphere. The peers attempted to be very supportive in their articulations of ideas and provide positive views on P2’s teaching performance. For example, P6 acknowledged the fact that P2 praised her students and between the lines she gave the message that she needed to praise her students too. In return, she responded to P6 and expressed her belief about P6’s use of praising language in the future. Obviously, such interaction is so powerful, as it is motivating and potentially creating a bond between the preservice teachers who interact with each other.

On the other hand, not all the feedback threads were as interactive. As mentioned before, some of the preservice teachers did not respond to their peers’ feedback that they received on their video-recorded teaching practice lessons. The following thread illustrates the feedback P1 received on his first video-recorded teaching practice lesson. He received different comment posts from four peers. However, he did not respond to any of the feedback he received.

P4 wrote: December 18, 2011 @ 16:38

I must admit that he is very confident in the classroom. His being relaxed and having positive attitude towards students will make his learners comfortable and confident. This positive atmosphere in the class will make an effective lesson no matter what mistakes have been done by him. We all have grammatical errors and lack of voice since we are new to classrooms. We all

are very excited and a little bit of nervous. These will go away in no time and I'm sure he will be one hell of a teacher.
Thank you.

P2 wrote: December 19, 2011 @ 11:30

P1, I watched your video. I can say that you are good about using technology on your lesson. I liked the game because it looks like students really enjoyed the activity. It is really good idea. Like my friend said we all have some grammatical problems and years will help us to develop ourselves in good ways. I like your attitude and your management of the classroom. I really enjoyed while I was watching it.
Well done xxx

P6 wrote: December 21, 2011 @ 19:49

P1, your class management was very good, how could you achieve it? I love your tone of voice too. The activity that you did in your class needs courage, and you made it through. I agree with my friends, you are looking very confident in class. Well done.

P8 wrote: January 9, 2012 @ 01:17

P1, what self-confidence! I like your management and tone of voice. You fell yourself to the students as boss and didn't lose any confidence this make students relaxed and they participated actively.

The thread above clearly demonstrates the use of positive and encouraging language as well as careful word choice for suggesting improvements. Preservice teachers seem to soften the tone of criticism by the choice of subject 'we' to indicate that they all have similar problems (e.g., "we all have grammatical errors"). In this feedback thread, the participants focused on different aspects such as positive attitudes towards the students, the use of technology, classroom management and exhibiting confidence in class. However, the feedback comments seem to lack some constructive feedback or critical ideas that suggest better implementation.

Overall, the following conclusions were reached as a result of the analysis of the blog interaction:

- i. Most of the feedback given to peers was supportive.
- ii. Positive feedback was given mostly on the same teaching-related issues such as the use of voice, monitoring, and checking instructions. However, these aspects were not deeply elaborated.
- iii. Feedback for improvement was given quite gently, with carefully selected words.
- iv. The participants provided positive feedback more than constructive feedback.
- v. Regarding feedback for improvement, critical perspective was missing in most of the comments. In other words, most of the peer feedback included a couple of strong points only.

Additionally, the following findings were also revealed:

- i. The distribution of quantity of written comments across the participants was not balanced. For example, while some of the participants received feedback on their lesson plans or teaching practice videos from 3-4 peers, some of the participants received feedback only from 1-2 peers.
- ii. The number of comments and the amount of interaction decreased towards the end of the semester.

4.1.4 Summary

This section summarizes the findings of the preservice teachers' blogging participation and interaction. In the first cycle of the study, the participants completed almost all of the assigned blog tasks. However, in the second cycle, the participation rate was significantly low. What is more, the participants in the first

cycle of the study appeared to be more interactive with their peers. The difference in the rate of participation and interaction was attributed to several reasons. Firstly, it appears that the assessment was an instrumental motivation for blog posting and interacting with each other for the preservice teachers in the first cycle. In the second cycle of the study, the absence of assessment and voluntary participation possibly led to lack of motivation as preservice teachers were less active and posted fewer blog entries.

Considering the nature and the quality of interaction that preservice teachers produced in blogs, it was discovered that they mostly interacted with each other by leaving feedback on their peers' video-recorded teaching practice lessons. The analysis of the blogging interactions revealed that preservice teachers were very supportive in their feedback language. They mentioned the strengths in their peers' lessons and provided some constructive feedback for improvement. However, the feedback was mostly on similar issues such as voice, classroom management and materials used in class. The participants also appeared to make similar suggestions like improving instructions, accuracy of language and so on.

In addition to factual findings as regards the quality of the preservice teachers' blogging interactions, they were asked to reflect on their blogging interactions during the interviews and in their final reports. The following section aims to present the findings and the insights of the preservice teachers as regards the benefits they gained from the blogging interactions. Also, the challenges they faced while blogging were also identified.

4.1.5 Participants' Reflections on Their Blogging Interactions

When preservice teachers' blogging interactions with their peers were investigated, it was seen that while some participants were active throughout the semester, some other participants were somewhat or less active. Also, a number of participants who interacted neither with their peers nor the researcher were identified; they only posted required blog tasks on the class blog. They did not leave any comments on their peers' blog entries or video-recorded teaching practice lessons. In order to gather some insights from the preservice teachers about their interactions at different levels, their blog communications and reflections on blogging interactions were investigated during the interviews. The following sections aim to present some insights gathered from the preservice teachers as regards perceived benefits of their blogging interactions.

4.1.5.1 Active Participants in Blogs

Analysis of blogging interactions of the preservice teachers revealed that P2, P3, P5, P6, P8, P9 and P15 were the most active participants. The number of comments they sent ranged from eight to sixteen throughout the semester. It was observed that these participants' interactions took place to give feedback on their peers' video-recorded teaching practice lessons. Also, some of the preservice teachers showed interest in their peers' lesson plans and left comments on them.

The participants were asked to share their reflections on their interactions in blogs during the interviews. P2, who was one of the most active participants, stated that she liked the dynamic nature of blogs as interactions were spontaneous. She also appreciated the fact that the blogs were easily personalized. Thus, she was able to

reflect her style and preferences in her blog in the way she liked. The extract below is illustrative:

R: I would like you to share your impressions of your blogging activities.

P2: The best part of using the blog, in my opinion, was our freedom to design it in the way we wanted and share our work there. Personally, I enjoyed using it because whenever I posted something, I received feedback immediately and I could respond to given feedback. For example, you gave me feedback on my lesson plans and I was able to make changes on it. My friends could watch me teaching and share their opinions about my lesson. It was very interactive.

The findings revealed that sharing video-recorded teaching practice lessons in blogs stimulated more interaction and the guidelines provided for preservice teachers helped the feedback to be at a standard level and enhance the quality of communication. Preservice teachers described the blog component as a convenient tool because their peers' lesson plans, teaching practice reflection reports, and other blog tasks were available to them. In other words, they could easily access their peers' blogs and observe their progress, go through their lesson plans, read the comments, and have some ideas about how to complete their blog tasks without having to meet them in class.

The following preservice teachers reflected (P6, P2, P4, and P9) on the blogs and how their blogging interactions contributed to their development. The following extracts from the interview illustrate the participants' reflections on the blogs and their blogging interactions.

R: What can you say about the blog tool and your blogging interactions?

P6: I think we had a big chance using the blogs because we became aware of each other and our performance. We did not just do observation and

teaching; we knew how to improve ourselves and our teaching because I was able to see what my friends did and we exchanged ideas in blogs, we learnt from feedbacks or watching each other's video recorded lessons (sic).

P2: Personally, I really liked using blogs because whenever I posted something, I could receive immediate feedback. Also, when I left feedback on my friends' posts, some of them immediately sent me response.

P4: I could receive immediate feedback from my teacher and interact with my friends. When I posted the lesson plan, my teacher gave me feedback and I could make changes to my lesson plan. After I revised my lesson plan I put it on my blog and received feedback again. Also, whenever I could not meet my teacher, we could meet on the blog and she gave me feedback and advice on my teaching practice lesson.

R: Would you like to share your general impressions about your blogging experience as a part of this course?

P9: It was an interesting experience because everybody had the chance to read and comment on each other's blog entries. For example, we watched movies and shared our thoughts about them. We watched our friends' teaching practice videos and gave them feedback. For me, it was an interesting experience to see everyone's opinion in one place. For example, a friend shared lesson plan, then you or another friend wrote feedback. I could see it and benefit from it. I mean it was something very original and nice. Something I did not experience before.

The participants mentioned similar benefits they gained from the presence of the blog tool and their blogging interactions. They acknowledged that immediate feedback was possible because of the blogs. The preservice teachers had the opportunity to watch their peers teaching and became aware of different classroom situations, which seemed to enrich their teaching ideas, gain understanding of what might work in class and how to improve weaknesses. What is more, the preservice teachers did not feel alone throughout their journey of learning to teach. The

participants who were active expressed that they felt supported by their friends' encouraging feedback.

Similar comments were identified from the final reports of the preservice teachers. They seemed to be pleased with the quick response they received from the course instructor and peers which was identified as one of the strengths of the blogs. P6 was another participant who interacted with her peers frequently. She wrote in her final report that sharing of the lesson plans, reflections and critiques in blogs made her curious to read her peers' blog entries and share her thoughts with them. The following is illustrative:

One of the most exciting things about using blogs is that I could see my friends' ideas, reflections, critiques; experiences and they could see mine too. Instead of keeping my writings in my computer, I shared them with my prospective teacher friends. I was able to read and criticize my friends' ideas. They also sent me feedback. I enjoyed reading them. So, it is a very good way to create peer connection in this course (P6).

By the same token, P8 emphasized that one of the factors that attracted her in blogs was feedback she received from her peers. She acknowledged the fact that she received immediate online feedback from the researcher when she did not have the chance to arrange face-to-face meetings with her. The excerpt taken from P8's final report below reflects her opinion of the blogs.

The blog is so useful. Can you imagine? I made my lesson plan at night and I received my feedback before my lesson next morning. If I did not have my blog, I would have received any feedback on time. Thanks to the blog. I could revise my lesson plan immediately. Furthermore, I would not be able to see my peers' lesson plans if I did not have the blog either. Being able to check their lesson plans gave me some ideas about how I could improve my lesson plans. In this sense, having a blog was a big advantage for me (P8).

4.1.5.2 Limited Blogging Interaction

Although some participants were active users of the blogs, it was observed that P4, P10, P11, P12, and P13 were engaged in limited interaction. The number of comments these participants sent to their peers ranged from three to five. On the other hand, three participants, P1, P7 and P14, appeared to remain passive throughout the study. These participants posted the required tasks on their blogs but they did not leave any feedback on their peers' blog entries and did not respond to the feedback they received. In this regard, all participants were asked to comment on their activities in blogs during the interviews. These participants reported their curiosity to read the blog entries and the comments, especially the researcher's (i.e., course instructors) feedback on preservice teachers' lesson plans and teaching practices despite their poor communication with their peers. Also, they listed a number of reasons which prevented them from contributing to blog interaction. The following interview extract is an attempt to illustrate the blogging interactions and experiences of P10.

R: Considering your blogging activities throughout the semester, would you consider yourself an active or a passive blogger?

P10: I was neither an active nor a passive user of the blogs. It was somewhere in between. I could not be an active blogger because of our busy schedule. I mean we could not log in regularly. Yet, I did my best to be active.

R: What factors encouraged you to be a 'somewhat' active blogger?

P10: Firstly, my friends' comments. They were important because, for example, when I made mistakes, I did not notice them because of excitement but my friends' comments attracted my attention. I was curious about who wrote what and wanted to log in and read their feedback. I mean because of that, I started logging in more frequently.

R: You considered yourself as a participant who is neither active nor passive. What factors made you remain passive at times?

P10: We were very busy this semester. Also, if we were graded on our blogging activities, we would feel more motivated. I mean, there wasn't any extrinsic motivation.

In the extract above, P10 expressed her intention to be a more active blog user. However, other course-related requirements seem to prevent her from reading her peers' blog entries or watching their teaching practice videos. What is more, she mentions that participating in blogs on a voluntary basis discouraged her from logging in frequently. As she put it, the absence of grading seemed to lead to lack of motivation amongst the preservice teachers in the second cycle of the study. P10 also shared some insights that revealed the benefits of the integration of a blog component. She mentioned that she became more interested in blogs and started to log in to see what comments her peers made on her teaching practice, although she considered herself a 'somewhat' active blogger, as she did not post a lot of comments.

4.1.5.3 Summary

This section examined the participants' reflections on their blogging interactions with their peers and the researcher. The active participants revealed that they benefitted from the opportunities the blog tool provided. They stated that their peers' activities and their feedback raised their awareness of various aspects of teaching. The active participants enjoyed the immediate feedback and regarded encouraging language of their peers motivating. Also, they felt curious to read their peers' comments, which kept them active as they frequently logged in to read and respond to feedback. On the other hand, some other preservice teachers seemed to be reluctant

to navigate through the blogs of the other participants and leave comments. They attributed their reluctance to a number of reasons, which need to be considered seriously. It appears that these preservice teachers perceived the blog tool only as a platform which is used to post the course tasks. The findings revealed a number of factors that may have prevented these participants from actively engaging in blogging. In the following section of this chapter, factors that potentially inhibited blogging interactions of the participants will be presented.

4.1.6 Factors that Inhibited Blogging Interactions

The findings revealed some potential reasons that hindered interaction among the preservice teachers. These reasons have been grouped in five broad categories. These are (a) attitudes towards the online medium, (b) devaluing peer feedback, (c) perceived inadequacy of written self-expression, (d) group dynamics, and (e) challenges of blogging. Each category is described in detail in the following sections.

4.1.6.1 Attitudes towards Blogs

The interview results revealed that some of the preservice teachers did not feel enthusiastic to interact with their peers and their teacher/the researcher through blogs due to their attitudes towards the online tool. Some of the preservice teachers admitted logging into their blogs only to post their tasks. They stated that they did not have any motivation to leave any comments even when they visited their peers' blogs. Moreover, some of the participants reported logging into blogs just to make their blog entries. They did not indicate any curiosity or motivation to visit their peers' blogs and read their entries.

Those preservice teachers seem to have an attitude towards the blog tool. They did not benefit from its affordances to share their teaching practice experiences and learn

from others'. The excerpt taken from one of the interview sessions clearly demonstrates the view of P8:

R: As you know, we had the blogs in order to better communicate with each other. Do you think we achieved this goal?

P8: In my opinion, this has not been achieved because we did not use the blogs to communicate with each other. We just used it to post our tasks.

R: OK. What sort of communication did you have with your friends?

P8: I did not use it to communicate with them. I checked my friends' work before posting my tasks. I also read the feedback and comments written to them to have some ideas.

R: Can you please be more specific?

P8: For example, before writing up my lesson plan, I checked my friends' lesson plans to see how they made it or whether I missed anything.

As P8 indicated, he viewed the blog as a tool that he could use to post his tasks only. He also reported that he had viewed his peers' blog tasks before writing his own blog entries. It seems that P8 was not interested in communicating with his peers and the researcher through blogs. Probably, his attitude towards the use of blogs prevented him and the other preservice teachers who had the same attitude from communicating through blogs.

Likewise, another participant explained the reason why she considered herself a passive participant of the blogs throughout the semester. She attributed this to her perception of the blog tool and other commitments.

R: Do you consider yourself an active or a passive user of the blogs?

P14: Honestly, I did not think of blogs as a place where we can communicate with each other. To me, it was a place where I can reflect on my experiences. Now, thinking back, I wish I had spent more time, but we had other projects and assignments and blog was not our priority. So, I just posted my tasks but did not leave any comments to my friends.

R: Do you mean you did not do anything other than posting your tasks?

P14: Nooo! I liked the videos of other friends. Even I watched them with my friend. When we watched them to see what we could do better in our teaching practices. Also, we realized that we also had the same problems to work on. That was good.

The excerpt above clearly indicates that P14 viewed the blog tool as a site to submit her assignments. She reported viewing her peers' teaching practice videos and reflected on their performances with her peer(s). She considered the blog tool only as an opportunity to reflect on teaching-related issues. When she was with a peer, probably they exchanged opinions, which could be considered as a gain for her. Yet, she was not involved in any interaction with her peers on the blogs. She could have shared her opinions in writing with her peers to maximize interaction.

4.1.6.2 Devaluing Peer Feedback

Having a course in blended format was a new experience for all of the participants. While some of them embraced this as an opportunity to experience something innovative, the others seemed to view it as a burden. The findings indicate that some of the preservice teachers failed to post their tasks in a timely manner. It seems that blogging (i.e., submitting the tasks online, viewing their peers' blog entries and leaving comments) was not their priority. To illustrate, some of the participants

posted their blog entries after deadlines, and thus, they did not receive any feedback. Due to this problem, posting the blog tasks after the deadlines appeared as another factor that inhibited blog interaction.

Another issue emerged from the interview data regards the participants' opinions about the quality of their peers' feedback. It seems that some of the participants did not consider their peers' feedback genuine and they avoided replying their comments or joining the comments thread. The following dialogue taken from the interview transcript is quite relevant to the issue.

R: You mentioned that you felt close to some of your peers while taking this course. Did you visit her blog, read her entries and leave comments?

P9: Since I always complete my tasks in the last minute, I did not have time to read my friend's entries and leave comments to her. But when she came to your office, we had chance to talk and get closer.

R: Do you mean that face-to-face interaction was more effective than blog interaction?

P9: I mean when we are face-to-face you understand if your friend is sincere or dishonest in their comments.

R: How often did you log in your blog and visit the others?

P9: Sometimes a few times in a week but sometimes I did not log in my blog for weeks. I think I did not use it frequently because it was my first time to use blogs.

The excerpt above reveals three different evidences as to why the participant did not show any motivation to communicate through the blogs. One reason seems to be

related with the participant's habit. As she admitted, she usually submitted the tasks in the last minute. Due to this reason, she did not have time to visit the blogs of her peers. What is more, her peers may not have had the opportunity to view her blog entries to leave feedback as she did not post before the due dates. The second evidence regards her lack of familiarity with such a tool as she stated that she did not spend much time on blog interaction because she was not used to having a blog or an online tool as a part of her course. The third evidence seems to address the participant's attitude towards the online feedback. She stated that she did not consider online feedback sincere and added that she valued face-to-face feedback more. When this attitude was investigated in more detail, it was revealed that the participant did not show interest in exchanging feedback with her peers as she seemed to devalue their feedback. The following is illustrative:

R: Ok. Did you write feedback to your peers or receive any from them?

P9: While reading the comments, you feel like the friends who wrote the comments have 40 years of teaching experience and you are just a new teacher who has no teaching experience. For example, you've just started teaching and so did I. I give you feedback as if I have years of teaching experience. Don't you react to it?

R: Did not you like the feedback you received from your peers? Is that what you mean?

P9: I did mostly but I did not like their style.

R: Did not you benefit from their feedback?

P9: I did not consider their feedback seriously. Your feedback was enough for me. The value of their feedback compared to yours was like grain of sand in the sea.

Obviously, P9 did not like the feedback language of her peer and since she did not appreciate it, she did not respond to her peers. Moreover, she seemed to devalue her peers' feedback most probably due to their inexperience. Such views she held towards her peers led her to discontinue her interactions with them. The issue of devaluing peer feedback appears to be a serious obstacle to blog interaction. Some other preservice teachers also mentioned this issue. The following participant expressed her thoughts as follows:

R: Do you think you were active or passive in your blogging interactions?

P5: Let's say average. I was not too active. I was just doing what I was asked to do.

R: OK. What factors affected you to refrain from blogging interaction?

P5: There was a problem because they were not writing properly. I did not understand because most of the students wrote the way they were speaking.

R: Hmm, when you published posts, did you expect your peers to read them and write comments on your posts?

P5: I expected responses from you, not from them, because other students, they were in the same situation. Also, it was not so interesting for them to participate in these blogs.... Obviously, we were doing it just for the sake of completing.

R: Do you think the comments you received contributed to your progress?

P5: Yeah, because you were leading us to somewhere next what I was supposed to do. At least you were guiding us what to do next.

The perceived quality of peer feedback appeared to be one of the reasons that prevented P5 from involving in blogging interaction. She seemed to devalue peer feedback quality of the feedback content and the language of their peers. The latter reason was expressed by some other participants as well, which is presented in the following section.

4.1.6.3 Perceived Inadequacy of Written Self-Expression

The preservice teachers' perceived ability of written self-expression was revealed as another reason for limited blog interaction. The interview analysis showed that a number of participants were reluctant to post their tasks on the blog. What is more, some of them avoided leaving feedback for their peers as they were afraid of making language mistakes in English. The following interview excerpt taken from the second cycle of the study seems to support the findings:

R: Considering your blogging activities, do you consider yourself as an active or a passive blogger?

P12: I think I am in the passive users group.

R: OK. In your opinion, what were the reasons that prevented you from interacting with your friends or making comments on their blog posts?

P12: What influenced my blog participation can be my lack of language practice. I am going to be a language teacher but I am not good at writing. I mean thinking fast in English and writing fast is not like what I do in mother tongue and this affected me. For example, if writing a blog entry or leaving a comment took one hour of your time, it would take me two hours to write a blog entry. I mean, it is not about not being able to write but it takes a long time for me to write on the blog, because I have to think and write accurately. That was the first reason. The other reason was that we had other projects and blog participation was not our priority.

R: Why wasn't blog interaction your priority? I mean posting your blog tasks on time, leaving comments on your peers' blog entries or writing feedback on their video recorded teaching practice lessons.

P12: You know it's about student psychology. It is sad but true that writing in blogs wasn't assessed but we had to complete other projects because they were assessed and we had to pass. Also, to write in blogs you need an internet connection, a lap top or a computer. You should be at home sitting in front of the computer to write comments on friends' posts.

As the findings indicate, some of the participants may have had some tension because the researcher and other preservice teachers would possibly read their blog entries and the comments. Communicating in an online medium using a foreign language may have affected their self-confidence as they had to write in English. Therefore, they may have tended to avoid writing comments to their peers as they did not want to make language mistakes. P12 reported that writing in a foreign language involved more careful thinking on word choice and it took more time for her to compose a blog entry. Thus, instead of writing comments, most probably she was content with reading others' blog entries. When she was asked to explain the reasons that led her to refrain from communicating with her peers in blogs, she gave another interesting response:

R: What are the other reasons of not being so active in blog interactions?

P12: Actually, I watched my friends' teaching practice ideas and read some of my friends' lesson plans to have some ideas for my own teaching. To be honest, I liked what we shared in blogs but I did not know whether to write feedback as a teacher or as a student to my friends. I did not want to offend my friends. They could say 'who are you to criticize me'. So, I just watched the videos and read the comments written.

Not being sure what identity to exhibit on the blogs, P12 chose to refrain from actively contributing to blog interaction through commenting and providing feedback. The preservice teachers like P12 must have faced this challenging situation as they were in a transition period and could not decide which role to take a teacher or a student?? In the class, the preservice teachers were expected to act the teacher role but they were the students who enrolled in the course. This may have created confusion for some of the preservice teachers like P12 which resulted in avoidance of active blog participation and interaction in order not to hurt their peers' feelings.

4.1.6.4 Group Dynamics

Group dynamics emerged from the data analysis as another inhibiting factor. To illustrate, one of the preservice teachers said she read the feedback given by some of peers but she did not respond to it because she thought that the feedback was not sincere as it came from a friend with whom she did not have good relations. The following excerpt is illustrative:

R: So, you said you received feedback from some of your friends. Did you respond to their feedback? Or did you write feedback to them?

P9: I did not write to some of my friends because I did not like their style. Also, to be honest, I did not want to write feedback to them.

R: Why?

P9: It may be something personal... Umm, personal feelings.

R: Ok, but think about it, a friend you do not like much is taking time to give you feedback.

P9: Yes, but there is feedback and there is that feedback which looks like something good but actually it means something else. I feel it.

R: Oh! How did you feel yourself then?

P9: Irritated. The feedback looks positive but I know that friend and what she meant by giving me that feedback.

It was interesting to find out that P9 did not respond to some of her peers because of her personal attitudes. It may be possible for some of other participants to avoid interacting with their peers because of their personal views.

Furthermore, some other participants mentioned paying more attention to the blog entries of the peers with whom they had better relations. Likewise, one of the participants said that she chose to watch the teaching practice lessons of her peers with whom she was allocated to the same school during the practicum period.

As the findings revealed, the preservice teachers who were active bloggers chose to interact with other active users. The excerpt below is illustrative:

R: When you consider your friends who also used blogs in this study, do you think you had good communication with them on the blogs?

P10: No, we did not have good communication because many friends did not join blog communications. I had good communication with P15 because she gave me feedback frequently. She was active and I responded to her.

To summarize, the reasons that may have inhibited blog interaction among the users emerged from the interview data. Participants avoided interacting with peers who they believed did not provide good quality feedback. As they devalued their

feedback, they did not show any willingness to respond to their peers' comments. Likewise, they exhibited reluctance in leaving comments to their posts. Furthermore, preservice teachers who had good friendship or communication between each other showed more interest in each other's blog entries. The participants expressed that they were more comfortable with writing feedback to the ones with whom they were good friends. However, some participants seemed to be isolated and the others tended to avoid writing feedback to them for the fear of hurting their feelings. Providing critical feedback on the blogs could offend them because they did not seem to establish the trust and professional perspective to share and handle critical feedback in blogs, as what they wrote was visible to others. Lastly, the active participants who posted regularly on blogs, worked on their personal blogs and visited their peers' blogs, tended to interact with peers with the same attitude. Those active participants chose to connect with other frequent users of the blog. Overall, personal views of the participants proved to play an important role in their choice of with whom to communicate in the blogs.

4.1.7 Challenges of Blogs

The participants mentioned a number of challenges of blogging which potentially hindered their blogging activities and interactions with their peers. As it was stated in the earlier sections, the participants did not have previous blogging experience. During the interviews and in their final reports, they expressed a number of difficulties that made them frustrated with blogging. The findings revealed a number of issues, which were clustered into three categories. Each category is explained below.

4.1.7.1 Lack of Previous Blogging Experience

As regards the challenges, preservice teachers stated that they did not have enough time to experiment with the blogs. Hence, learning how to use the blogs and blogging efficiently at the same time was challenging for them. One of the participants shared her reflections about these challenges at the interview:

R: How did you find the blogging experience?

P5: For me, it was a difficult experience because it was the first time for me. If we had used it from the first year and if I were used to blogging, it would be fine. We are in our last semester and we were introduced to blogs. It was difficult for me. Also, learning computer technologies takes a long time for me to learn. If I were used to it, if I had more time, then it would be fine with me.

4.1.7.2 Lack of Enough Time to Explore Blogs

Some of the preservice teachers complained about the limited time they were given to learn to use blogs and fulfill the course expectations in one semester. Due to deadlines and other course-related commitments such as doing projects and presentations in other lessons, they reported their frustrations. What is more, the preservice teachers mentioned that having a number of blog tasks to complete in a short period of time put them on stress. P15's explanation is illustrative in this regard:

To be honest, I did not think that the blogs would be useful for us but when I watched the lesson of my friends whom I have spent four years of education together I felt proud. At the beginning, I had difficulty in using the blogs and I did not want to do the tasks. However, later I had time problem. We had other assignments and projects. Watching videos and films would take hours and I really had to devote good time to write feedback or my reflections on the blog. I think most of my friends could not write feedback on my videos because of lack of time. I only received feedback and comments from you (P15).

4.1.7.3 Preference of Face-to-Face Communication.

A number of participants sincerely uttered their attitude as regards the online communication. For example, P5 stated her opinion about the whole blogging experience in her final report. In her view, online communication is not sincere and the participants are lazy to participate. The comment that P5 made explains why the participation rate was low at certain times of the semester.

Personally, I don't really like all these blogs and commenting online because it is proved by reality and by students themselves that people are lazy to come to blog and leave sensitive and meaningful comments. They prefer to leave something for the sake of leaving something. For majority to write a comment for his/her peer is a big deal and if we are talking about leaving comments on blog, it is all about laziness. For me, personally, it would be more effective if the same feedback would be done in the classroom but at the same time, some people may not tolerate criticism. So, for them, I think it's better to leave comments on the blog (P5).

4.1.8 Summary

This section presented the findings related to the factors that hindered blogging interactions of the preservice teachers. Firstly, their negative attitudes towards the blogs prevented them from interacting with their peers. Apparently, those who did not interact with their peers viewed the blogs as a tool that they could only submit their tasks. They did not seem to believe in the merits of sharing and learning from each other. Another reason pertains to the preservice teachers' beliefs about the quality of their peers' feedback. They stated that they only valued their instructor's/the researcher's feedback as they thought that their peers would not know more than they did. Lastly, the preservice teachers' perceived inadequacy of written self-expressions appears to be yet another reason. They avoided posting comments on their peers' blog entries because they did not want to make mistake, and hurt their friends' feelings when they criticized them. Therefore, they remained passive in writing comments. On the other hand, they expressed their interest in

reading the comments of the active bloggers and those of the researcher to benefit from.

The next section presents the levels of reflections identified in the reflection blog entries of the preservice teachers' teaching practice lessons.

4.1.9 Findings of the Levels of Reflection

In order to find out whether the blogging experiences of the preservice teachers contributed to their reflection, the blog entries of their teaching practice lesson reflections were analyzed. For the analysis of these documents, the levels of reflection they exhibited were identified. To bear in mind, the preservice teachers were asked to reflect on their teaching practice lessons after conducting their lessons, as reflection was one of the aims of the course. For the purposes of the study, each preservice teacher was required to write a reflective blog entry by following the scaffolding guiding questions upon each teaching practice lesson and post it on their personal blogs (in the first cycle) or the class blog (in the second cycle). The preservice teachers posted 37 blog entries regarding their reflections on teaching practice lessons in the first cycle and only 7 in the second cycle.

To conduct the analysis of the levels of reflections, two different reflection scales were combined and utilized. The first reflection scale was devised by Hawkes and Romiszowski (2001), which focused on 'actual' teaching experiences of in-service teachers. The second scale, developed by Crotty and Allyn (2001), was a six-level reflection scale based on Bloom's Taxonomy and was originally developed for preservice and novice teachers to measure the levels of their teaching practice reflections. Since these two scales focused on different aspects of reflections, they

were combined for more comprehensive analysis. The combined reflection scale included (a) the degree of integration of theories, (b) connecting practices with what was learned in formal education, (c) evidence of learning from teaching practices, and (d) future plans for improvement various levels. Therefore, it was assumed that combining these two instruments could enable the researcher to carry out a comprehensive data analysis regarding what each level of reflection involved.

During the data analysis process, the combined scale was modified as preservice teachers' emotions emerged from the data and the scale did not include reflection of emotions. The preservice teachers described their thoughts and feelings before, during or after their teaching practice lessons in their reflection blog entries. Therefore, the additions that were made to the reflection scale to address the emotions that the preservice teachers described are as follows:

- Feelings and thoughts the preservice teachers described in general but not attached to a specific example related to teaching practice were considered as reflections at Level 1 (e.g., "I was nervous about my first classroom teaching experience").
- Feelings preservice teachers described in simple terms with general examples related to the students' reactions and behavior during their practice teaching or based on concrete rationale were considered as reflections at Level 2.
- Feelings which were described and explained related to a reason or a result of specific teaching practice experience were considered reflections at Level 3. These included specific examples (e.g., "When my students did not understand my instructions, I felt frustrated and thought that the lesson would never end"). (See Appendix I).

As explained in Chapter 3, several steps were taken to reach comprehensive results regarding the levels of reflection. To bear in mind once again, initially, the reflective blog entries of the preservice teachers were taken from their personal blogs and transferred to word documents. Then, the data were read and divided into chunks. For chunking the data, the steps that the preservice teachers followed in their teaching practice lesson reflection blog entries were considered. For example, starting a lesson, description of each step, moving on to examples, and reaching conclusions were separated into chunks. Then, the data were re-read to code the segments by using the latest version of the reflection scale. Third and fourth readings were also done to go over the levels and to note down emerging features of each level.

Table 4.3: The Levels of Reflection in the Teaching Practice Lesson Reflection Blog Entries

Level	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Teaching practice lesson reflection blog entries	98/385	118/385	86/385	38/385	35/385	10/385	0/385
	25.45%	30.65%	22.33%	9.8%	9.09%	2.59%	0%

The data of teaching practice lessons reflection blog entries consisted of 23.163 words in 44 pages. The total number of chunks was 385. Table 4.3 below presents a detailed account of the levels of reflection, which were generated through the frequency analysis. According to the information presented in Table 4.3, there seems to be a balance among Levels 1, 2, and 3 as their percentages are quite close to each other. Likewise, the percentages between Levels 4 and 5 are also close to each other, both of which are at a lower percentage (around 9%). Yet, a significant difference is seen between Levels 1, 2, 3 and Levels 4 and 5. While the minimum amount of

reflection is seen at Level 6, none of the preservice teachers' reflection was found to be at Level 7. Each level of reflection is presented in detail in the following sections.

4.1.9.1 Reflections at Level 1

The first reflection question asked the preservice teachers to describe their lesson aims as well as their feelings before executing their lessons. The question aimed at providing some general information for the readers (i.e., their peers and the course instructor) who were not in the class to observe the lesson. The preservice teachers described what happened in the classroom including the aim of the lesson and how they felt at the beginning and so on. Therefore, almost all participants started their reflection blog entries with a general description of their lessons and how they felt. Reflections at Level 1 included thoughts and feelings of preservice teachers before they conducted their teaching practice lessons. Also, their overall impressions of their teaching practice lessons they mentioned in brief were considered reflections at Level 1. Based on the above-mentioned description, the analysis revealed that out of 385 chunks in the data, 98 chunks were reflection at Level 1. In other words, 25.5% of teaching practice lesson reflection blog entries was found to be at this level.

The following excerpts taken from the preservice teachers' teaching practice lessons reflection blog entries include some reasons why they felt excited and nervous before their teaching practices.

Before going to class, I was very excited and feeling nervous. I couldn't sleep at night and I woke up very early. I called my supervisor and we went to school together (P7).

My lesson was neither good nor bad. I was excited at the beginning of the lesson. When I entered the class to prepare my materials I was relaxed (P3).

Well, my first teaching experience was very nice. I was very excited because the lesson was going to be video-recorded. I was kind of scared to go to the classroom because it was an assessed lesson (P5).

Apart from the feelings and impressions described at Level 1, some of the chunks coded at this level included simple descriptions of the actions that the preservice teachers took, either before or during their teaching practices. The extracts taken from two different preservice teachers' reflection blog entries clearly illustrate simple, general descriptions made very roughly as representative of other chunks identified at this level.

I decided on my materials and I made my lesson plan. After putting my lesson plan on my blog I got some feedback from my friends and my teacher. Then, I changed some things on the lesson plan (P3).

I asked them to move their chairs. One student didn't move the chair and I said it was not a pair work activity and I asked another student to change his seat and do the group-work (P1).

4.1.9.2 Reflections at Level 2

Reflections that included the descriptions of examples, events or experiences related to the preservice teachers' understanding of the development of the students in their classes and relevant instructional plans were coded as reflections at Level 2. What is more, reflective chunks that involved preservice teachers' descriptions of feelings before, during or after their lesson execution were coded at this level.

The analysis results show that 118 chunks out of 385 chunks (i.e., 30.65%) were coded at Level 2. Compared to the other levels of reflections, this number (and percentage) seems to be the highest of all. This shows that most of the reflection blog entries that preservice teachers posted included descriptions of their lessons, emotions and thoughts before going to the classroom and during the lesson based on evidences.

The following excerpt taken from one of the preservice teachers' reflective blog entry describes her feelings before lesson execution. She expressed her excitement briefly and stated that she found it strange because she had had two mini-teaching experiences before. Despite this, she also attributed her self-confidence to her previous mini-teaching experiences.

Before and during the teaching practice lesson, I was very excited. I don't know why I was excited and stressed. Although I did two mini-teachings, I did one of the mini-teachings as a teaching practice lesson, I wasn't very comfortable but I had self-confidence; everything was okay (P4).

Some of the participants demonstrated the aim of their lessons in more detail, giving some examples but they used simple terms in their reflections. The extract below exemplifies data coded at Level 2. P9 stated in her reflective blog entry what questions she asked to the students but she did not mention what answers she received. Also, she did not evaluate on whether asking such questions before the writing activity helped the students in the later stages of the lesson.

In my last teaching practice lesson, I focused on writing. I asked some questions about communication. How do people communicate with each other? What kind of communication methods do they use? And then, I got some answers from students (P9).

Preservice teachers also described their students' behavior and learning as well as how they felt during their teaching practices. However, these descriptions were limited to a few sentences. For example, P1 mentioned that he checked the pronunciation but he did not include any detail regarding what pronunciation he checked or why he made such corrections. He could have elaborated on his thoughts about correcting pronunciation. Yet, he just mentioned his action in one simple sentence.

Sometimes I checked my time and I moved to the next activity. I went near students and I encouraged them to join the lesson. Generally, they were willing to join the lesson. I corrected their pronunciation and I checked their conversation with each other (P1).

Likewise, the description P2 provided in her reflective blog entry includes a vague description of events in a sentence. In her reflection, she disregarded what activities the students had difficulty with, how she helped them and whether it was useful or not to the students. Her reflection is rather general and lacks such details.

When they were doing the activities, they had some difficulties. At that time, I helped them. I monitored them closely and I tried to help them to do these activities (P2).

As it is understood from the above extracts, the participants only gave general descriptions of their activities in one or two sentences. Since they did not use any pedagogical terms in their descriptions and did not elaborate on their descriptions, these chunks of reflections were coded at Level 2.

4.1.9.3 Reflections at Level 3

The chunks of teaching practice lesson reflection blog entries that included 'pedagogical terms' were coded as reflections at Level 3. Also, the statements of previously learnt concepts that preservice teachers mentioned in relation to their specific teaching practices, as well as their feelings, were considered reflections at Level 3. According to the results, 22.33% of the teaching practice lesson reflection blog entries were coded at Level 3. The segments coded at this level were still descriptions but they included pedagogical terms such as 'classroom management', 'time management', 'giving instructions', and so on. The reflections at this level also included evidences of the use of pedagogical terms, as well as applications of previously learnt lessons from their teaching practice experiences.

In excerpt below, the preservice teachers used a pedagogical term to present the problem that she encountered in her classroom. Moreover, she presented a possible reason that might have led to it. However, she did not elaborate on the reason that led her students not to feel confident enough to actively participate in the activities.

I also encountered some classroom management problems such as the students on the left of the classroom were not active and they didn't participate in the lesson and I think the problem was self-confidence (P5).

On the other hand, the excerpt below taken from another participant's reflective blog entry mentioned 'classroom management' as her strength and forgetting to 'check instructions' as her weakness. Although she used some pedagogical language in her reflective writing, she did not discuss these areas in detail.

Although I was demoralized because of the label, I can say, I managed my lesson and activities well. But, after I gave my instructions, I didn't check them. I forgot to do it. This was so bad for me, because, after we give our instructions, we have to check them (P8).

The chunks which included statements of awareness regarding the reasons of certain teaching-related issues, examples of the preservice teachers' feelings and specific teaching practices that they focused on were also coded at Level 3.

I can say that my lesson had a time management problem. I didn't do my last activity because I had no time at the end of my lesson for my last activity (P9).

Overall, the findings indicate that preservice teachers gained some awareness of certain teaching-related issues such as time management, classroom management, checking instructions, and displaying self-confidence. However, they did not discuss the potential reasons of the problems they faced elaborating on alternative solutions.

4.1.9.4 Reflections at Level 4

The chunks that included articulations of strong rationale behind specific decisions the preservice teachers made during their teaching practice lessons were coded as reflections at Level 4. Only 9.8 % of the teaching practice lesson reflection blog entries of the preservice teachers were coded at this level. Such dramatic decrease may be attributed to the fact that the reflections at this level required more elaboration and more specific examples.

The excerpt below was taken from P6's reflection blog entry. The participant expressed that asking the same question again and again to the same student did not help student to give the answer. Then, she proposed an alternative action and possible consequences of her insistence, respectively. Such elaborations were considered as a proof of evidence that she learned from her experiences.

Furthermore, when I asked a question to a student, and I did not get an answer, I insistently kept asking the same question to the same student until I got a reply. I should not have done it, I should have asked it to someone else, because it wasted my time. I could have done other exercises in that time. Also, he may have felt embarrassed and finally it would be unequal to other students (P6).

Based on the combined reflection scale, the reflections at this level involved deeply elaborated examples of evidences that the preservice teachers were able to critically reflect on the actions they took and feelings they had while they were teaching. The following excerpt below provides some evidences as regards how P3 attempted to overcome the problem of giving instructions and her realization of various ways of checking her instructions.

My weakness is with giving clear instruction and checking it. How can I put it? I really don't know, but sometimes I think that I gave clear instructions to my students and then I realized that some students didn't know what they

were doing. So, I had to give the instructions again. Another weakness is with checking instructions. I gave instructions but I didn't check them. However, after giving instructions, I should check them again. I must ask different questions to my students (P3).

In the following extract, P12 attributed her confidence in class to her previous experiences. She also reflected on her perspective on the importance of gaining experience:

In my second teaching, I noticed that I was not anxious as much as the first time. I think the reason was that I had experienced it before. Experience is really important (P12).

In a nutshell, the selections from different preservice teachers' teaching practice lessons reflection blog entries provide some proof of evidence (i.e., they came to some conclusions as a result of their teaching experiences). Some of these lessons learnt include the importance of asking different questions to check instructions, asking a question to a different student in order not to embarrass the one who could not answer the question, and the importance of gaining experience of teaching through time.

4.1.9.5 Reflections at Level 5

The chunks of teaching practice lesson reflection blog entries which were coded at Level 5 involved more elaboration on the examples related to their teaching experiences. These were generally based on the cause/effect principle, self-criticism, and most importantly, evidence of learning from their new experiences.

Only 9.9% of the data was revealed to be reflections at Level 5. Out of 385 chunks, only 35 chunks were identified as statements that included evidences of learning from new experiences based on the preservice teachers' perspectives. The

scaffolding guiding questions asked them to provide evidences of what went well, what didn't go so well, and what they gained from their teaching practice experiences. The low percentage (9.9%) indicates that preservice teachers did not elaborate on their teaching practice experiences much. The following reflection excerpt of P5 includes the proof of evidence that she reached some conclusions about the importance of being well-prepared for her lessons.

As a teacher I am supposed to be well-prepared because my students must see that I am prepared and can manage the time and the lesson well. I am very grateful to this kind of experience; I will take into consideration my weak points and make it my advantage (P5).

The same participant briefly elaborated on time management as another challenge she faced in the same lesson from a critical perspective. First, she mentioned the reasons that caused problems of time management. Then, she generated a potential solution in order not to face the same challenge in her future teaching practices. The following brief extract clearly indicates a lesson learnt from the experience.

The problem was timing again. I wasted my time doing the warm-up activities and explaining grammar patterns to students. As a possible solution, I could reduce the number of exercises before the main writing activity in order to economize on time (P5).

To conclude this section, it is possible to state that only a few preservice teachers produced reflections that included more explanations about the lessons they learnt as a result of their teaching practice experiences. Although the number of reflective chunks identified at Level 5 was very few, the preservice teachers included specific examples and plans for their future teaching practices in order not to encounter the obstacles they had in their lessons. It was important to identify such lessons learnt

from teaching experiences as they were the indicators that at least some of the Preservice teachers built up their belief systems based on them.

4.1.9.6 Reflections at Level 6

The reflections at Level 6 were very few as only 10 chunks out of 385 chunks were coded at this level. In other words, only 2.59% of the whole data included examples of non-imagined contextual factors such as environmental limitations, and learner and teacher needs that the preservice teachers elaborated on. The excerpt below is coded as reflection at Level 6 because the participant (P6) stated in her reflective blog entry that she did not anticipate that late comers would interrupt her lesson. P6 reflected on the reason why she had to start the lesson again which led her to experience some problems with managing time.

However, I guess I had just one problem, and it was time management. I could not manage the time to finish the exercises in the book. So, I need to take it into consideration. But I have a reason for this. When I began the lesson, I was interrupted many times by the students. Since there were late comers, I had to restart the lesson many times. Consequently, I began the lesson ten minutes late. I know that the time management is really crucial in a real class, because it should be done according to the school rules. But, I think, at that moment, the positive class atmosphere that I created was more important than timing for me, because I defeated my anxiety and excitement (P6).

To code the reflections at Level 6, some concrete statements that preservice teachers identified as their future professional developments after evaluating their current teaching practices were looked into. In the extract below, P7 expressed the lessons he learnt from his teaching practice experience by evaluating his teaching abilities, and listed some concrete steps that he would take to improve his teaching practices.

When I look back, I understand that I have to be more thoughtful and equal to students, and also, have more self-confidence. I think, I managed the class very well and had good eye contact with all students and monitored all students one by one. To develop my skills further, I have some plans such as

working on different ways to involve more students in the activities and motivate them all and use L1 as little as possible (P7).

Although preservice teachers were asked to reflect on their gains and plans to further develop their teaching skills through the guiding questions, unfortunately they did not elaborate on these aspects.

4.1.9.7 Reflections at Level 7

None of the chunks in the whole data was coded at Level 7. The preservice teachers did not support their reflective statements with any guiding principle nor did they refer to any moral and ethical issues. In order to encourage reflections on this level, the preservice teachers could be asked to relate their experiences to relevant theories that they studied in the previous years. This could be achieved through guiding scaffolding questions or the course instructor/ the researcher could direct such questions to the preservice teachers as feedback as this would lead to more fruitful interaction among them.

To summarize, the findings gathered from the teaching practice lesson reflection blog entries indicated that the preservice teachers tended to write more of the descriptions of events and their actions and decisions compared to elaborated examples supported with reasons. Only a few preservice teachers elaborated on their teaching experiences, reflecting on specific actions and decisions. Likewise, lessons learnt from experiences and articulations of future professional developmental plans seem to be rather limited in scope.

4.1.10 Summary

This section presented the findings as regards the levels of reflections identified in the preservice teachers' reflection blog entries of their teaching practice lessons. In

order to carry out the analysis, two different scales were combined and modified for the purposes of the study. The results revealed that preservice teachers mostly described their feelings and teaching practice activities in their reflective blog entries. Although the participants were given a set of guiding questions which aimed to encourage more reflection, it was discovered that the preservice teachers either skipped those questions or they did not fully answer them by elaborating on their experiences. Therefore, very little reflection of the preservice teachers mentioned lessons they learned from the teaching practice experience and future steps to take to improve their current practices. Overall, the results showed that the preservice teachers needed some more guidance to pay attention to the depth of their reflections which is highly important to raise their awareness to realize their potentials and seek ways to improve their practices.

The second research question sought to answer the contribution of the preservice teachers' blogging interactions to construction of their language teacher identities. The next section presents the related findings.

4.2 Research Question #2: How do preservice teachers' blogging interactions contribute to their teacher identity construction?

The second research question attempted to discover how preservice teachers' blogging interactions contributed to construction of their professional teacher identity. In order to seek answers to this research question, qualitative content analysis was conducted (Merriam, 1998; Saldaña, 2012). The analysis of the interview transcripts and the blog artefacts, which were comprised of movie critiques, teaching practice reflections, and final reports, revealed a number of emerging themes. These themes were then grouped into five major themes: i)

concepts about qualities of good teachers, ii) improvement of current teacher qualities, iii) improvement of blogging skills, iv) construction of self-concept, and (v) expected and feared possible-selves. Each of the themes is presented in the following sections with supporting extracts taken from the data.

4.2.1 Concepts about Qualities of Good Teachers

The findings revealed that watching the movies and video-recorded teaching practice lessons potentially heighten the preservice teachers' awareness as regards the qualities a good teacher would possess. The excerpt taken from one of the movie-critique-blog entries of P3 shows her reflection on the teacher characteristics she observed in one of the movies.

When I watched the film I liked it very much. I will be a teacher just 3 months later. While I was watching the film, I imagined myself as the teacher in the movie. Also, I tried to define the meaning of a good teacher. Good teachers are people who have content knowledge and also good relationship with students. They understand their students' feelings and behave equal to all students. In the movie, the teacher was very patient and I understood that she loves teaching (P3).

Similar reflections were identified in other preservice teachers' blog entries as well. They generally indicated that their blogging activities helped them generate an understanding of important characteristics of a good teacher. To illustrate, P9 described how her pre-conceptions regarding the aspects of a good teacher went through changes in her final report. It appears that previously she thought knowing very good English would be enough to teach well. However, later, she realized that this would not be enough and other qualities and skills were required as well to conduct successful lessons.

I realized that knowing very good English is not enough to be a good teacher in class. You should also bring students together in class and keep them motivated and interested throughout the lesson. Maybe you know the content very well but the way you explain it does not work in class. You

should find interesting ways to teach it in class. A teacher should prepare very well before teaching it in class (P9).

The interview transcript analysis also revealed similar findings pertaining to the preservice teachers' construction of teacher identity. The extract taken from the interview data shows how P4's notion of teacher and teaching has changed during the course.

P4: ...for example we watched the movies. The students who were rebel and problematic... you watch what the teacher in the movie does to handle the students and consider what you could do if you were the teacher. Then, you think that it is possible to have such students. These helped me gain a perspective. I mean, I no longer look at teaching and teacher in a conventional way anymore.

R: What do you mean? Can you explain?

P4: I mean before the course, I had a very simple view of teaching and teachers. I was simply thinking that you get dressed and go to class to teach. The most important problem would be that some of the students would not do their homework or bring their books. However, all these blogs tasks like movie critiques, watching other friends teaching and reading their lesson plans showed me that a teacher needs to do more than getting dressed for teaching. We may have more serious problems like the ones presented in the movies. Simply, I discovered that teaching is very complicated and we should be prepared for unexpected situations. While watching the movies, I started thinking what I would do if I had such students in class and questioned my teacher qualities. I realized that gained a new perspective by the end of the semester.

As P4 admitted, she previously had a rather simplistic view of what teaching involves and potential problems a teacher may encounter at work. However, her teaching practice experiences, observation of her peers' practices, and watching different teacher characters in movies led her to raise awareness of other issues that she did not consider before. Eventually, she stated this learning process was a

precious one as she became aware of certain issues which she may encounter when she starts the profession and she gained some understanding of how to deal with them.

The same participant also reported that she also realized her own teacher qualities. As she stated, her perception of herself as a teacher also changed. She realized her potential teacher qualities she could display while teaching when she watched her video-recorded teaching practice lessons.

Until the time I went into the classroom to teach, I was not aware of my teaching potentials; there was always a hesitation like ‘can I do this?’ or ‘can I do that?’ I was not sure. I realized that I could manage the class and have good communication with them. I tried to use technology in class because I was inspired when I watched the videos of my friends on the blog. I wanted to show that I could also use technology in my classes because it is important for a teacher (P4).

Watching their own video-recorded teaching practice lessons seemed to help the preservice teachers identify their strengths and weaknesses. Likewise, feedback from their peers and the course instructor (i.e., researcher) probably facilitated the recognition of what qualities they possessed and what qualities they needed to improve. The extracts taken from various preservice teachers’ blog artefacts are presented below to support the findings.

I watched my teaching practice lesson videos and I saw my weaknesses and good sides. It is important for a prospective teacher to receive feedback from others who have different perspectives. With the feedback coming from my teacher and friends, I started giving more attention to the use of L2 in class (P15).

There were fears about not having respect by students or not creating a successful education environment because I am a very silent person and have very soft voice. I wanted to overcome this fear and I considered the feedback I received from my teachers and from my peers on the blog; I focused on the issues they suggested (P14).

Likewise, in the excerpt below, one of the participants clearly indicated how she realized her potential teacher qualities and constructed a teacher identity throughout the course during her interview.

P10: Before taking this course, I used to imagine myself as a quiet teacher in class who would have difficulty to manage the students because I am a quiet person as my friends also tell me. However, in my last teaching practice I surprised myself because I realized that I could be a strict and dominant teacher when necessary in class.

R: What do you think led to this change?

P10: There is a difference between me in the first teaching and me after the fourth one, because I tried to benefit from your feedback, my teacher's feedback. I was logging on my blog frequently to see what feedback my friends wrote under my lesson plan and the video-recorded teaching practice lesson. I tried to apply the suggestions in my teachings. I tried to correct my mistakes and improve myself. I mean I tried to develop myself as a teacher like that.

The blogging activities that the preservice teachers were engaged in potentially provided them with an opportunity to critically reflect on their teacher qualities they displayed and work on their self-concept to improve as teachers. The participants' reflections in their blog entries clearly indicate how they attempted to construct new self-concept as teachers.

4.2.2 Improvement of Current Teacher Qualities

As revealed from the data analysis, watching their own teaching practice lessons seemed like a learning experience for the preservice teachers as regards their professional development. They also took the feedback from their peers and the course instructor (i.e., the researcher) into consideration seriously in order to develop their own teacher qualities. The extract taken from the interview above also indicates

that the preservice teacher attempted to construct a better teacher identity and improve her self-concept every time she practiced teaching.

Furthermore, the feedback the preservice teachers received online seems to be another important factor as some of them took it seriously and followed the advice they received. One of the preservice teachers evaluated her progress as a teacher in her final report as follows:

In the whole teaching process, I realized what teaching involved day by day. I became more relaxed and trusted myself. My supervisor came to watch my teaching and video-recorded me teaching. I watched my own performance at home and became more aware of my weak and strong sides. I read my peers' and teacher's feedback on the blog. I realized that I had to use my voice more effectively; I should be more patient and have a smiling face. We had learnt all these from the books but it is really difficult to apply them in class. Then, when I watched other videos, I realized that I improved myself so much, such as using my voice effectively, giving instructions, monitoring the class and so on. Before teaching, I was afraid to control the class because they were young adults. (P3).

Self-reflection and feedback from peers and the instructor (i.e., the researcher) provided P3 with the opportunity to improve her teaching qualities. Gaining teaching experiences, as she put it, helped her improve her self-esteem as a teacher in class. It is possible to conclude that the preservice teachers' blogging interactions helped them to see themselves as teachers and reflect on their teacher qualities. Also, these blogging interactions facilitated the feedback mechanism to further provide support for the preservice teachers from others. In that sense, it is possible to state that the preservice teachers benefitted from the feedback cycle and critical self-reflection to become aware of who they are and improve themselves as teachers.

4.2.3 Improvement of Blogging Skills

Learning how to set up a blog, actively using it by completing several tasks, and communicating with the other users online was a totally new experience for the preservice teachers. Data analysis revealed that most of them took the whole experience as a gain, which possibly led to the growth of a sense of professionalism. Furthermore, most of the participants mentioned that they learned much about blogs and improved their blogging skills. This experience made them feel one step ahead of their friends who did not have the opportunity to learn how to use blogs. The following extracts are illustrative.

To learn to use a blog page and have one was so beneficial and educational for me in this course. Nowadays in almost all schools blogging is a part of practice and as a teacher candidate I should learn and use it effectively. I had chance to create my own page, edit it according to my wishes and learn many things by doing (P5).

Unlike my friends from other groups, I now know how to use a technological tool. This makes me feel like a teacher who is in an advantageous position because I have many ideas about ways of using a blog in my class. I feel more confident as a teacher (P2).

The above extracts reveal that learning how to set up and manage a blog feature contributed to the technological knowledge of the preservice teachers. What is more, since the blog tool was an important component of ELTE 406 Teaching Practice course, the preservice teachers gained ideas about how to integrate it in instruction. Therefore, it seems that the process contributed to the technological pedagogical knowledge (TPK) of the preservice teachers. The following participant (P3) summarized the blogging experiences and added her self-relevant opinion about herself as a teacher.

I think the whole blogging experience was a great gain for all of us. We saw the difference between our group and other friends in other groups who did not use blogs. For example, we watched movies and shared our ideas on the blogs; we had ideas about our friends' lessons by viewing their lesson plans and watched their video-recorded teaching practice lessons on the class blog. We do not view teaching in a classical way; we also have ideas about how to manage a blog page. It was a great advantage for us. I feel like a modern teacher who can keep up with the technological changes (P3).

The participants who had the blog experience stated that they perceived themselves different from their peers who did not have the blog tool as a part of their courses. They perceived it as a gain since they had the knowledge of how to set up, use and integrate a blog tool into a course. In other words, their blogging experiences helped them to cope with the technological challenges:

R: Has the blogging experience affected your future teacher image? Imagine you did not have the blog as a part of your course. Did this difference affect your perspective as a future teacher?

P4: Yes, I believe I am a more modern teacher now. When my friends learnt that I had a blog on the Internet, they say 'Wow!' They do not know what it is and ask me how they can use it. I believe I am one step ahead of them.

4.2.4 Construction of Self-Concepts

Self-concept that is "what a person believes about himself" (Zlatkovic et al., 2012) is another theme that emerged from the data. The representations of how preservice teachers viewed themselves as teachers seem to be a significant finding as engaging in teaching practice activities and receiving feedback from their supervisor and peers led to awareness of teacher qualities they possess. The preservice teachers also stated that they became aware of their teacher-selves when they watched themselves teaching. Two of the extracts below taken from different participants' reflection blog entries seem to illustrate the findings.

I know that human relationship is the most important thing. A teacher should be friendly. I tried to be friendly with students and tried to learn their

names, because if you call students with their names, they will be motivated. This lesson was recorded. So, I could watch myself. I was clearly the boss of the class and took all the attention. At the end of the lesson, I reached my goals; I was cool and felt very delighted. I could reduce my teacher talking time and discovered that I managed to elicit in class (P1).

I realized that I was impatient in class in my first teaching, it was important; I have to be patient and wait for my students to finish their tasks. Also, I understand that using colorful visuals is very useful. A teacher may know the content very well, but if they cannot present it in class efficiently, it doesn't work. I realized the importance of the techniques used in class (P11).

Similar findings were also revealed during the interviews when the participants were asked to express their views regarding how they changed or grew professionally throughout the teaching practice process. The preservice teachers were asked to express whether their teaching practice lessons and blogging experiences had contributed to their professional growth. The extract below indicates that the overall experiences of the preservice teacher changed her previously constructed self-concept.

R: When you consider yourself as a teacher, how have your teaching practice and blogging experiences changed the way you see yourself?

P15: Before taking this course I was thinking that by being a disciplined and strict teacher, I could control my class much more easily but after all these experiences my opinion changed. I realized that in order to control students a teacher should understand their students. You should understand what your students expect and how they behave to attract their attention to the lesson. That's why after taking this course my understanding of teaching has changed.

The participant stated that she became aware of her teacher qualities as a result of watching herself teaching, and then reflecting on her teacher behaviors in class. As she stated, she realized that some of the concepts she had considered vitally correct

would actually prove to be wrong when she watched herself teaching. What is more, she indicated that her whole teaching practice experience she was engaged in during a semester had led her to change the way she perceived teaching.

The findings also indicate that the blog interactions of the preservice teachers created the sense of professionalism. As some of the participants expressed, they felt like a professional individual while giving feedback to their peers and responding to the received feedback on the blogs. One of the participants' responses was remarkable in this sense. When she was asked to mention the difference between face-to-face and online interaction, she made the following comment:

R: In your opinion, what were the differences between the classroom interaction and the blog interaction?

P2: When we were in class, I was making comments on some of my friends' ideas and I was ignoring some of them due to my personal attitude towards them. However, on the blogs, I made comments on their [referring to those she ignored in class] blog entries or teaching practice videos because blogs seemed a more professional environment to me and I felt like a professional teacher because I was there to comment on their teaching practice experience.

4.2.5 Expected and Feared Possible-Selves

The preservice teachers were asked to articulate what kind of teachers they expected to be when they become teachers during the interviews. They were asked to “generate possible teacher selves they expected to achieve in their first year of teaching, and feared teacher possible-selves they wanted to achieve during their first year of teaching” (Hamman et al., 2010, p. 1353). The preservice teachers articulations of possible-selves were qualitatively analyzed and categorized based on categories and definitions of expected and feared teacher possible-selves (Hamman et al., 2010).

Firstly, expected selves were clustered into three broad categories: i) interpersonal relationships, ii) instructional strategies, and iii) professional dispositions. Similarly, feared teacher-selves articulated by the preservice teachers were also clustered into three categories: i) classroom management, ii) instructional strategies, and iii) unprofessional dispositions (See Table 4.4 for a summary of recurring patterns within each theme). With respect to expected teacher-selves, interpersonal relationships comprised the largest proportion compared to instructional strategies and professional dispositions.

Table 4.4: Summary of Recurring Patterns within Each Theme

Theme: Expected teacher-selves	Theme: Feared teacher-selves
<p>Interpersonal relationships I expect to be a teacher who:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - is approachable - praises his/her students - has good rapport with students - deals with students' problems - is cheerful - is respected by students - has good communication with students in and out of class - is tolerant and flexible 	<p>Classroom management I fear becoming a teacher who:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - establishes constant discipline in class - puts pressure on students - exhibits dominance in class
<p>Instructional strategies I expect to be a teacher who:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - incorporates various and interesting materials in lessons - integrates technology in instruction - implements new approaches to teaching - conducts learner-centred lessons - establishes and maintains discipline in class 	<p>Instructional strategies I fear becoming a teacher who:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - uses same (type of) materials in class - conducts monotonous lessons - does not keep himself/herself up-to-date with new trends
<p>Professional dispositions I expect to be a teacher who:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - is hard-working - is organized - serves society 	<p>Unprofessional dispositions I fear becoming a teacher who:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - does not care about students

4.2.5.1 Expected Teacher-selves: Interpersonal Relationships

Interpersonal relationships refer to ideas of the self in interaction with others, such as working and getting along with persons or groups in a school (Hamman, personal communication February 9, 2015). Findings revealed that preservice teachers were more concerned with their personal qualities (e.g., being cheerful, approachable, dealing with students' problems) and relations with their students (e.g., praising students, having good communication and establishing rapport) than with instructional strategies or professional dispositions. For instance, P4 focused on interpersonal relationships with students when articulating the kind of teacher she/he expected to be in the future:

Actually, I have thought about it several times and tried to imagine myself as a real teacher in the classroom. I think it depends on my class and my students' behaviour. I think I will be a tolerant and positive teacher. I love sharing knowledge. I aim to teach them something and make them a part of society (P4).

In this quote P4 focused on self-image (i.e., self-as-teacher) and relations with students. The choice of words suggests that P4's future self as a teacher will be tied to future students' behaviour, implying in itself a sort of fear as well. That is, future students may not meet existing expectations and may behave undesirably. Despite this, certain words (i.e., love, tolerant, positive) foreground a focus on interpersonal relationships in P4's expected teacher-self. The other words (i.e., share knowledge, make them a part of society) can be related to her expected professional efficacy.

Another participant (P5) shared her expected future teacher-self in her reflection report. P5 stated, "I want to be a tolerant and flexible teacher so that my students can approach me easily. I also want to have fun classes. I want my students to love my

lessons. I want to praise them”. P5’s choice of words (i.e., tolerant, flexible, approach...easily, love, praise) communicate that the focus is on interpersonal relationships as well. The phrase “fun classes” can be attributed to both interpersonal relationship and instructional strategies (i.e., teaching techniques and materials).

P1 was also more concerned with relations with students than with instructional strategies or professional dispositions. This emphasis was reflected in P1’s blog post regarding the assigned movie *Dead Poets Society*:

A good teacher affects his students’ life deeply. I really want to be that kind of teacher. Mr. Keating had a perfect relationship with his students. He was intelligent and behaved like a father. I will be a teacher like him but I need experience. I will be a role model like him (P1).

P1’s words explicitly point to an expected teacher-self (i.e., “...affecting students’ life deeply, ...perfect relationship with students,...intelligent, ...like a father, ...be a role model”), which is related to interpersonal relationships.

4.2.5.2 Expected Teacher-Selves: Instructional Strategies

Instructional strategies refer to “selves that pertain to the use of strategies, the focus of instruction, or the instructional process” (Hamman, personal communication February 9, 2015). For example, in a blog entry, P12 expressed a preference regarding the desirability of specific instructional strategies in future teaching:

My peers see me as a teacher who is well organized and works hard to prepare new materials for my lessons. I hope to be better in doing this when I start teaching. I also want to involve my students in the lessons and improve my student-centred lessons (P12).

P12 attempted to construct expected teacher-self in light of the feedback received from peers. In fact, he quoted the key words that his peers used to describe their perceptions about his present teacher image that he exhibits. Furthermore, P12 also

expected to become a teacher who conducts “student-centred lessons,” which illustrates quality-focused concerns.

Another participant, P9 cast expected teacher-selves in terms of interpersonal relationship and instructional strategies when describing the inspirational influence of one of the teacher characters in *Dangerous Minds*. Impressions in the movie reflection blog entry related to this task expressed two expected teacher-selves based on the teacher in the movie: one relating to maintaining discipline without shouting and punishing students, and the other to bringing interesting materials to class that attracted students’ attention. The phrase “...maintained discipline without shouting and punishing...” implied that P9 expected to develop such teacher features. What is more, P9 expressed particular passion about being a teacher who could bring “materials to class” in order to make students more interested in the lesson.

4.2.5.3 Expected Teacher-Selves: Professional Dispositions

Professional dispositions refer to “selves pertaining to characteristics or qualities that are expected of a *professional* teacher. It is a quality or characteristic of self that is represented independently of interaction” (Hamman personal communication February 9, 2015). One example for this comes from the final reflection blog entry, in which P12 reported that other preservice teachers perceived her/him as a “well organized” and “hardworking” teacher. P12 expressed the expectation to build current teacher qualities into a better teacher-self in the future:

Some of my peers commented on one of my video-recorded teaching practice lessons. They see me as a teacher who is well organized and hardworking because I prepared new materials for my lessons. I hope to be better in doing this when I start teaching. I also want to involve my students in the lessons and improve my student-centred lessons.

Unlike many other preservice teachers, P12 formulated some professional dispositions as expected teacher-selves. P12's willingness to improve in material development, lesson planning, and instructional strategies indicated quality-focused concerns relevant to students and lesson management.

4.2.5.4 Feared Teacher-Selves: Classroom Management

Classroom management (negative) refers to “selves that pertain to conducting oneself *poorly* or being *ineffective* at orchestrating the matters of discipline, student behavior or classroom procedures” (Hamman personal communication February 9, 2015). To demonstrate, P14 expressed concerns about how physical appearance may impact classroom management. During the interview P14 revealed fears about losing control of the class due to being “very short” and not “look[ing] like a teacher”. This participant felt that being short may cause difficulties establishing authority, fearing that students would not take her seriously as if she were not mature enough to be a teacher. However, this participant also expressed not wanting “to be a teacher who is very authoritarian and strict.” Most probably, P14's major concern during the first year of teaching would be finding a balanced way to overcome this fear. Similarly, in one reflection blog entry on teaching practice experiences, P10 expressed fear about becoming a strict teacher: “I will try not to be an authoritarian and a strict teacher because while I was doing my teaching practice, I realized that when I put pressure on students, they did not participate in the lessons.” P10 appreciated the importance of the delicate balance necessary for involving students in lessons. This personal experience falsified P10's previous concept that discipline in class can only be maintained by “being a strict teacher”.

4.2.5.5 Feared Teacher-Selves: Instructional Strategies

Instructional strategies (negative) refer to “selves” that pertain to being *ineffective* with instruction, using ineffective strategies, or not being successful in some aspect of the instructional process (Hamman personal communication February 9, 2015). Findings related to feared teacher-selves indicated that receiving feedback and watching peers’ video-recorded lessons helped preservice teachers mitigate feared teacher-selves pertaining to instructional strategies by identifying strategies to deal with such problems when they arise. To demonstrate, in the last teaching practice reflection blog entry, P6 mentioned that teaching practice experiences led to generating feared selves. At the same time, the feedback provided during the post-observation meetings helped raise awareness of how to improve certain aspects of teaching. Also, observing peers who encountered similar obstacles created a feeling of relief:

After I conducted the grammar class in my last teaching practice lesson I felt that I was not sufficient. I felt embarrassed when I could not answer the students’ questions...When I received feedback and some guidance from my instructor I had some ideas to overcome these problems. Then, I realized that some of my friends had encountered similar problems when I watched their videos. This was a bit relieving because I was not the only one (P6).

One of the significant feared teacher-selves in the extract is “being an unprepared teacher.” P6 did not want to feel embarrassed again, and expected to prevent it by being “a well-prepared and organized” teacher. Moreover, P6 felt “having enough content knowledge” was essential to avoid “embarrassment” in front of students. It is also interesting that P6’s classroom experience led to constructing the feared teacher-self of “not being sufficient”, which resulted in generating the expected self of “being well-prepared”. P13 also expressed feared teacher-selves during the interview:

I do not want to be a boring teacher. If I use the same type of materials and methodologies or if I have the same tone of voice all the time and am not enthusiastic in the classroom, I would be a boring teacher. The students would fall asleep all the time. I experienced it myself. So I don't want my students to feel the same in my classroom (P13).

P13's experience of having boring teachers led to the formulation of such a feared teacher-self which was reflected in P13's instructional strategies and professional dispositions.

4.2.5.6 Feared Teacher-Selves: Unprofessional Dispositions

Professional dispositions, in a negative sense, refer to "selves" pertaining to *undesirable* characteristics or qualities of an *unprofessional* teacher (Hamman personal communication February 9, 2015). P14 articulated what was to be avoided after starting to teach: "I would not like to be a teacher who just teaches and leaves the classroom. I want to be a teacher who cares about students' problems as well." According to P14, just "teaching and leaving the classroom" is an undesirable attribute that teachers risk exhibiting. It is clear from the quote that expected teacher-selves are fostered by feared teacher-selves generated by the preservice teacher. As P14 put it, it is preferable to be a teacher who "cares about her students" as opposed to being an "ignorant" teacher.

4.2.6 Teacher Identity Construction through Blog Interactions

Findings revealed that the existence of the blog helped preservice teachers to develop their teacher identity by engaging them in professional discourse through feedback. Most of the preservice teachers took the opportunity to interact with each other, comment on lesson plans, and give feedback on video-recorded lessons.

Examination of the blog feedback threads revealed that the preservice teachers who interacted with their peers provided constructive feedback by suggesting ideas and asking questions. The following interaction thread was taken from the personal blog of P3, who initiated the discussion by giving a brief overview of her lesson plan and inviting peers to provide feedback:

P3: My dear teacher and friends, this is my first formal teaching lesson plan, I would appreciate it if you could give some feedback on my lesson plan.

P4: Hi P3, I read your lesson plan and like that you will start the lesson with pictures. I think that it is a good way to get students' attention. I wonder if you will explain the phrasal verbs, directly or indirectly.... If you have any chance, you can teach them indirectly.

P3: Thanks for your comments. I prepared colourful cards. I will stick them on the board.

After P3's video-recorded teaching practice lesson was posted on the blog, three peers provided more feedback:

P6: The first thing that caught my attention was those colourful pictures on the board. If I were your student, I would definitely join your class. The tone of your voice is good. You praise your students after each question. The way you use the language is good.

P4: I watched your video. First of all, I want to say you use your voice and everybody can hear you. I like your colourful materials. You also use your body language effectively. Also, you give time to your students to answer the questions.

P9: Firstly, I can say that I loved your materials on the board. Secondly, your position in the class... you stood in the middle of the class. So, you could control students effectively. Thirdly, you used reinforcement during the lesson, such as 'well-done' I can understand your students were happy to answer your questions.

The above mentioned thread from P3's personal blog illustrates initial steps into professional discourse. It is possible to say that the preservice teachers usually provided feedback using appropriate language to point out strengths in their peers' lessons. In fact, during the interviews, the participants addressed how their blogging interactions contributed to their development as future teachers. To illustrate, P6 stated:

I had the chance to evaluate my own teaching as well as my friends' teaching practice lessons. I was able to notice good things in their teachings. For example, I always liked P3's materials. She shared them on her personal blog. This gave me a lot of ideas for my own lessons. Also, I think I had a critical eye. I was able to give feedback to my friends. What is more, I felt like a professional teacher when I was writing feedback because I was always careful about my word choices to not want to hurt my friends. Also, I gave feedback to some of my friends who I did not like because I thought I had to be professional (P6).

Preservice teachers' blogging interactions helped them establish basics of their professional identities. The data indicated that preservice teachers perceived their peers as teachers and not as students when they watched their peers' teaching practice videos. Their feedback language implied that they practiced their teacher role in providing this feedback. For example, in one blog entry P5 stated that it was more comfortable to share personal experiences after reading peers' blog entries and seeing that they had similar challenges:

At first I was a bit shy and had difficulty communicating with my students. I was scared to share this in my reflections. When I read my peers' blog entries I was relieved because they were like me too. Now, I feel proud and like a teacher when my students call me 'teacher.' I want to be a caring teacher who helps students.

Having the opportunity to watch video-recorded lessons on the blog provided preservice teachers with the chance to reflect on their teaching and evaluate their

own teacher qualities. What is more, they had the chance to compare themselves to their peers by watching their teaching practice videos. P2, for example, learned a lot from watching peers' teaching practice videos and had the chance to see how they implemented materials in their lessons:

I was able to watch my friends' teaching practice videos on the blog and send and receive feedback. I think that was a great opportunity. I felt more professional. I was curious how they used materials during the lessons. I watched some of my peers' lessons to have ideas about my own teaching practice lessons. I learnt different classroom management and material implementation techniques from my peers. I will use them in my classes. Without the blog interactions, I would have no idea what my peers were going through.

4.2.7 Summary

The qualitative analysis of the preservice teachers' construction of language teacher identities as a result of their blogging interactions yielded a number of issues for discussion. The findings revealed that the preservice teachers, especially the ones who were actively engaged in blogging interactions with their peers and the course instructor (i.e., the researcher) benefitted from the blogging opportunities. The findings indicated that watching movies and sharing their related critiques with others and viewing their peers' teaching practice videos helped them construct some concepts about the qualities of good teachers. Their reflections also revealed that watching themselves teaching and the feedback they received from their peers and the course instructor (i.e., the researcher) raised their awareness of the strengths in their teaching qualities as well as the areas of their teaching skills they needed to focus on. Interestingly, the preservice teachers who stated that they were not very active or not active at all revealed that reading the comments written to their peers was helpful for them to prepare for their teaching practice lessons as they gathered some ideas about what would work and what would not. Therefore, as they put it, they realized their potentials as teachers, which possibly led to what sort of teachers

they expected to exhibit and what teacher qualities they would avoid to develop when they become teachers. When they were asked to reflect on their future possible selves, the preservice teachers revealed mostly self-relevant teacher selves. In other words, they appeared to be concerned with their relationships with their students and how they looked in class. However, they articulated less about the qualities of their teaching. The results can be attributed to the limited amount of the teaching practice experiences of the preservice teachers.

The next chapter will focus on discussion of the findings which will be followed by conclusions and implications.

Chapter 5

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

5.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the discussion of the findings, and the conclusion drawn from the results. After providing a brief summary of the findings for each research question, the results are discussed in relation with the literature and previous research. Pedagogical implications are then presented for practical purposes and suggestions for further research in relation to preservice teachers' blogging interactions and construction of teacher identity are provided.

5.2 Discussion of Findings

The study emerged from the problem of limited interaction between the course instructor (i.e., the researcher) and the preservice teachers as well as among the preservice teachers, which would affect the quality of reflection on their teaching practice experiences. To address the problem, a blog tool was added to the existing course and an action research was conducted in two cycles to monitor and evaluate the results. The aim of the study was to investigate the contribution of preservice teachers' blogging interactions to their reflection and construction of teacher identity.

The findings revealed that the preservice teachers were engaged in blogging interactions at different levels. While some preservice teachers were quite active in their blogging interactions with their peers and the course instructor, the other participants interacted neither with their peers nor the course instructor. Instead, they

only posted the assigned blog tasks. The participants who were active users of the blogs acknowledged the convenience of blogs. To illustrate, the immediate feedback they received from their peers and the course instructor (i.e., the researcher) on their lesson plans and video-recorded teaching practices appeared to be one of the features that encouraged interaction among these participants in an online environment. This finding highlights the significance of the presence of individuals, implying that technology without human touch may not be attractive and engaging.

With respect to the quality of interaction, the findings revealed that the preservice teachers, especially those who were active in bloggings, were content with being in contact with their peers. They reported that learning from their peers' experiences was valuable, and the peers' encouraging feedback and suggestions were considered as objectives for improvement in their teaching practices. Even the participants who were reluctant to interact with their peers reported that the content of their peers' feedback was very helpful. On the other hand, some other participants reported that they did not like the feedback due to their personal attitudes towards certain peers. In other words, their personal relationship with their peers was a determining factor in accepting the given feedback positively or negatively. They appeared to be suspicious about the sincerity of the feedback even if it was a positive one, which could be explained as a feeling of 'prejudice' or 'distrust'. Also, some participants questioned the quality of feedback given by their peers, believing that they were equal and what they gave as feedback was not reliable. This kind of attitude was also reported in Deng and Yuen (2013), who pointed out that "interaction through commenting was considered ineffective for seeking immediate feedback or solving pressing problems" on the blogs (p. 350). In line with this finding, some of the

participants emphasized having a face-to-face meeting with the course instructor (i.e., the researcher) for feedback provision instead of receiving it online. They reported that receiving online response was sometimes frustrating as it had the tendency of being delayed. These findings are in line with that of Vanderwell's (2003) who concluded that students preferred face-to-face communication as they would get immediate feedback or response from their teachers. Likewise, some of the active participants expressed their frustration when they did not receive any response from their peers. Apparently, the more active participants who posted their lesson plans and video-recorded teaching practices on the blog expected to receive comments from their peers and when they did not, they felt frustrated.

Notwithstanding the fact that the participants who were actively engaged in blogging interactions acknowledged the benefits they gained, other participants remained inactive throughout the semester. Similar results were reported in previous studies concerning students' participation and interaction rates. To illustrate, it was reported in Guzdial and Turns (2000) and Lipponen et al. (2003) that despite the density of interaction and participation, some participants remained inactive while others were interactive in a computer-supported collaborative learning environment. The participants who were reluctant to engage in blogging interaction in the present study articulated a number of factors that potentially prevented them from being active bloggers. These factors emerged as the issue of assessment, attitudes towards the online tool, time constraints, perceived quality of peer feedback, perceived inadequacy of written self-expression, and group dynamics. Each of these factors are discussed below in the light of the related literature.

Regarding the role of assessment, the findings show that the preservice teachers in the first cycle of the study exhibited more motivation to use the class and personal blogs compared to the participants in the second cycle. While 97% of the assessed tasks were completed before the due date by the preservice teachers in the first cycle, the percentage dropped to 27% in the second cycle. The results bring the issue of assessment into consideration. While the findings of previous research (Efimova, 2003; Nardi, Schiano, Gumbrecht, & Swartz, 2004) suggested that minimizing the role of assessment since the participants were motivated to use the blogs to generate knowledge, share it with others, and learn from peers, the present study suggests more instrumental motivation such as evaluation of their blog tasks and blogging activities to encourage the preservice teachers to participate in blogging activities more actively. This finding is similar to the result of Çakır's (2013) study, in which 73% of the participants attributed their blogging interactions to the fact that it was one of the class requirements. In other words, their blogging activities were one of the components of the course assessment, and only 18% of the participants mentioned "sharing and comparing their content knowledge with classmates" as a reason for blog engagement (Çakır, 2013, p. 248). In a similar vein, Deng and Yuen (2013) identified the absence of assessment as a discouraging factor of blogging. They reported that almost half of the participants in one of their classes "perceived lack of assessment as a demotivating factor" (p. 347). The findings of the present study seem to be in line with this conclusion.

Another factor that seemed to challenge the participants in their blogging interactions was reported to be the absence of previous blogging experience and lack of familiarity with blogs, which shaped their attitude towards the online tool. Since

none of the participants had previous blogging experience, they were given a two-hour training session at the initial stage of the study. Then, the participants were provided help on request during office hours. Despite this scaffolding, most of the participants pointed out that not having enough training were, one of the challenges they faced. Furthermore, some of the participants reported that they hesitated to participate in blogging interaction due to the difficulties of learning and using the blog tool at the same time within a short period. Owing to lack of technological experience, the participants seemed to refrain from using various blogs, features such as adding media, accessing different peers' personal blogs and so on. Although the technological ability and levels of engagement did not yield significant relationship in Çakır's (2013) study, the participants of the present study all agreed that they had difficulty in learning to use the blogs efficiently at the beginning. In other words, the feeling of frustration seemed to be one of the issues that negatively affected the motivation to use the blogs due to the fact that they were not familiar with this technological tool. Consistent with Kistow's (2009) suggestions, more tutor support and more workshops need to be held before launching a blended learning instruction to yield more positive results. As Osguthorpe and Graham (2003) suggested, course instructors ought to be aware of their students' previous experience of technological tools, degree of familiarity and amount of training needed before initiation of a blended program.

Time constraint was mentioned as another reason which hindered active blog participation and interaction of the preservice teachers. Previously conducted studies also point out that one of the reasons for avoiding blog participation is perceived challenges of the blog tasks (Shernoff, Csikszentmihalyi, Shneider, & Shernoff,

2003). However, in the present study, the participants mentioned limited time as one of the challenges they faced. To elaborate, they reported they were required to both view and comment on their peers' video-recorded teaching practice lessons. Also, they were expected to respond to feedback they received from their peers and the course instructor within a short time. It seems that time caused strain on the participants as they were expected to use the blogs efficiently to complete these tasks. Due to these reasons, they seemed to have refrained from contributing to the blog interactions because they had very little time. Also, some of the tasks seemed more challenging due to time constraints. Considering time as an aspect, these results seem to be in line with another study in which Luehmann (2008) reported 'time' as a factor (along with effort and confidence at personal and professional levels) for efficient use of blogging. Therefore, providing sufficient time for the participants to complete the blog tasks and engage in interaction with their peers should be ensured by scheduling different blog activities.

Perceived quality of peer feedback was revealed as another factor which potentially inhibited online participation and interaction. While perceived value of feedback and online communication seemed to play an important role in motivating the preservice teachers for using the blogs, some of the participants admitted that they did not value their peers' feedback as they believed that their peers were neither superior nor more knowledgeable than themselves. Furthermore, some of the participants reported not learning from their peers' feedback as the feedback was rather surface-level and mostly on similar issues such as the use of voice, rapport and use of materials. In other words, students found feedback coming from their classmates unbeneficial as it is at surface level lacking depth and value, as was also reported in Kwon (2014) and

Vonderwell (2003). On the other hand, the preservice teachers indicated that they valued the course instructor's (i.e., the researcher's) feedback much more as it helped them to improve their lesson plans and future teaching practices. In previously conducted studies similar findings were also identified. For example, Kwon (2014) reported that students valued teacher feedback and considered it positive and reliable due to the expertise the course instructor has. Likewise, some other studies (Deng & Yuen, 2013; Kerawalla, 2008) also confirm that the users' perceived academic value of the blogs influenced the level of their participation.

Perceived inadequacy of written self-expression in blogs appeared to be yet another factor that prevented active participation and interaction. Obviously, writing in an online environment was perceived as a discomfoting experience for some the preservice teachers who avoided getting engaged in interaction with their peers in written form. In a study which looked into networked-learning (NL) (de Laat, Lally, & Lipponen, 2007), the researchers attributed low level of participation to students' feelings and perceptions of internet-based communication technologies. They stated that "insecurity and unfamiliarity with NL environment can prevent students from active participation because they are not used to being criticized or challenged by other students" (p. 258). By the same token, preservice teachers may have had difficulty in expressing their opinions in written form on the blogs (Lipponen, 1999, 2000; Lipponen et al., 2003). Previous studies also confirm that students' low language proficiency proved to be a factor that caused avoidance (Stroch, 2005) due to the fear of making mistakes or offending their peers with their critical feedback.

Finally, group dynamics was revealed as another reason for limited blogging interaction. A close investigation of interaction among the preservice teachers and the interview results revealed that the participants who were close friends in and out of class tended to view each other's blog posts and send feedback to one another. Apparently, friendship proved to be a motivating factor for those who interacted with each other the most. Focusing on trust-building activities and implementing methodologies which foster sharing and scaffolding bonds among the preservice teachers in face-to-face meetings would potentially increase sense of friendship. Moreover, assigning specific roles to participants and designing tasks which aim to bring them together in blogs would help to generate friendship among participants as was discovered in a previously conducted study (Çuhadar & Kuzu, 2006).

According to Lave and Wenger (1991), the notion of learning in communities has changed and instructors are no longer in full control and learners are actively making decisions on their learning. In other words, learners participate in communities of practitioners and inevitably improve their knowledge and skills. Furthermore, "learning as increasing participation in communities of practice concerns the whole person acting in the world" (Lave & Wenger 1991, p. 49), enabling learners to develop both professionally and personally. Vonderwell (2003), on the other hand, highlighted the presence of instructor. She stated that "social and pedagogical presence of the instructor is essential for improved communication and learning" (p.88). Furthermore, she suggested that "online instructors need to be careful in structuring the feedback mechanism to encourage students' inquiry and collaboration rather than an immediate, quick answer to a question that can itself be a barrier for effective student learning" (Vonderwell, 2003, p. 88). The participants in the present

study acknowledged the immediate feedback they received on their lesson plans and teaching practice reflections from the researcher. They stated that receiving immediate feedback from the instructor (i.e., the researcher) on their lesson plans was one of the strengths of having a blog as a part of their course.

Regarding the amount of time an instructor should spend on giving feedback or interacting with students, Vonderwell (2003) stated that “instructors should be consistent with the amount of time they provide feedback or response to the students. Inconsistency can cause student frustration and decrease their motivation” (p.88). Although this issue was not mentioned by any of the participants, the researcher realized that some of the participants received higher number of feedback posts from her while some of the participants received only a few.

With regard to the quality of instructor’s feedback, Jones and Ryan (2014) argued that the language of the instructor should be “encouraging preservice teachers to question their processes or to make links with theoretical ideas” (p. 141). However, reflecting back on self-practice, the researcher realized that she mostly used comforting sentences such as “well done”, “that was a very good point” in response to the preservice teachers’ reflective blog entries and the entries related to their video-recorded teaching practices. In this regard, Szabo and Schwartz (2011) suggested that instructors have the role of questioners to facilitate higher level reflection by encouraging and reminding preservice teachers to link their experiences with relevant theories. Critical self-reflection of the researcher reveals that she mostly focused on practical issues such as classroom management, teacher talking time, lesson planning and so on. In her discourse, she did not seem to include

questions which could trigger more critical thinking of the preservice teachers and encourage them to link their practices to relevant theories when she gave online feedback. As Vonderwell (2003) states, instructors “should facilitate activities for students to be open to communicating or interacting with each other” (p.88). When analyzed critically, only a few feedback posts written by the researcher included questions that further encouraged preservice teachers to respond back. These results were attributed to the researcher’s inexperience in managing interaction within an online environment. To eliminate such problems, the researcher could have revised some of the blog activities so as to get the preservice teachers to communicate with each other in order to fulfill a given role. For example, a preservice teacher could specifically be assigned to watch another peer’s video-recorded teaching practice lesson and write a detailed feedback. Such strategies could be considered in future implementations of blended programs.

Face-to-face pre- and post-observation meetings the course instructor (i.e., the researcher) held with preservice teachers as well as help and guidance she provided were revealed to be reasons that decreased pre-service teachers’ blogging interactions. Therefore, due to vis a vis meetings, online interaction may have been considered unnecessary.

As regards the levels of reflection conducted by preservice teachers, the qualitative analysis of the preservice teachers’ reflection blog entries revealed that the participants’ teaching practice reflections were mostly descriptive even though they were given a set of guiding questions to answer so as to write reflective reports. According to the findings, although a few participants included their insights and

more critical views of their future developments successfully, the majority tended to describe their feelings and what they did in class rather than elaborating on their performances. Most of them did not establish cause-effect relationship and articulate what lessons they learnt from their teaching practice experiences. To help them put more thought into their reflections and provide more examples, it seemed that the preservice teachers needed more guidance and support to produce reflections at higher levels. The results of the present study are similar to those of Killeavy and Moloney's (2010) study which looked into newly qualified teachers' reflections within blogs. The researchers used Mezirow's scale (1991) which described three levels of reflection, content reflection, process reflection, and premise reflection. Killeavy and Moloney (2010) found that the teachers' reflections were mostly at level one, i.e., content reflection, leading to the conclusion that the participants used their blog entries "as a diary rather than as a reflective journal" (p.1074) and suggested that teachers should be further supported and guided while writing reflections. Also, some pedagogical planning should be made at the preservice level to focus more on the quality of reflection. It could be said that these suggestions also apply to the present study to increase the quality level of preservice teachers' reflection.

The results also revealed that preservice teachers did not produce higher levels of reflection owing to reasons which include the close link between teacher personal identity and their classroom practice, the absence of certain professional qualities, or the culture of isolation within teaching, which are reasons also mentioned in a previously conducted study (Ball & Cohen, 1999). Another point to underline is the fact that reflection is considered difficult due to a lack of understanding of reflection

(Boud & Walker, 1998). Consequently, determining whether higher levels of reflection took place is not an easy process due to the complex nature of reflection process.

In line with the contribution of the preservice teachers' blogging interactions to the formation of their teacher identities, the findings revealed two major issues which address the preservice teachers' expected and feared teacher-selves and professional learning. The results also point to a strong bond between expected and feared teacher-selves. It seems that blogging facilitated the emergence of this relationship. Building on findings from Hamman et al. (2013a), the present study indicated that preservice teachers generated expected teacher-selves to a greater extent compared to feared teacher-selves based on watching peers' video-recorded teaching practice lessons. Moreover, the results suggested that observing peers also helped preservice teachers to deal with common teaching-related obstacles. That is, preservice teachers' fears seemed to diminish once they realized that other preservice teachers also encountered similar challenges. Thus, the sense of 'being in the same boat' and experiencing the same challenges possibly helped preservice teachers formulate feared teacher-selves to a lesser extent than they would without this awareness. Moreover, preservice teachers formulated solutions for their own teaching practices and their future teaching endeavors by watching 'good examples' in their peers' video-recorded lessons and assigned movies. Thus, unlike previous studies (Hamman et al. 2010; Hamman et al., 2013a), these new findings indicated that generating feared teacher-selves might not be detrimental for preservice teachers as it may lead them to construct expected teacher-selves to a greater extent and help them overcome their fears. The findings also indicated that the feedback preservice teachers receive

from their course instructor and peers helped them diminish feared teacher-selves and construct expected teacher-selves. The data also revealed that preservice teachers' observations when they were students influenced their formulation of expected and feared teacher-selves, which was also described by Lortie (1975) as 'apprenticeship of observation'. The findings appeared to be consistent with the results of a recent study (Miller & Shifflet, 2016) that illustrated how preservice teachers' previous experiences influenced what roles and possible-selves they imagined for their future teaching and learning goals. By deriving their present self-concepts from observations of their own teachers, preservice teachers attempted to teach in the way they were taught by their former teachers. The results also complement the work of Watzke (2006), who suggested that teachers needed to have a certain amount of teaching experience to shift from reliance on their past experiences to their own current teaching experiences as the basis for forming their teacher-selves.

Both expected and feared teacher-selves that the preservice teachers generated show differences in terms of scope. The preservice teachers formulated self-relevant expected teacher-selves on interpersonal relations (i.e., focus on self) in greater a scope compared to a focus on instructional strategies and other professional qualities. This appeared to be in line with the findings of Hamman et al. (2010) who stated that "it may be difficult for them to consider their teacher-selves much beyond their immediate role and context" (p. 1356). The findings could also be attributed to the limited teaching practice experiences and interactions within the school context. Regarding expected-selves described by preservice teachers, the results appeared to be consistent with previously conducted seminal works (Conway & Clark, 2003;

Hamman et al., 2010; Mahmoudi-Gahrouei et al., 2016). The results also complemented those of Kagan (1992), who postulated that preservice teachers are in the initial stage of developing their meta-cognition. Yet, some of the preservice teachers seem to have achieved more awareness. These teachers formulated expected selves relevant to future professional dispositions (i.e., quality-focused) that would be essential for them to possess in the future. On the other hand, preservice teachers generated limited feared teacher-selves in terms of scope during practicum. This could be attributed to the fact that preservice teachers were given the opportunity to observe 'good' examples of teaching and received feedback, which provided interaction and allowed them to share their teaching practice experiences. In other words, engaging in interaction and feedback helped them generate ideas about how to overcome their fears, which resulted in a limited scope of feared teacher-selves. Preservice teachers' personal experiences and previous observations of other teachers were other bases for generating feared teacher-selves, which included classroom management and instructional strategies. Overall, the results of the present study mainly indicated that there was an interplay between the expected and feared teacher-selves in that some expected selves originated from feared selves.

Analysis of the preservice teachers' interactions with each other revealed two broad themes: self-concept development and professional perspective development, both of which seemed to emerge from professional learning. Regarding self-concept development, it was observed that preservice teachers' feedback for their peers mostly focused on personal qualities that their peers projected in class (e.g., being cheerful, approachable, dealing with students' problems) and the level of student relations (e.g., praising students, having good communication and rapport with

them). Feedback rarely covered materials, instructional strategies, and some other professional qualities. The limited scope of feedback can be attributed to preservice teachers' limited professional experience. That is, preservice teachers' feedback language, as well as the level of reflection revealed insufficient teaching practice to fully address the complex and demanding nature of teaching. Since they lacked 'resources' and 'experience,' many preservice teachers were not able to elaborate on their feedback and reflection. Yet, at the same time, some participants were able to comment on the quality of their peers' teaching (e.g., professional qualities and classroom management), which helped other participants go beyond their understanding of 'self-as-teacher' and develop the concept of what teaching involves. When interpreted within the framework of possible-selves theory, the diverse findings that emerged from the present study were consistent with those of previous studies (Hamman et al., 2010; Mahmoudi-Gahrouei et al., 2016). To illustrate, Mahmoudi-Gahrouei et al. (2016) suggested that preservice teachers "need to consider their teacher selves in a manner that is not confined to the immediate role and context" (p. 593), and tend to formulate expected and feared selves "from the theoretical foundations" (p. 593) during their formal education. Similarly, Hamman et al. (2010) emphasized the need to increase preservice teachers' familiarity with real classroom situations so that they have a sensible and realistic viewpoint about the teaching profession, which would contribute to their construction of teacher identities. Regarding the role of blogging in teacher identity formation, preservice teachers' blogging interactions helped them learn from each other and grow professionally (at least to a limited degree), which contributed to their professional identity construction. The research to date also revealed similar cases where the participants benefited from blogging with respect to their professional identity

development (Hammerness & Darling-Hammond, 2005; Luehmann, 2008). In the present study, the participants' reflections indicated that their blogging experiences developed their conceptualizations of teaching and of being a teacher. They realized that classrooms would be full of complex, demanding, unexpected events, and that being a teacher could possibly extend beyond how teachers projected themselves in class or established rapport with students.

The development of a professional perspective was also revealed as a result of the analysis of the preservice teachers' communication with one another. The participants' reflections on the whole process of their blogging interactions confirmed that as a result of interactions that took place especially when providing feedback on lesson plans and teaching practice videos, they felt they adopted a unique professional attitude. The preservice teachers' feedback threads on blogs and reflections on blogging experiences revealed the development of both a professional approach and a critical view of teaching. The opportunity to interact with each other and give feedback on each other's teaching practice lessons (even to those who were not 'good friends'), made them feel like teachers and gave them the opportunity to act professionally.

Overall, the study revealed that the preservice teachers' desires, expectations, reservations, and fears mostly originated from their past and current social and environmental experiences. As Markus and Wurf (1987) suggested, possible selves are created within the parameters of an individual's social context and their experiences with social interactions, which are most likely to exert the greatest influence on their behaviors. Both themes that emerged from the data indicated that

professional learning leads to affective and cognitive development among preservice teachers. The preservice teachers' individual involvement through reflection, sharing experiences, and giving feedback to others, as well as expressing how they viewed themselves and their peers as future teachers, created an affective dimension. Furthermore, the preservice teachers had the opportunity to construct knowledge collaboratively when providing support and constructive feedback. These results are consistent with those of Pavo and Rodrigo (2015), who also highlighted participants' affective and cognitive process development during their teaching practice period.

5.3 Pedagogical Implications

The findings point out several issues to address and some problems to deal with. First of all, it seems that evaluating blogging activities of the pre-service teachers and considering them as a part of the overall course assessment was perceived as a motivating factor. Secondly, ample training before launching blended instruction appeared to be a vital issue. In order to ensure that all preservice teachers are clear about how to use the blog tool effectively prior to its implementation, necessary training should be provided and full support should be given throughout the semester (Kistow, 2009). What is more, preservice teachers should be informed about the benefits of blended instruction so that they can develop and maintain positive attitude towards the online medium (Deng & Yuen, 2013). Merits of online sharing and learning from others' experience should be deep seated in their cognition. Not having previous blogging experiences appeared as a barrier for some of the participants. This can be eliminated by integrating blogs in other courses offered in the first years of their higher education at the department. Therefore, the preservice teachers may feel more comfortable with posting blog tasks and interacting with others via an online platform. Acceptance and practice of blended learning instruction by faculty

members will equip teacher candidates with important technological knowledge required for their future professional developments.

Furthermore, the preservice teachers should be provided with a secure and private online environment so that they would feel comfortable with sharing their experiences with others and writing feedback to their peers without feeling anxious. The preservice teachers could also be given additional guidelines and prompts as regards the conventions of blogging, i.e., how to write a blog entry in different genres, or different ways of responding to a peer or received feedback. Initially, some blogging activities could be allocated in class hours so that course instructors would provide instant response to preservice teachers as a sample. In order for more efficient management of online interaction, the role of an instructor in an online medium should be well outlined and planned before launching the blended learning instruction. In an online environment, the role of an instructor appears to be crucial in triggering participants' ideas to share with their peers and further ensure that interaction evolves among them.

With regard to formation of teacher identity, pre-service teachers' reflective reports should include more than documentation of their teaching activities. More efforts should be put into discussions of reflective practices within the school context that they are allocated to carry out their practice teachings (i.e., their cooperating teachers). As Hamman et al. (2010) state "awareness of new teachers' views may provide an indication of the effect of educator preparation programs" (p.1356). They maintained that pre-service teachers' articulations of possible selves and their self-concept, if observed carefully, potentially indicate "limited focus in the teacher

preparation program, or characteristics of the settings in which in-service and student teachers are working” (p. 1356). For example, the present study revealed that most of the preservice teachers did not mention professional qualities such as exhibiting certain skills (for example, feeling confident about using learning technologies) as their expected teacher selves. This indicates that teacher education programs need to consider preservice teachers’ articulations of possible-selves and self-concept in a broader context and reconsider the content of teacher education courses.

As Flores and Day (2006) point out, learning to teach is an ongoing and dynamic process. Sach (2001) describes this process as ‘changing,’ adding that “for teachers this is mediated by their own experience in schools and outside schools as well as their own beliefs and values about it” (p. 6). Identifying and working on teachers’ views of themselves is crucial as their sense of becoming teachers will help them build motivation, self-confidence, and professional commitment. The findings of the present study revealed that feared and expected selves are interconnected. The feared selves may trigger the construction of expected selves since the preservice teachers formulate solutions to their fears through observing ‘good examples’ of their peers’ practice, sharing feedback, and receiving support from their teachers and peers. However, preservice teachers need more opportunities to construct their teacher identities beyond their immediate roles and contexts to shift their attention to professional qualities and pedagogies. To maximize the amount and quality of sharing and support to help preservice teachers construct their teacher identities with more ‘expected-selves,’ constant interaction and communication should be vital components of teacher education programs. Considering the limited class hours allocated for courses, preservice teachers need to be provided with additional

platforms, -online or face-to-face,- where they are informed about their peers' practice and feel supported through feedback. Examples of teaching practice experiences in different teaching contexts are eye-opening and raise preservice teachers' awareness. The use of blogs has been effective in this regard. Therefore, it is important to establish a platform such as blogs to help preservice teachers share, learn, and experience. The availability of such a platform would aid preservice teachers in shifting from past to current teaching experiences as the basis for teacher identity formation. By considering how preservice teachers view themselves as future teachers, necessary steps can be taken to improve specific qualities of their (future) teaching. In fact, Hamman et al. (2013a) point out that "teacher possible selves could be used as a bellwether for monitoring effects of curricular and experiential strategies aimed at explicitly fostering teacher qualities" (p. 330).

The scope of expected teacher-selves that emerged from the data reveals the focus on self-images compared to instructional strategies and professional qualities, which affected preservice teachers' teacher identity formation processes. As Hamman et al. (2010) state, "awareness of new teachers' views may provide an indication of the effect of educator preparation programs" (p.1356). More specifically, careful observation of preservice teachers' expressions of possible-selves and their self-concepts may provide data on elements missing from teacher preparation courses. The present study revealed that most preservice teachers did not mention professional qualities such as improving certain skills (e.g., the use of technology in class) as part of their expected teacher-selves. Bearing this in mind, it is suggested that the importance of developing and exhibiting certain professional qualities are highlighted by the course instructors at the ELT program. Teacher identity is an

implicit component of teacher preparation programs (Beauchamp & Thomas, 2009), which should be carefully integrated into the explicit objectives of teacher education courses to nurture preservice teachers' self-concepts and to raise awareness of vital professional dispositions. In this regard, the use of possible selves might serve as a mechanism which potentially promotes preservice teachers' looked-for teacher identities.

5.4 Limitations and Delimitations of the Study

The goal of the study was to explore the contribution of blogs to the interaction and reflection among preservice teachers as well as to the construction of their teacher identity. As the present study is an action research conducted in two cycles "in a systematic and disciplined manner" (Mills, 2011, p. 114), it has a number of strengths. First of all, the data analysis provided comprehensive understanding of the preservice teachers' perceptions of blogging and its contribution to their interaction and critical self-evaluation. Also, convenience sampling and thick description of data has contributed to our understanding of a particular situation (Merriam, 1998), aiming to improve related practices in the context of the study.

Another limitation was that the action research was conducted with 9 preservice teachers in the first cycle, and only 6 preservice teachers volunteered to participate in the second cycle. The fact that the study was situated in a particular context had potential disadvantages related to the generalizability of the results. Since the study was conducted with a small sample of participants in one particular context, it is difficult to generalize the results to other settings. However, in qualitative studies like this, transferability of the results is very important (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). In

order to ensure transferability of results, the researcher provided a detailed account of the contexts the course, and the participants.

Yet another limitation was that the researcher was not independent of the research study in both cycles. In the first cycle, the researcher was the course instructor. Throughout the study, the researcher interacted with the participants, led the research and managed the blogs. Her views and bias may have affected the direction of the study. Concerning doubts about this issue, Duff (2008) states that “using personal judgment and in making research decisions, framing studies based on earlier research, and drawing interpretations and conclusions are involved in all research” (p. 55). In order to minimize these effects, the researcher used all the blog artefacts and interviewed the participants to obtain data from various sources. What is more, the researcher asked one of her colleagues, who had completed his PhD study, to code 25% of the data in order to maintain trustworthiness and objectivity. The interrater reliability was found to be 89%.

5.5 Suggestions for Further Research

In the light of the obtained results, further research can be conducted in several areas. There is evidence that having blogs as a part of ELTE 406 Teaching Practice course proved to be useful, and the preservice teachers, if not fully, benefitted from the opportunities the tool provided. Based on the findings of the present research, following research studies are recommended:

This research was conducted in two different cycles with a relatively small number of the participants. Further research could extend this study by considering preservice teachers’ blogging interactions, and (a) quality of their reflections on their

professional development, (b) construction of their language teacher identities to determine if similar experiences are reported. Such research should also include the blog participation of class teachers (i.e., cooperating teachers) who the preservice teachers work with. In the practicum period, class teachers work very closely with the preservice teachers and have a number of opportunities to observe the preservice teachers' unassessed teachings. Therefore, their feedback and guidance may appear in blogs throughout preservice teachers' teaching practice periods and these can be included in research. Class teachers' contribution may yield more comprehensive insights into the reflections and construction of teacher identities of the preservice teachers. Also, tracing how their feedback and guidance contribute to preservice teachers' teacher identity formation in terms of expected and feared teacher selves can be insightful for faculty members in designing their course content.

This study also attempted to understand preservice teachers' teacher-identity construction by drawing on how they express the qualities of teachers they expect to become and fear becoming during the practicum period. However, due to some challenges previously mentioned, eliciting expected and feared teacher-selves from the preservice teachers' reflections revealed a limited range of categories, which suggests the need for more emphasis on instructional strategies, professional qualities, and classroom management during formal education. This will in turn raise preservice teachers' awareness in these areas. A longitudinal study could also investigate how the expected and feared teacher-selves of preservice teachers evolve after they start their teaching profession.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A: ELTE 406 Teaching Practice Course Policy Sheet

Academic Year/Semester	2011-2012 Fall	
Course Code and Title	ELTE 406 Teaching Practice	
Section(s)	03	
Instructor(s)	Ayşegül Sallı	
Office No.	EF 321	
Phone No.	630 2879	
Course day / hours / classes	Tue. 10:30 – 12:20 EF 302	
Office Hour(s)	Monday/Tuesday/Wednesday 13.30-16.30	
e-mail	aysegul.salli@emu.edu.tr	
Blog	https://teachingpractice.edublogs.org	
Aim of the Course		
This course aims to prepare prospective teachers for teaching in a real classroom environment. It places special emphasis on lesson planning, lesson observation, teaching practice and evaluation of classroom performance reflecting on teacher activities, learning outcomes, classroom management, and etc.		
Learning Outcomes of the Course		
By the end of the course, students will be able to:		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • develop an understanding of basics of lesson planning; • plan and implement microteaching sessions in ELTE 406 class; • reflect on teacher performance, classroom management, error correction, seating arrangement, etc. after observing a series of lessons at prearranged schools; • plan and teach a series of lessons in a real classroom environment; • write reflection reports with regard to their strengths and weaknesses (i.e. points to improve) after each formal teaching session; and • write a final report evaluating their overall practice teaching experience 		
Classroom Procedures		
The classes will be conducted in the form of discussions related to major issues about English language teaching (e.g. lesson planning, classroom management, etc.), and micro teachings and their evaluation (self, peer and teacher evaluation).		
Weekly Instructional Plan		
Weeks	In Class	Blogs
Week 1: 19-23 September	Introduction to the course	Introduction to the course
Week 2: 26-30 September	Ice- breakers; lesson planning	Signing up for a blog
Week 3: 3-7 October	Lesson planning (cont.) Classroom management	Starting blogging task 1 & 2 Movie critique - Dead Poets Society (task 3)
Week 4 : 10-14 October	Demo Lesson: Grammar & Vocabulary SCHOOL: Observations	Video critique No. 1
Week 5: 17-21 October	Demo Lesson: Pronunciation &	Classroom Observations reflections (at least 4 observation reflection posts)

	Reading School: Observations	
Week 6: 24-28 October	Demo Lesson: Listening & Writing School: Mini teachings	Classroom Observations reflections (at least 4 observation reflection posts Movie critique no. 2 (Dangerous Minds) Video critique no. 2
Week 7: 31 October – 4 November	Demo Lesson: Speaking & Integrated skills School: Mini teachings	Mini teaching reflections (write at least 2 mini teaching reflections & give feedback to your peers in your groups)
Week 8: 7-11 November	Religious Holiday	Religious Holiday
Weeks 9 & 10: 14-25 November	Midterm Examinations	Lesson Plans for formal teaching 1 on blogs Share lesson plans give feedback to peers in the group Video critique no. 3 Movie critique no. 3
Week 11: 28 November-2 December	Demo Lessons School: Formal teachings	Formal Teaching 1 Post your reflections & write feedback to peers
Week 12: 5-9 December	Demo Lesson School: Formal teachings	Lesson Plans for formal teaching 2 on blogs Formal Teaching 2 Post your reflections & write feedback to peers
Week 13: 12- 16 December	Demo Lesson School: Formal teachings	Lesson Plans for formal teaching 3 on blogs Formal Teaching 3 Post your reflections & write feedback to peers
Week 14: 19- 23 December	Demo Lesson School: Formal teachings	Lesson Plans for formal teaching 4 on blogs Formal Teaching 4 Post your reflections & write feedback to peers
Week 15: 26- 30 December	Assessment/remedial work & Overall reflections	Final Thoughts & Reflections

Requirements

All students are required to

- attend classes (at the university and the prearranged schools) regularly
- take active part in class discussions
- Have a blog page and actively use it to submit the required assignments in due time
- do the formal teachings on the given class hours

Resources	
Course book	
Hadfield, J., & Hadfield C. (2008). <i>Introduction to teaching English</i> . Oxford: OUP.	
Reference Books	
Caroselli, M. (2006). <i>500 creative classroom techniques for teachers and trainers</i> . HDR Press.	
Chandler, J., & Stone, M. (1999). <i>The resourceful English teacher</i> . Surrey: Delta Publishing.	
Harmer, J. (2007). <i>The practice of English language teaching</i> . Essex: Longman Pearson Education Limited.	
Harmer, J. (2007). <i>How to teach English</i> . Essex: Longman Pearson Education Limited.	
Lindsay, C., & Knight, P. (2006). <i>Learning and teaching English. A course for teachers</i> . Oxford: OUP.	
Sands, M., Özçelik, D. A., & Gardner, B. (1996). <i>Work in schools (Secondary)</i> . YÖK: World Bank National Education Development Plan, Pre-Service Teacher Education. Ankara, Turkey.	
Evaluation	Percentage
Formal teaching sessions at schools	40 (10×4)
Lesson plans	10 (2,5×4)
Reflective reports	20 (5×4)
Final report	10
Class participation	5
Blog participation (i.e., giving feedback to peers, posting and lesson plans on blog on time, accurate and appropriate writing)	10
Micro-teaching in class	10

Appendix B: Consent Form

Consent Form

(Investigating the Contribution of Blogging Interactions to Preservice English
Language Teachers' Reflection and Construction of Teacher Identity)

I agree to participate in a study that aims to discover pre-service English language teachers' learning experiences in blended learning environment as regards 'enhanced feedback' and its contribution to their teacher identity construction. I understand that this study has been explained to me and I may decide at any time that I do not wish to continue this study and that it will be stopped if I say so. Information about what I say and do will be used for research purposes only and will not be given to anyone else.

I understand that I will be asked to allow my intern student to observe my lessons, provide him/her with necessary guidance for his/her lesson planning for formal teaching sessions, carry out 4 observations and assess his/her formal teaching sessions using an evaluation form, provide oral feedback for two teaching performances at the post-observation meetings, log on to my intern's blog and provide written feedback on his/her four teaching practice sessions.

When I sign my name to this page, I am indicating that this page was read to (or by) me and that I am agreeing to participate in this study. I am indicating that I understand what will be required of me and that I may stop the study at any time.

Participant's signature

Date

Signature of the researcher

Date

Appendix C: Movie Critiques Reflection Tasks

Movie Critiques Reflection Tasks

Movie 1: Dead Poets Society

Dear all,

You are required to watch the movie called 'Dead Poets Society' and write your critique following the guidelines/questions below. Please write as clear as possible in the **essay format**. **Please provide examples too. Then spell check your essay before you post it.** 😊 Tag it as 'movies' and put it in 'movies' categories.

THANK YOUUU 😊

**I went to the woods because I
wanted to live deliberately...
I wanted to live deep and suck
out all the marrow of life!
To put to rout all that was not life...
And not, when I came to die, discover
that I had not lived...**



**Develop and use Intellectual Freedom
Carpe Diem, Seize the Day
Be True to Yourself**

Dead Poets Society

You have watched the film Dead Poets Society. Please reflect on the following questions.

1. Considering the teacher and teaching, what was the most striking message of the film for you?
2. Briefly describe Mr. Keating regarding his teacher qualities and compare it to your ideal teacher image. (You can mention his teaching methodologies, his communication and relations with his students, his influence on his students and so on)

- Have you ever had a teacher like Mr. Keating? Please briefly mention.
- Have you ever had a teacher who has had impact on your life, thoughts and future decisions?
- Would you like to be a teacher like Mr. Keating? Why /why not?

Movie 2: Dangerous Minds

Dear all,

Make notes of what you notice and find striking while you are watching the movie Dangerous Minds. After you watch the movie, write your reflective post. Please reflect on the following prompts and questions in your reflective writing:

- Classroom management techniques that Louanne used;
- Dictated curriculum that the Principal mentioned;
- School's resources;
- Louanne's communication with parents;
- Qualities of a good teacher that you have noticed in Louanne. Give examples from the movie and if possible, relate those examples to your experiences.
- What would you do if you had a class like Louanne had? How would you handle the students, approach them. and manage your class?
- What has changed in your 'ideal teacher' image or 'qualities of a good teacher' after you watched the movie?
- Compare Mr. Keating in Dead Poets Society and Louanne in Dangerous Minds in terms of their teacher qualities.
- Please add anything that you would like to discuss in your reflective post. Share your feelings and thoughts openly.

Thanks

PS: After you write your post, put it into movies categories and tag it as movies please.

Movie 3: Freedom Writers

Dear all,

We watched our last movie on Friday. I think this movie is as influential as the previous two movies.

As you know the movie was based on a true story. You can check the link below for the book [Freedom Writers' Diary](#) on Amazon.

I would like you to mull over the movie and write your critique reflection.

Deadline is December 7th, Wednesday.

Please follow the guidelines below:

INTRODUCTION PARAGRAPH

- Briefly mention the movie and write the purpose of your reflection
- Write your overall impression about the movie and mention the topics that you intend to discuss.

Please consider the following topics for discussion:

- the teacher's classroom management;
- students' attitude towards the teacher and the beginning and at the end of the movie and the reasons;
- whether a teacher's social & political stance affects his/her teaching and how you relate your opinion to the movie;
- teaching methods of the teacher; and
- the teacher's interaction with students.

BODY PARAGRAPH 1

Then discuss the topics that you have mentioned in the previous paragraph in detail, provide examples from the movie and add your personal opinion or experience.

BODY PARAGRAPH 2

1. Mention the teacher image in this movie and write about her qualities. (i.e., What features make her a good teacher?)
2. Compare the teachers in the previous movies (Dead Poets Society and Dangerous minds) with the teacher image in this movie.

CONCLUSION PARAGRAPH

Wrap up our discussion and add what you have learned from the teacher from this movie.

IMPORTANT

Add a soundtrack of the movie and an image you liked to your blog 😊

Listen to the soundtrack I have chosen for you 😊

[watch?v=bQ0axk4_qW0](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bQ0axk4_qW0)

I hope you enjoy it.

Appendix D: Formal Teaching Reflection Task

Formal Teaching Reflection Task

(Scaffolding guiding questions)

Briefly write about your lesson aims and mention how you prepared your lesson to achieve your aims.

INTRODUCTION PARAGRAPH

1. Briefly describe your lesson in general and mention your emotions and thoughts about this teaching experience BEFORE you went to the classroom.

BODY PARAGRAPH

1. Briefly describe some highlights about your lesson. What went well during your lesson? What is the evidence? Provide examples.

2. What problems did you encounter during the lesson? List each problem answer the following

a. Why do you think you faced that particular problem?

b. What action did you take to overcome the problem?

c. What would you have done to prevent it at the lesson planning stage?

3. Describe your emotions (positive and negative) during the lesson. How did these emotions affect your teaching and your teacher image?

CONCLUSION PARAGRAPH

1. After your formal teaching, when you reflect on this experience,

a. What have you gained from this experience?

b. What qualities of a teacher have you noticed in your teaching?

c. What plans do you have to further develop your teaching skills?

2. Do you have anything to add???

Appendix E: Final Report in the First Cycle

ELTE 406 Teaching Practice – Final Report

(Scaffolding guiding questions)

In this report, you are required to reflect on the overall Teaching Practice Course experience. You are required to provide specific examples to support your arguments. Please refer to the following points: Classroom observations, lesson planning, pre-observation meetings, formal teaching sessions, post-observation feedback meetings, your blogging experience, and how all these processes contributed to the process of becoming a teacher.

Below, you will find some guiding questions to provide you with a structure for your report. You are very welcome to mention any topic or experiences other than the questions. However, you are required to respond to the questions below with specific and concrete examples.

Your report will be a part of my PhD dissertation. So, please be honest and sincere in your responses and share your thoughts, feelings and experiences explicitly.

This report is worth 15 points. The evaluation will not be done regarding your positive or negative views. The depth of your reflection and relevant examples you provide for your arguments will be considered for the evaluation.

INTRODUCTION PARAGRAPH

Briefly mention the aim of this report and provide short information where you carried out your observations and classroom teaching session and who you worked with. Give brief information on the classroom and students.

BODY PARAGRAPH

Answer the questions below in each paragraph. Give examples and be sincere in your writing.

1. Reflect on and evaluate the classroom observation process.
 - a. What have you gained from the classroom observation processes?
 - b. What challenges did you face?
 - c. How did this process help you shape a teacher image?
2. Reflect on and evaluate the lesson planning processes.

- a. In what ways have you gained from the lesson planning processes?
 - b. Regarding material development and adaptation and various teaching skills, how has lesson planning led awareness in you?
 - c. In what ways have putting lesson plans on blogs and receiving feedback from the supervisor, cooperating teachers and peers helped you improve your teaching? Provide concrete examples.
3. Reflect on and evaluate pre-observation meetings?
 - a. In what ways have you benefitted from the pre-observation meetings with your supervisor and/or cooperating teacher? Give specific examples.
 4. Your formal teaching sessions☺
 - a. Briefly mention your thoughts and feelings about teaching in a real classroom BEFORE you started your formal teaching sessions. Give examples.
 - b. How would you evaluate the whole teaching process?
 - c. What have you improved in your teaching? Compare how you viewed yourself as a teacher candidate before and after formal teaching sessions and give examples. You can mention your teaching skills, thoughts, feelings and teacher qualities and so on.
 - d. What challenges have you faced during this process? What were your fears before teaching and how have you overcome your fears? Give examples.
 5. Reflect on and evaluate your Blogging experience.
 - a. What have you gained from blogging? (Mention the following points: video critics, movie critics, lesson plans on blogs, your reflections on blogs, your formal videos on blogs and feedback on your performance, supervisor and peer interaction and feedback)
 - b. Do you have anything to else to add and/or suggest regarding the use of blogs in this course?

CONCLUSION PARAGRAPH

Wrap-up your report and share your final thoughts and feelings.

Thank you

When you post this on your blog, use a password, and make sure that you share your password only with me

Appendix F: Final Report in the Second Cycle

Semester Evaluation ELTE 406 Teaching Practice

INTRODUCTION PARAGRAPH

Briefly mention the aim of this report and provide brief information where you carried out your observations and classroom teaching session and who you worked with. Give brief information on the classroom and students.

BODY PARAGRAPH

- 1. Reflect on and evaluate the classroom observation process.**
 - a. What have you gained from the classroom observation processes?
 - b. How did this process help you shape a teacher image?
- 2. Reflect on and evaluate the lesson planning processes.**
 - a. Do you think you gained from the lesson planning processes? If yes, in what ways? If not, what are the possible reasons?
- 3. Reflect on and evaluate the pre-observation meetings**
 - a. Have you benefitted from pre-observation meetings with your supervisor and/or cooperating teacher? If yes, in what ways? If not why? Give specific examples.
- 4. Your formal teaching sessions☺**
 - a. Briefly mention your thoughts and feelings about teaching in a real classroom BEFORE you started your formal teaching sessions. Give examples.
 - b. How would you evaluate the whole teaching process?
 - c. What have you improved in your teaching? Compare how you viewed yourself as a teacher candidate before and after formal teaching sessions and give examples. You can mention your teaching skills, thoughts, feelings and teacher qualities and so on.
 - d. What challenges have you faced during this process? What were your fears before teaching and how have you overcome your fears? Give examples.
- 5. Reflect on and evaluate your Blogging experience.**
 - a. What have you gained from blogging? (mention the following points: video critics, movie critics, your reflections on blogs, your formal videos on blogs and feedback on your performance, supervisor and peer interaction and feedback)
 - b. Do you have anything to else to add and/or suggest regarding the use of blogs in this course?

CONCLUSION PARAGRAPH

Wrap-up your report and share your final thoughts and feelings.

Appendix G: Semi-Structured Interview Questions

Interview Questions

A. Blogging

1. What is your general impression/opinion about the blogging experience?
2. Did you have any technological problems or difficulty in managing your blog?
3. Did you seek help through blogs when you had a problem outside the class or when you had something in your mind that you could not share in the classroom?
4. If yes, how do you feel about the support that you received on this environment?
5. What do you think about your relationship with your classmates?
 - a) Has there been a shared bond between you and your peers in your group?
 - b) Did you feel that you belonged to a group?
 - c) If yes, did blogging contribute to that bond and sharing?
 - d) If yes, then for what aspects and to what extent did it so?
 - e) If no, then why did not it contribute to the bond among the classmates? What might have been done in order to facilitate the communication within this group?
6. Do you think you benefitted from your peers' experiences, resources or ideas? If yes, then to what extent did you do so? If no, what are the reasons for that?
7. How do you feel about your activity on your own blog?
 - a) (If s/he is passive) what were the motives or reasons that made you publish fewer posts or comments?
 - b) (If s/he is active) Which characteristics of blogs urged you to leave comments?
 - c) What factors do you think can make you a more active blogger?
8. If you consider your blogging experience, what do you think about using blogs in pre-service teacher education?
9. Did you have any expectation after you published a post on your blog?
 - a. How did you feel about getting response from others to your writings?
 - b. To which comments did you feel a need to respond?
 - c. How do you feel about your friends' interest in your blog?
10. Do you think that the comments you received contributed to your progress? If yes, in what ways?
11. Did you follow your friends' blog postings on a regular basis?
 - a. If yes, which postings attracted your attention most?
 - b. To what extent did you participate in the discussions on the blogs?
12. What blog features did you use? (video, picture, links, calendar, counter, etc.)
13. Were you interested in other blogs?
14. Do you think that his blogging experience has contributed to your professional development? If yes, then in what ways?
15. Did you learn other Internet tools during this application?
16. When you consider your blogging experience, what blogging characteristics did you like most?
17. What blogging characteristics didn't you like?

18. In your opinion, what are the differences between keeping an online journal through your blog and keeping a traditional pen and paper journal?
19. What kind of differences are there between participating in in-class discussions and communicating through blogs?
20. Do you think that you continue blogging in the future? Why or Why not?
21. Would you like to use blogs in your future teaching as support to English language teaching?
 - a) If yes, for which skills would you like to use them?
 - b) How would you integrate blogs in your lessons?

B. Identity

1. Can you reflect on positive and negative role models from the times when you were a student?
2. How did these models affect your perception of a good teacher?
3. Before teaching practice course, how did you view yourself as a prospective teacher? What teacher qualities do you think you had? (positive and negative).
4. Have your blogging and teaching experiences during teaching practice course led to any changes in the way you perceived yourself as a future teacher?
5. What teacher qualities have you developed during this process?
6. What teacher qualities do you think you need to avoid?
7. How do you feel as a teacher? How do you identify yourself with being a teacher?
8. Do you have any opinion about how your peers, students and teachers perceive you as a teacher?
9. How do you view your present and future identities with relation to the teaching profession??
10. What metaphor would you use to describe yourself as a teacher at this time?

Possible-Selves Questionnaire (adapted from Oyserman, 2004)

What kind of teacher will you be when you start teaching in the future? Each of us has some image or picture of what kind of teachers we will be like and what we want to avoid being like in the future. Think about next year -- imagine what you'll be like, and what you'll be doing next year.

- In the lines below, write what kind of teacher you expect you will be and what you expect to be doing next year.
- In the space next to each expected goal, mark NO (X) if you are not currently working on that goal or doing something about that expectation and mark YES (X) if you are currently doing something to get to that expectation or goal.
- For each expected goal that you marked YES, use the space to the right to write what you are doing this year to attain that goal. Use the first space for the first expected goal, the second space for the second expected goal and so on.

Next year, I expect to be	Am I am doing something to be that way?	If yes, What I am doing now to be that way next year
	Yes / No	
	Yes / No	

In addition to expectations and expected goals, we all have images or pictures of what we don't want to be like; what we don't want to do or want to avoid being. First, think a minute about kinds of teachers you would **not** like to be when you start working -- things you are concerned about or want to avoid being like.

- Write those concerns or selves to-be-avoided in the lines below.
- In the space next to each concern or to-be-avoided self, mark NO (X) if you are not currently working on avoiding that concern or to-be-avoided self, and mark YES (X) if you are currently doing something so this will not happen next year.
- For each concern or to-be-avoided self that you marked YES, use the space at the end of each line to write what you are doing this year to reduce the chances that this will describe you next year. Use the first space for the first concern, the second space for the second concern and so on.

When I start working as a teacher, I want to avoid	Am I doing something to avoid this	If yes, What I am doing now to avoid being that way
	Yes /No	
	Yes /No	

Appendix H: Sample Interviews

Sample 1

Researcher : 6 şubat 2012 interviewumuzu yapıyoruz. Bu mülakatın İngilizce mi olmasını mı istiyorsun yoksa Türkçe olmasını mı istiyorsun?

P9: Türkçe olsun hocam.

R: Bu sohbet kapsamında blogging, senin teaching practicele ilgili tecrübelerin, ve bu süreçte yaşadıklarını konuşacağız senle. İster misin önce genel izlenimlerini paylaşasın bu derste blog kullanımıyla ilgili olarak? Nasıl bir tecrübeydi blog kullanımı?

P9: Çok enteresan bir deneyimdi hocam çünkü herkes birbirinin yazdıklarını okuma imkanı buldu. Mesela film izliyoruz film hakkındaki düşüncelerini, video işliyoruz video hakkında herkesin kendine ait düşünceleri var işte gerçek bir sınıfa ait video işledik dönemin başında ve herkes kendince daha o zaman hiç bu kadar olayın üzerine gitmeden daha önce öğrendiği bilgilerine dayanarak o video hakkında kritik yaptı, mesela o bile çok enteresan birşeydi. Blogta herkesin kendi fikrini videonun altına yazması ya da sizin başka bir şeyde bize sayfa açıp bizim oraya yazmamız, mesela derste birşey yapıyoruz, bir ders planı biri geliyor mesela yorum yapıyor, işte sen yanlışlarını eksiklerini görebiliyorsun. Yani bu açıdan orjinal ve güzel birşey yani. Bence blog kullanımı

R: Peki bu blogging esnasında sınıftaki arkadaşlarınızla aranızda paylaşım oldu. Blog ortamında arkadaşlarıyla aranızdaki ilişki hakkında ne düşünüyorsun?

P9: Yani formaldi, ben yapı olarak da şey olduğum için, yalın ve formal bir dilimiz vardı. Herkesin bir samimiyeti vardı ama çok hani çok şey bir ortam....

R: Aranızda bir bağ oluştuğunu hissettin mi? sınıf ortamının dışında bir ortamda da iletişim oldu çünkü...

P9: Yani oluyor bi şekilde ama mesela herkes kendi blogunu tasarlıyor ya mesela, işte o resimler koyuyor falan ondan bile az çok birşeyler çıkarabiliyoruz yani. Mesela ben insanların bloglarına bakınca görüyorum ki üzerlerinde uğraşmışlar insanların o bloglarını o şekilde görmek bile güzeldi yani bence. Renkli bir şey kendine göre tasarlıyorsun.

R: Beki bu kurs süresince arkadaşlarıyla aranızda bir bağ oluştu diyorsun. Bu süreçte kendini bir gruba ait hissettin mi?

P9: Bu çalışma grubunun içinde çok rahattım ama o grubun içindeki bireylerle çok yakınlaştım mesela bazı özel bireyler var, onlarla çok yakınlaştım yani hiç tanıımıyorduk birbirimizi ama şimdi çok yakınlaştık.

R: Blog ortamının yakınlaşmasında nasıl bir etkisi oldu?

P9: Bizimki blog ortamından ziyade bu ofis ortamında oldu hocam. Mesela P4'le biz eskiden böyle değildik ama sonradan bu dersin de katkısı çok büyük bence, yakınlaştık. Tanımadığım insanlarla tanıştım bu ders sayesinde.

R: Peki P4'le yakınlaştığımızı söyledin, bu yakınlaşma sayesinde onun bloğuna ilgilenip onun yazdıklarına bakıp yazdıklarına comment yapma hissettin mi?

P9: Hocam o son dakikacı olduğum için pek yazmadım. Ama genelde ofise geldiğimde mesela Ebru da burda olduğunda zamanla aşına oldum bloğa.

R: Bloguna ne kadar sıklıkta girdin, başka arkadaşlarının bloğuna?

P9: Bazi haftalar hergün bazı haftalarasa hiç giremedim bloğuma. Bence haftada bir ya da iki kere girmişimdir eğer bir istatistiğe yayarsak. Kendi fikirlerimi paylaşmaya çalıştım

R: Blog kullanırken ne gibi zorluklar yaşadın?

P9: O dashboard olayı biraz seydi. Bi de sizin classbloga gitmede zorlandım. Ama sonradan zaten otomatiğe bağlanıyorsun.

A: Hangi özelliklerini kullandın bloğun?

P9: Video yükledim, temayı değiştirdim, resim koydum, müzik koydum, ondan sonracığıma video koydum.

R: Beki bunları kullanırken, bu özellikleri bir öğretmen adayı olarak kendini ifade etme şekli olarak gördün mü?

T: Tabi hocam, biz blogta sadece blog yapmayı öğrenmedik mesela sizin değişik video sitelerinde video eklemeniz ondan sonra boxa bağlamanız mesela o bana çok enteresan gelmişti hepsi birbiriyle bağlantılı ve bir sayfanın içinde kullanabiliyoruz. Mesela yeni şeyler de öğrenmiş olduk teknolojiye dair kendi ilgi ve eğitim alanımıza dair. Çok güzeldi yani bence bunlar.

R: Peki senin bloğun seni nasıl yansıttı? Sonuçta sen bir sayfa oluştururken kendini ifade etmek için belli başlı temaları seçtin, kullandığın medya olsun...

P9: Şimdi hocam ilk başta çok fazla kasiyordum, herkes bakıyor da hata yapmayayım falan filan... ama son zamanlarda o bloğun bana ait olduğunu hata yaparsam da kimseyi enterese etmez bu benim bloğum kimseyi şey yapmaz diyerekten daha coşkulu bir şekilde kullandım yani.

R: Blog kullanımının öğretmenlik tecrübene bir katkısı oldu mu?

P9: Ders plan hakkında mesela, elimde hep eski ders planıyla ilgili dökümanlar vardı daha önceki yıllardan kalma. Yeni bir ders planı formatı öğrendim ve diğer öğrencilerin o format hakkında bir bilgisi vardı. Blog sayesinde arkadaşlarının ders planlarına bakıp ben de öğrendim

R: Arkadaşlarının ders planlarına baktın yani?

P9: Baktım çok baktım, ve comment de yaptım. Bana çok faydalı olduğunu düşünürüm mesela. İşte ders planı yapmış, speaking listening mesela o geçen hafta yapmış ben bu hafta yapıcım. Fikir edinmede çok yardımcı oldu.

R: Bunu biraz açıklayabilirmisin?

P9: Onun geçen hafta yaptığı ders planı tabi ki aynı şeyi yapamıyoruz ama mesela o ne yapmış işte o atıyorum derste olumsuz birşey olursa ne yapmayı düşünüyor mesela ondan sonra boş vakti kalırsa onu nasıl değerlendirecek zaten az çok belli bir şey var, stepleri belli yani. Kafamdaki boşlukları o ders planı sayesinde daha iyi doldurduğuma inanıyorum yani. Ondan sonra boş vakti kalırsa ne yapacak. Kimisi oyun yaptırmış, kimi konu hakkında konuşurum demiş. Onlar sayesinde bazılarını uygulamaya çalıştım. Uygulamasam bile bilmediğim şeyler bana fikir oldu. Yol gösterdi yani.

R: Peki hiç group da feedback yazdın mı ya da birisi sana feedback yazdı mı?

P9: Ya şey oluyor insan. Birbirine öyle bir yorum yazılıyor ki sanki yorumu yazan insan 40 yıllık öğretmen sen daha yeni başlamışsın gibi hissediyorsun okurken hani. mesela siz yeni başlıyorsunuz ben de yeni başlıyorum. Ben de on yıllık öğretmen gibi size feedback veriyorum. Siz demezmişiniz ne oluyor ne bu tripler. Yani o açıdan yani ama birbirine fikir vermek fikir alışverişi de güzel birşey yani.

R: Sana gelen feedbackleri sen sevmedin mi yani?

P9: Yooo, çoğu çok şey değildi ama arada bir kaç tane çıkıntı tip vardı.

R: Neler seni rahatsız etti mesela?

P9: Uslubu belki de, Teksincigim, şöyle yaparsan böyle olur böyle yaparsan söyle olur bilmem ne falan tadında yani.

R: Peki faydalandın mı bu feedbacklerden?

T: Hayır

R: Faydalanmadın mı? uslubundan dolayı mı faydalanmadın yoksa bir attitude mu geliştirdin, antipatik bir durum mu oluştu?

P9: Tabi antipatik bir durum oluştu da ben onları baz alarak yapmadım hocam. Zaten sizin verdiğiniz feedback benim için yeterli yani sizin verdiğiniz feedbackin ölçüsünde onun verdiği denizde bir kum yani.

R: Neden böyle düşünüyorsun?

P9: Ne bileyim kişilerin uslubu olabilir, kişileri sevip sevmemem olabilir şahsi olabilir.

R: Nasıl hissettin?

P9: Bir aşağılama gibi.

A: Çünkü bu ilginç birşey. Online ortamda kullanılan üslup ve sana hissettirdikleri.

P9: Hani hocam yazma dili de var yani konuşma dilinden ziyade. O yazma dilinden onun bir derdi var mı yok mu bunu anlayabiliyorsun. Bi de yanyana geldiğin zaman sana olan tavırlarından da birşey çıkarabiliyorsun.

R: Peki hiç böyle onun veya arkadaşlarının yazılarından verdikleri feedbacklerde kendini onların gözünde sana 'ben böyle bir öğretmenim' diye hissettiren birşey oldu mu?

P9: Kritik yaparken yazma nezaketimiz var ya kendi aramızda, ilk önce olumluları söylüyoruz ondan sonra olumsuzları söylüyoruz. Olumlular belli zaten, klişe olmuş şeyler yani. İşte ses tonun çok güzeldi, sesi çok effective kullanmışsın bilmem ne falan. Ondan sonra olumsuzlar sıralanıyor.

R: Bir süre sonra olumlular etkisini yitiriyor mu yani?

T: Yitiriyor tabi hocam çünkü herkes birbirinden kopyalayıp yapııştırıyor. Yarısı belki de videoyu izlememiş bile. Herkesin kalıplaşmış şeyleri var. Ben baktım inceledim yani bana ne yazmışlar diye. Biri bişey yazmış, altına yazan kişi onun bi değişik versiyonunu yazmış. Ama giriş gelişme aynı. Öbürü farklı bişey yazmış falan. Zaten yani bi otomatige bağlamış herkes. Ondan sonra da çok şey yapmıyorsun, takmıyorsun yani.

R: Anladım, senin görüşüne göre arkadaşların birbirlerinin feedbacklerini rewording yaparak yazıyor.

P9: Evet

R: Peki bu yazışmalar seni daha çok ya da daha çok ya da daha az katılmaya teşvik etti mi?

P9: Hiç etkili olmadı. Zaten bir amacımız var yani. Birine kızıp da bir yorganı yakmanın bir manası yok.

R: Peki sen arkadaşlarının bloglarına nasıl bir katkıda bulundun?

P9: Videolara yazmaya çalıştım ve hatta videoları izlerken çok eğlendim yani. Eğlendim çünkü benim yaşadığım şeyleri tek ben yaşamamışım başkaları da yaşamış.

R: Kendi videonu izlemenin bir faydası oldu mu ben bunu çok merak ediyorum.

T: Hocam kimse kendi videosunu oturup da ben nasıl anlatmışım diye izlemiyor. Ben nasıl giyinmişim, bu bana yakışmış mı diye bakıyor.

R: Peki, kendini izlediğinde bir öğretmen imajı belirdi mi kafanda?

P9: Valla benim belirdi, şöyle yani; Ben sınıfta çok şey değilim. Ben gerekmediği yerde sert davranan bir hoca olacağımı düşünmüyorum ama gerektiği zaman kaşımla gözümle çocukları susturabileceğime inanıyorum çünkü bir kaç defa sınıfta gürültü olmuştu. Bir kaç kişi konuşuyordu. Onlara baktım sustular. Bir kaç kez masaya

vurdum falan. Sonuçta ne kadar bağırırsan, çocukla ne kadar tartışma yaşarsan çocuk da seni o kadar ciddiye almaz yani. Küçük hareketlerle, kaşınla gözünle çocuğu susturabiliyorsan zaten bence umut var. Ben onu yaptığıma inanıyorum, bir kac yerde de yaptım zaten. Ondan sora sınıfta öğrencilerin bir şekilde motivasyona ihtiyaçları olduğunu gördüm mesela işte o cikolataymış bilemem neymiş falan filan yani orda hiç derse katılmayacak bir yerde ben kendim de öğrenciyim biliyorum yani, çocuklara hadi bakalım kartpostal yazın dediğiniz zaman kimsenin bunu istekle yapacağını düşünmüyorum yalandan iki cümle yazacak, zorlarsan parmak kaldıracak, zorlamazsan parmak kaldırmayacak ama mesela orda çikolata kullanmak iki dakika kalmış orda. Tabi sizin feedbackte de dediginiz gibi doğru yerde doğru praise yapmalı heryere yayma dedi Gül hoca da dedi onu. Onun aslında neden öyle dendiğini sonradan anlıyoruz, tabi hocaların verdiği feedbackler de aslında çok önemli. Çünkü onlar kendi deneyimlerini paylaşıyorlar.

R: Tabi ki yani onu alabilmek de önemli aslında. Peki sen bunları dinleyip reflectionlarında blog ortamında paylaştın, bunlara gelen bir reaksiyon oldu mu arkadaşlarından?

P9: Olmadı. Kendi deneyimlerimi uzun uzadıya yazmaya çalıştım yani. Öyle bir paragraf yazıp geçmedim. Başkaları da öğrensin benim deneyimlerinden diye.

R: Peki sen başkalarının yazdıklarını, diğer arkadaşlarını yaşadığı tecrübeleri okuyup comment yazdın mı? ya da okuyup geçmiş de olabilirsin.

P9: Valla hocam çok üstünde durmadım desem yalan olmaz hani. Çünkü mesela ben milletin yazdıklarına baktım, bir paragraf yazmışlar, çok kısa yazmışlar yani, o anki dersi yaptın, derse dair ne yaptın, aktivite olarak ne kullandın?

R: Peki dönemin başında sen kendini öğretmen olarak nasıl görüyorsun. Şimdi bu güne kadar verilen tasklarda yazdıklarını düşünecek olursak kafadaki öğretmen imajı nasıl gelişti, değişti?

P9: Aslında çok bir değişiklik yok hocam yani. Bence iyi bir öğretmen ilk başta anlayışlı ve arkadaşça olmalı ama bunu yaparken belli birşeyi var bir ölçüsü kriteri var, çok fazla kaçırдыңın zaman tadı kaçır. Bir kere arkadaşça olmalı. Ben onun yanına gittiğim zaman, elim ayağım titrememeli, kendimi kasmamalıyım hani sırf ona saygı göstermek için saygı göstermemeliyim. Bir öğretmen bunu kendisi ayarlayabilmeli yani. Öğrenci ofisine geliyor yani sırf ona saygı göstermesi gerektiği için saygı göstermemeli, aksi taktirde samimiyetsiz oluyor yani. Ama mesela atıyorum bir ödev verdi ve bu ödevi yarın yapıp getireceksiniz dedim, çocuk da onu yarın yapıp gelmedi. Hocanın da bunu yanlış anlayıp şırıngayla kan çekmesinin bir manası da yok yani. Çocuğa doğru bir şekilde uyararak, çocuk onu zaten anlayabilmeli, atıyorum, ödevlerini daha doğru şekilde yapmalı. Sınıfta çocuk derse katılmıyorsa bence bu öğretmenin kendi hatasından kaynaklanıyor olan birşey. Ya getirdiği aktiviteler çocuğun seviyesine yaşına uygun değil, ya da çocuğu çeken bir tarafı yok. Çok sıradan çok tekdüze şeyler yapıyor sınıfta. Bu yüzden de çocukların hocaya olan saygısı hocanın sınıfta yaptığı şeylerle de orantılı. Siz sınıfta tekdüze bir ders işlerseniz çocukların hepsi zaten uyur, kimse hocayı da kaale almaz, onun anlattığı dersi de dinleme gereksinimi duymaz. O yüzden hani sen yelpazeni geniş tutacaksın ki birini yakalayamazsan diğerini yakalayasın. Zaten hani bir filmde de

izlemiřtik, Dangerous Minds'tı yanılmıyorsam. Kadın hep lider olanla iletiřim kurmaya alıřıyordu. Yani sınıfta birinin nabzını tuttuktan sonra diđerleriyle ister istemez iletiřim oluyor. Yani bir dersin sıkıcı olması hocanın kiřisel zellileriyle alakalı olan birřey. Hoca sınıfta otoriter olmalı ama bunu ocuęa baęırarak aęırarak deęil, kařıyla gzyle falan yapmalı. Aksi halde ocuklar artık yzsz oluyor yani. Sen her derste ocuęa baęırırsan aęırırsan hakaret edersen hele her ders, bir sonraki derste ocuk seni kaale bile almıyor. Bir de ocuklar herřeyi piřkinlięe vurdukları iin yani, takmıyorlar hocayı.

R: Sen Őimdi hocanın kiřisel zlliklerinden bahsediyorsun.

P9: Sınıf ortamındaki zelliklerine gelirsek eęer, bi kere hoca sesini kullanabilmeli, sınıfta tonlamasını bilmeli ocuęun dikkatini ekmeli. Yoksa mıy mıy mıy hani nemli olan da o mıymıyım iinde geiyor nemsiz olan da. Zaten ocuk uyuku moduna geiyor, mesela hoca doęru bir Őekilde tonlamasını yapmalı. Hoca konuřtuęu Őeylere ok dikkat etmeli yani setięi kelimelere. Hocanın sınıftaki hareketleri dersi iřleme sekli tahtayı kullanım Őekli yani hoca kseye 3 cmle yazıyorsa ocuk gremiyor derse katılacaksa da katılmıyor. Bence fotoęraf, grseller ocukların daha ok dikkatini ekiyor. Mesela bana aynı dersi fotoęrafla anlatsalar, benim grsel hafızam belki daha iyi ben onu kaydediyorum ve baęlantı kuruyorum, bu nemli birřey yani. Renkli kaęıtlar kullanımı, tahtaya doęru drst kullanmak, bunlar ok nemli Őeyler.

R: Peki, dnemin bařında kendini grdęn P9 ile dnemin sonunda bu tecrbeleri edindikten sonraki P9 arasında bir fark oldu mu?

P9: Oluyor ister istemez, Őyle, mesela dnemin bařında kendimi rkek bir yaprak gibi hissediyordum, kim nereye savursa gidecek tadındaydım ama dnemin sonunda yařadığım deneyimlerden sonra, daha sert oluyorum, bunun dıřında ben mesela, nceleri daha uzun instruction veriyordum ama aldığım feedbackler doęrultusunda ve ęrencilerin artık elementary olduęunu idrak ettikten sonra uzun instructionları daha kısaltıp daha basite indirgemeyi ğrendim ama hala check etmeyi ğrenemedim, feedback verip cevapları check etmeyi ğrendim, bizde check etme mantığı yok nk grmemiřiz hocam, yapma ihtiyacı hissetmiyorsun, mesela ęretmenlere teaching practice'den nceki ve sonraki bakıř aımın, hani bir ęretmen adayı olarak yani nceden ęretmenlere daha nyargılı yaklařıyorsunuz ya ama mesela bu formal teaching sonunda aslında ęretmenlerin de ok hani haklı olduklarını grdm mesela onların da ileden ıktığı noktaların da olduęunu anladım.

R: Peki kendinde geliřtirdięin bazı ęretmen zelikleri oldu mu?

P9: Mesela ben kiřisel olarak sabırsız bir insanım ama sınıfta sabırlı olmanın ok nemli birřey olduęunu anladım. Mesela grsellikle alakalı kullanılması gereken Őeylerin ok faydalı olduęunu anladım, ondan sonra hocanın kendi kriterlerinin ne kadar stn olursa ocuęu da o kadar etkileyebileceęini ğrendim ama yani sadece hoca sadece ok gzel ingilizce biliyor olabilir hi farketmez. Ama sen bildięin bilgiyi ocuęa ğretemiyorsan onun orda ęretmen iin ok byk bir falso olduęunu dřnyorum, bir de kullanılan tekniklerin ğrenmede nemli olduęunu ğrendim.

R: Peki content knowldege ile ilgili bir geliřim farkındalık yakaladın mı?

P9: Bizim sıkıntımız instructioni verirken hep İngilizce olması, ben biliyorum ki Türkçe olsa o ders daha çabuk geçecek ama İngilizce olduğu için zor oluyor.

R: E ama İngilizce dersi veriyorsun.

P9: Evet hocam da ben biliyorum ki biz o dersi İngilizce vermiyecz yüzde 80 o ders Türkçe geçecek. Yalandan hello how are you goodbye İngilizce o olucak, bunu özel kurs da versen dersaneye de gitsen devlette de çalışsan aynı olacak, mesela ben bu dersi Türkçe anlatsam çok farklı anlatacağıma eminim ve çok daha etkili geçecek.

R: Peki teacher qualities' deyiz hala daha, ilerde nelerini geliştirmek istersin?

P9: Bi kere practisimi geliştirmeyi çok istiyorum sözleşmeli öğretmen olup sınıf ortamında öğrencilere ders anlatmak onların sınıf içindeki psikolojilerini kendi psikolojimle bağdaştırarak ders vermeyi istiyorum yani, mesela bir çocuğa sıfırdan birşey öğretmek çocuğa, çünkü küçük bir tohum yani o, kendimle alakalı şahsen speaking'imi geliştirmek istiyorum ondan sonra, grammar olarak eksikim varsa onları da geliştirmek istiyorum, yani bunlar zamanla olacak şeyler ama şimdi bana sorsalar ne grammar eksikğin var diye sorsalar bilemem.

R: Peki öğretmen olarak baktığında nelerden kaçınmak istersin.

P9: Tekdüze bir ders yapmak istemem, yani derse farklı aktiviteler koymak isterim yani o integrative skills çok doğru bir mantık yani. Mesela atıyorum sadece grammer öğreteceğin zaman kuru kuru kuralları yazıp 3 tane de cümle atıp hadi bakalım 3 tane de siz yazın mantığı değil de daha ziyade reading ile grammarı birleştirip öyle ders yapmak isterim.

R: Başka? Qualities of a teacher olarak baktığında nelerden kaçınmak ve neleri başarmak istersin. Mesela düşündüğünde gelecek yıl nasıl bir öğretmen olmamak istersin?

P9: Yani çok otoriter olmak istemem, sınıfın da eğlenceli olmasını istiyorum. Eğlenceli bir hoca olmak isterim, öğrencilerimin dersimi sevmelerini isterim. Praise yapmak ödüllendirme yapmak isterim, ılımlı yumuşak hoca olmak isterim, bana gelecek öğrenci titreyecek gelmemeli saygı duyarak gelmeli.

R: Duyularınızda bir değişiklik oldu mu? Dönem başında bu tecrübeleri yaşamadan önce ve dönem sonunda.

P9: Olmaz olur mu, en sevmediğim hocayı bile anlamaya başlıyorsun. Bana bu kadın burda bunu yapmış, demek ki şundan şundan dolayı yapıyormuş, gibi yani hocaların da az çok birşeyler yaşayıp ama onları sınıfta yansıtmadıklarını anlamış oldum bu deneyimle. Duyular değişiyor mu diyorsanız değişiyor, ilk başlardaki o çömezliğim yok yani.

R: Teşekkür ederim eklemek istediğin birşey var mı?

P9: Yani biz geçen dönem biz moodle kullandık, ona nazaran blog daha iyi bence daha renkli insanı çekiyor yani.

Sample 2

Researcher: Thanks for coming here for the interview today we are going to have an interview about your blogging experience, teaching practice experience during the fall semester. You know for the first time we used blogs in our class. It was a new experience. Blogging required some tasks that you needed to complete. Shall we start from your general opinion about blogging?

P5: OK.

R: How did you find the blogging experience?

P5: For me it was a difficult experience because it was the first time for me but if you start doing it like from the first year of BA when you are getting used to when you have time for this, then that's fine. For it was for just one semester. It was all smashed to make it faster and to get adjusted to this. It was difficult for me. Moreover, its time consuming to learn something new , computer technologies and all these things but me personally if I was teaching now I would definitely use it because, it's for students normally...It is something to draw their attention and it works but for me it's time consuming ... and I don't like it I'm not used to this

R: You don't like it because you were not used to it. Is that right?

P5: If I were used to this then fine no problem.

R: Yes, you say that it was difficult for you because at the same time, you had to use it properly and you had to know how to use it properly. Using and learning processes were in one, they were together. Can I ask you another question? You said that you found it difficult. Have you learnt anything regarding teaching practice? Have you learned anything from others, from sharing others?

P5: Of course, obviously, you are providing with students with something that can help them not to meet face to face, you can see the same work when you are at home, you can see blogs, you can see what people are posting. You can comment or you can even like or not like. It's like Facebook. So, whatever is Facebook like, people like it, me, I like it too but its time consuming, if I was used to it if I had more time then, it would be fine with me.

R: So what kind of problems did you have?

P5: The procedure. For me, to upload something in a correct way so that people see it, I do not know the steps.

R: Did you seek help when you had problems outside the class? Or when you had something in your mind that you could not share in the classroom?

P5: Did I have what?

R: Did you look for help when you had some problems?

P5: Yes, I was coming to you. First for me, I'm not that kind of person but aaaa, but it's personal... I do not like all these. If I had chance to talk to you face to face then

I'd better come to you and talk to you face to face. You have time for me, you would explain it to me, if I do not understand, this way, you would go to another corner, and explain it to me so that I get to understand it but with computers, if you are e-mailing me or something, you cannot put everything, so I'm missing some information, that's me.

R: So when you received help how you did feel?

P5: Much better, the same day, I would go in to do what you told me to do, because later on I would forget, and for me, if you are explaining it to me and if I see it how you are doing then I'm coming home and repeating by myself, then it works, but if you just tell me what to do you would not show me ... aaa, it's not working with me.

R: OK, do you consider blogging experience helpful in your pre-service teacher education?

P5: Yes.

R: Did this blogging experience contribute to your development as a teacher candidate?

P5: It's not only as a teacher candidate, it's in general, I started a part of teacher, I started blogging at blog.com, and it's about use, personal experiences. It's like you can share, besides, what I like you can log in not as, I mean without using your own name, anonymously, and you can post everything what you what, it's like freedom of speech. Even the same teaching experience, when you, if you don't ask your students to use their own names, you can ask them to do it anonymously. You can ask, you can get frank feedback from the students. Normally when you ask them I was my teacher, it was fine they say. It wasn't fine, you are just lying. But when you ask them to tell you anonymously, they will tell you the truth. So you said the best way to get feedback or what is really in your head.

R: OK. Let's focus on your activities on your blog, do you think, you were active or passive in your blogging?

P5: Let's say average, I was not too active I was doing what I was asked to do.

R: So, can you give me some reasons why you were sometimes active and sometimes not so active? What factors affected you?

P5: It depends on personality. Me, I'm not like a ... I like oral activity, I can talk much as can talk but any in written form is time consuming, first of all I would lose my ideas and then I cannot go back and remember ... but even though oral activities are much better.

R: So you say that you posted fewer posts because you think that writing is time consuming, did you have time to check your friends' posts?

P5: There was a problem, because most of the students the way they speaking in English I was like aaa! What's written? I don't understand, I go to another post and I

don't understand. I was even leaving comments what is written can you please translate, because I don't understand.

R: When you published your posts, did you expect from your peers to read them and write comments on your posts?

P5: I expected responses from you not from them because other students, they were in the same situation, it was not so interesting or captivating for them to participate in these blogs, it was like for the sake of complete the assignment and that's it but if all of us, we were used to blogging like Facebooking, then, obviously, it would be like ahh let me blog today, we were not ... the attention was not caught, eee, the participation was not caught ... so, obviously, we were doing it just for the sake of completing, aaa, and that's it.

R: When you received response, how did you feel? Did it motivate you more, or just...?

P5: I don't think that I was pushed to do something more, I think it was like, I don't really think we came from an appropriate perspective so to do this blogging, it was supposed.

Appendix I: Combined and Modified Reflection Scale

Combined and modified reflection scale based on Hawkes and Romiszowski's (2001) rubric and Crotty and Allyn's (2001) reflection scale for novice teachers (Taken from Tan, 2006).

Level	Description
0	Describes irrelevant examples, events or experiences or description is missing. Reflection is unrelated to practice.
1	Briefly describes the relevance of the evidence or artefact. Factually states examples or experiences based on simple recall. <i>Simple description of feelings before and during the lesson execution, or after completion of their teaching practices.</i>
2	Describes examples, events or experiences in simple, layperson terms. Demonstrates an understanding of student development and relevant instructional plans. <i>Describes feelings before, during or after lesson execution attaching specific examples like students reactions, behavior or based on concrete rationale.</i>
3	Describes examples, events, or experiences using pedagogical terms (e.g., teacher modelling, jig-saw, grouping, scaffolding activities, what they have learned from the specific choice of activity, and etc.). Connects college coursework concepts with practical classroom applications (e.g.). Applied previously learnt concepts with the present situation. <i>Describes and elaborates on feelings before, during or after lesson execution attaching specific examples like students reactions, behavior or based on concrete rationale.</i>
4	Explains teaching practice events and elaborates on examples, events or experiences based on rationale of their personal preference. The statements show that the pre-service teacher preferred to stay on their own comfort zone not taking risks. Yet, "... because..." statements shows some evidence the reason of that specific choice. Explanation shows evidence of taking a teacher's perspective by deconstructing examples, events or experiences. <i>Explanation shows evidence of pre-service teacher's feelings and emotions.</i>
5	Explains teaching practice events and elaborates on examples, or experiences using cause/effect principle. Rationalization or reconstructions are from or an otherwise outward looking perspective (i.e. self-criticism from a 3 rd person's perspective) Typically has "... because ..." and "... then..." statements. Pre-service teacher shows evidence of learning from new experiences and based on teacher's perspective and <i>attaches feelings to specific lessons learned from the experience.</i>
6	Explains and elaborates on examples, events, or experiences while incorporating non-imagined contextual factors (e.g., environmental

	limitations, learner needs, teacher needs, etc.). Includes an awareness of their own professional development. Evaluates current teaching abilities and determines what is needed for the future.
7	Explains and elaborates on examples, events, or experiences and cites guiding principle and current context, while referencing moral and ethical issues.

Appendix J: Consent Form

Participant Consent Form (for co-operating teachers)

You are invited to participate in a study that investigates pre-service English language teachers' learning experiences in blended learning environment as regards 'Investigating the Contribution of Blogging Interactions to Preservice English Language Teachers' Reflection and Construction of Teacher Identity'.

If you decide to participate, you will be asked to allow your intern student to observe your lessons, provide him/her with necessary guidance for his/her lesson planning for formal teaching sessions, carry out 4 observations and assess his/her formal teaching sessions using an evaluation form, provide oral feedback for two teaching performances at the post-observation meetings, log on to your intern's blog and provide written feedback on his/her four teaching practice sessions.

Any information that is obtained in connection with this study and that can be identified with you will remain confidential and will be disclosed only with your permission. If you decide to participate, you are free to discontinue participation at any time without prejudice. If you have any questions please do not hesitate to ask me. You will be offered a copy of this form to keep.

.....

Participant Consent Form

You are making a decision whether or not to participate in a study that investigates pre-service ELT teachers' learning experiences in blended learning environment as regards 'Investigating the Contribution of Blogging Interactions to Preservice English Language Teachers' Reflection and Construction of Teacher Identity'.

Your signature indicates that you have read the information provided above and have decided to participate. Should you choose to discontinue in this study, you may withdraw at any time without prejudice after signing this form.

Signature of the participant: _____ Date: _____

Signature of the researcher: _____ Date: _____

Appendix K: Petition to Request for Permission to Conduct the Second Cycle of the Research

To: Asst. Prof. Gülsen Musayeva Vefalı

Head of the ELT Department

From: Sen. Inst. Ayşegül Sallı

Subject: Request for permission to conduct research

Date: 24.09.2012

I would like to request for permission to conduct the second cycle of my action research study with the students who take ELTE 406 Teaching Practice course. Conducting the research is crucial for the completion of my PhD dissertation.

Please find the prospective procedures for the research below:

1. informing students about the research and procedures,
2. getting their consent,
3. training on blogs, setting up blogs and writing up first blog post,
4. writing up a blog post on the course and their ideal teacher,
5. three blog posts on movies they have seen,
6. reflection blogs on classroom observation,
7. reflection blogs on teaching practice experiences,
8. posting their lesson plans on blogs for feedback,
9. leaving feedback on their peers' practice teaching videos, and
10. posting their final reports on blogs.

Thank you for your consideration

Appendix L: A Sample Blog Interaction

P2's Second Formal Teaching Video (Video-recorded teaching practice lesson)

Aysegul Salli at 9:51 pm on Thursday, December 15,

Hi all,

P2 did her second formal teaching and wants to share a part of it with you. She will give you some information about her lesson. You can view the video below and share your feedback with her.

Thanks

Aysegul S.

P2 (December 20, 2011 @ 20:03)

My lesson aims are: Use these vocabulary items to complete the writing activity, categorize these vocabularies under the headings, and revise their vocabulary knowledge which had learnt last lesson and also develop their vocabulary. The part that you are watching is focusing on the activity. I was eliciting the answers and there were one wrong answer and I made the correction with the whole class. Later on you will see the last writing activity. You can see my interaction with the students

Please watch it and share your ideas with me

Many thanks

P6 (December 21, 2011 @ 19:59)

P2 :)) the first thing that takes my attention those colorful cards stick on the board. If I were your student, I would definitely join your class. Your tone of voice is very good, and most important thing is, which I am lack of it, you praise your students after each question. The way you use the language is very good. You will be a very teacher in future.

(December 21, 2011 @ 20:22)

Thank you! It is really nice to hear your comment. I noticed that I prefer to use praise for students work to encourage them. I know in the future, you will use lots of praise for your students work. The way you use the language especially using some literature makes your language more interesting and lovely. Thank you so much. Lots of love

P3 (December 26, 2011 @ 22:33)

Dear P2

I watched your second formal teaching. First of all, I want to say you use your voice and everybody can hear you. You use reinforcement. I like your colorful materials. You use body language while saying coming I like it. :)) And also, you give time your students to answer the questions.

P9 (January 14, 2012 @ 16:39)

Dear P2

Firstly, I can say that I loved your materials in your board. I'm sure that your materials were very useful in your teaching because it was remarkable. Secondly, I can say that your position in the class. You stood in the middle of the class. So, you controlled your class very effectively. Thirdly, you used reinforcement during the lesson such as "well done", I can understand that your students were very happy while they answering your question. Other good point that, you used your body and gesture during the lesson. And I think that it was very good and you smiled to your students during lesson. So, I believe that your students were very comfortable in your lesson.

Finally I can say that I agree with Emel you will be good teacher in your future... 😊