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The Role of Self-Reflection and Peer Review in Curriculum-focused Professional Development for Teachers*

Öğretmenlerin Program Odaklı Profesyonel Gelişiminde Öz-Değerlendirme ve Akran Değerlendirmenin Rolü

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ABSTRACT: Professional development is the backbone for teachers to sustain their professional lives without coming to a stop and they need a considerable amount of solid support in this process. The purpose of this study is to investigate what contributions self-reflection and peer review made on teachers' professional development within the scope of curriculum-focused professional studies based on Understanding by Design (UbD), an instructional design model. The study represents a threshold about providing a curriculum-focused professional development in higher education EFL teaching within the scope of a professional dialog among teachers. The study was carried out through action research. The participants of the study were 10 EFL teachers working at a state university in Istanbul, Turkey. Within the framework of the study, the teachers received training about UbD, formed groups and made unit designs and implemented them in their classes as part of the action research. As data collection tools, self-reflection and peer review forms were used. The collected data were analyzed through the content analysis. Within the context of the content analysis, the collected forms were read, coded carefully and the emerging themes were identified. The findings of the study indicated that self-reflection and peer review made considerable contributions to the teachers' professional development throughout the study. With the help of self-reflection and peer review, the teachers had the opportunity to revise their unit designs and implementation process and their awareness raised about their strengths and weaknesses.

Keywords: Understanding by Design (UbD), professional development, unit design, peer review, self-reflection.

ÖZ: Profesyonel gelişim, öğretmenlerin profesyonel yaşamlarını devam ettirmelerinin temelini oluşturur ve bu süreçte önemli miktarda somut bir desteğe ihtiyaç duyarlar. Bu araştırmanın amacı Anlamaya Dayalı Tasarım (UbD) çalışmaları kapsamında öz-değerlendirme ve akran değerlendirmenin öğretmenlerin profesyonel gelişimleri üzerinde nasıl bir değişime neden olduğunu incelemektir. Araştırma eylem araştırması deseniyle yürütülmüştür. Araştırmanın katılımcılarını bir devlet üniversitesinde çalışan 10 öğretmen oluşturmaktadır. Araştırma çerçevesinde, öğretmenlere UbD konusunda eğitim verilerek, tasarım grupları oluşturmaları, bu gruplar dahilinde üçer tasarım geliştirmeleri, geliştirdikleri tasarımları geribildirimler doğrultusunda düzenledikten sonra sınıflarında uygulamaları sağlanmıştır. Araştırmada veri toplama aracı olarak akran değerlendirme formları kullanılmıştır. Toplanan nitel veriler içerik analizi tekniğiyle çözümlenmiştir. Araştırmadan elde edilen bulgular, öz-değerlendirme ve akran değerlendirmenin, öğretmenlerin tasarım ve uygulama süreçlerini değerlendirmelerine önemli katkılarda bulunduğunu ortaya koymuştur. Bu araştırma, yüksek öğretimde İngilizce öğreten öğretmenler arasında profesyonel bir diyalog kapsamında program odaklı bir profesyonel gelişim sağlama açısından önemlidir. Ayrıca, öğretmenlere UbD tasarımı ve uygulama süreci hakkında kendi düşüncelerini ve akranlarının görüşlerini gözden geçirme konusunda önemli katkılar sağlamıştır.

Anahtar sözcükler: anlamaya dayalı tasarım (UbD), profesyonel gelişim, tasarım, akran değerlendirme.

1. INTRODUCTION

Professional development is an important phenomenon for teachers to sustain their development throughout their career and professional lives. In addition, it is crucial for the

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acquisition of necessary knowledge and skills to improve their instructional practices to address students' needs in an effective way (Benedict, 2014; Cooper, 2014; Ingvarson, Meiers, & Beavis, 2005; Lee, 2014). Apart from the traditional notion of teaching and professional development, teachers have recently undertaken a new responsibility as 'teacher as a designer', which helped them to gain a new identity about making use of the available resources, establishing a balance between choosing the right strategy and achieve their goal in the process of teaching and sustaining their professional development (Brown & Edelson, 2003). With this new attribution to their identity, teachers can act as a decision maker in the curriculum designing process rather than covering the written plans that are given to them. This can serve as a focal point to come together with their colleagues in the context of unit designs and sustain their professional development in an effective way (Caena, 2011; Craig, 2012; Kalantzis & Cope, 2010).

A variety of tools can be utilized within the scope of 'teacher as a designer' notion for teachers' professional development. One of these tools is Understanding by Design (UbD). UbD, which is an instructional design model, helps teachers to establish a learning environment in which students' enduring understanding is the ultimate goal of instruction. The understanding mentioned here is students' ability to transfer knowledge into new learning environments rather than superficial learning (Wiggins & McTighe, 2011). UbD is essential both for teachers' professional development (Brown, 2004) and students' enduring understanding (Wiggins, 2010; Yurtseven, Dogan, & Altun, 2013). Teachers that administer UbD as part of their instructional decisions form groups, have an exchange of ideas about design and implementation period, and give feedback to each other in this respect (Wiggins & McTighe, 2007). In students' aspect, the most important point of UbD is to pay close attention to all students and their preferences of learning by trying to avoid learning circumstances that happens coincidentally or by innate capability. While doing this, teachers initially aim at determining the instructional priorities and conducting the instruction by making a good design. These help teachers to sustain their professional development and increase students' achievement at the same time (Brown, 2004, 144; Wiggins & McTighe, 1998).

UbD encourages teachers to prepare a unit plan through the coverage of a three-staged template during the designing process. The first stage, named *desired results*, consists of terms such as transfer, understanding, and acquisition. Transfer is about the knowledge to be used by students in new learning situations independently. Understanding is the section in which teachers introduce enduring and transferable ideas as well as provocative essential questions. At the acquisition part, teachers identify the knowledge and skills that students should achieve at the end of the unit. The key principles at the first stage is to define a big idea and some essential questions that will accompany students throughout the unit. In the second stage, called the evidence, teachers prepare a performance task and some other assessment *evidence* to evaluate learning. In the third stage, which is called the *learning plan*, teachers decide on all the strategies, methods, techniques, and materials that they will use to achieve their teaching goals (Wiggins & McTighe, 1998, 2005, 2011).

Implementing UbD in educational settings enables its implementers to become active members of curriculum development (Andrews, 2011; Baird, 2006; Bertram, 2011; Boehler, 2008; Boozer, 2014; Burson, 2011; Corvo, 2014; Edmunds, 2011; Kelting-Gibson, 2003; Meyer, 2006; Takacs, 2010). Dealing with designing makes considerable contributions to teachers' burgeon of professional collaboration and dialogue at school settings. They can share ideas and make educational decisions in the designing process together with their colleagues (Anwaruddin, 2013). Moreover, implementing the designs they have made themselves promotes the emergence of 'teacher as a designer' notion and helps to minimize textbook coverage routine (Wiggins & McTighe, 2011).

One of the most important parameters in teachers' professional development is feedback, which UbD can also provide its implementers with throughout the process of designing. Blandford (2001) states that giving feedback to teachers about their experiences, research, and their instructional practices is an important aspect of professional development. In this vein, self-reflection and peer review are two crucial dynamics that have an important share in teachers' professional development. In the past, it was not common among teachers to take steps about professional development and to urge the need about professional collaboration (Schulte, 2006; TALIS, 2013). In fact, self-reflection was commonly seen as an isolated and individual process. However, reflective practices that enable collaborating and learning from the peers is useful for the whole group members (Walsh & Mann, 2015). Joining such communities helps teachers to improve their instructional practices and to facilitate student learning (Caena, 2011). Participating in professional learning communities and collaborating with colleagues about improving the instruction make a positive impact on teachers' job satisfaction and self-efficacy perceptions as it helps teachers to evaluate the effectiveness of education through the revision of instructional practices (TALIS, 2013; Yurtseven, 2016). Likewise, self-reflection is crucial as it helps teachers to raise awareness about their own progress and to take systematic decisions in accordance with their goals (Darling-Hammond & McLaughlin; 1995; Joyce & Showers, 2002).

Many studies in the literature draw attention to the fact that self-reflection and peer review are inseparable parts of a teacher's professional development since giving and receiving feedback constitutes a crucial part in the process (Benedict, 2014; Kabadayi, 2013; Lee, 2014; Onkol, 2011; Orlovsky, 2014). However, there is an unaddressed gap about providing teachers with regular feedback via the sources of self-reflection and peer review throughout the professional development process, especially in the Turkish context. This study is significant in the sense that it represents a threshold about providing curriculum-focused professional development opportunities for teachers in the field of higher education EFL teaching in self-reflection and peer review framework. In this respect, the purpose of this study is to investigate what contributions self-reflection and peer review made on teachers' professional development within the scope of UbD unit design and implementation studies. The research questions are as follows:

1. Is there any contribution of the teachers' self-reflections about their studies make to their professional development? How?

2. Is there any contribution of the peer reviews about unit designs make to teachers' professional development? How?

2. METHOD

2.1. Research Design

The action research was used throughout the study. Action research studies are carried out with an aim to problematize an issue about education and to develop solutions to it throughout the process with the assistance of rising data. The main purpose in action research is to revise and improve the educational practices (Berg, 2001; Burns, 2010; Creswell, 2012). The reason for choosing this design was to develop an understanding and perspective to some of the professional development issues, which the researchers identified via observations and informal meetings. As presented in the role of the researchers section, one of the main researchers worked in the same institution for over 10 years and her experiences throughout the formal and informal meetings as well as the other teachers' experiences made a solid construct for the foundations of the study. The researchers also tried to include teachers in the research process by choosing action research design, through which they can play a dynamic role in making decisions and taking actions.

2.2. Action Research Process

Action research has a cyclical process that goes on a continuous basis (Berg, 2001; Creswell, 2012; Yildirim & Simsek, 2008). In the action research, the data collected during the previous action provides information to the researchers about the content of the subsequent action (Costello, 2011). In this vein, the researchers used the following flow of action in the current study for 15 weeks.

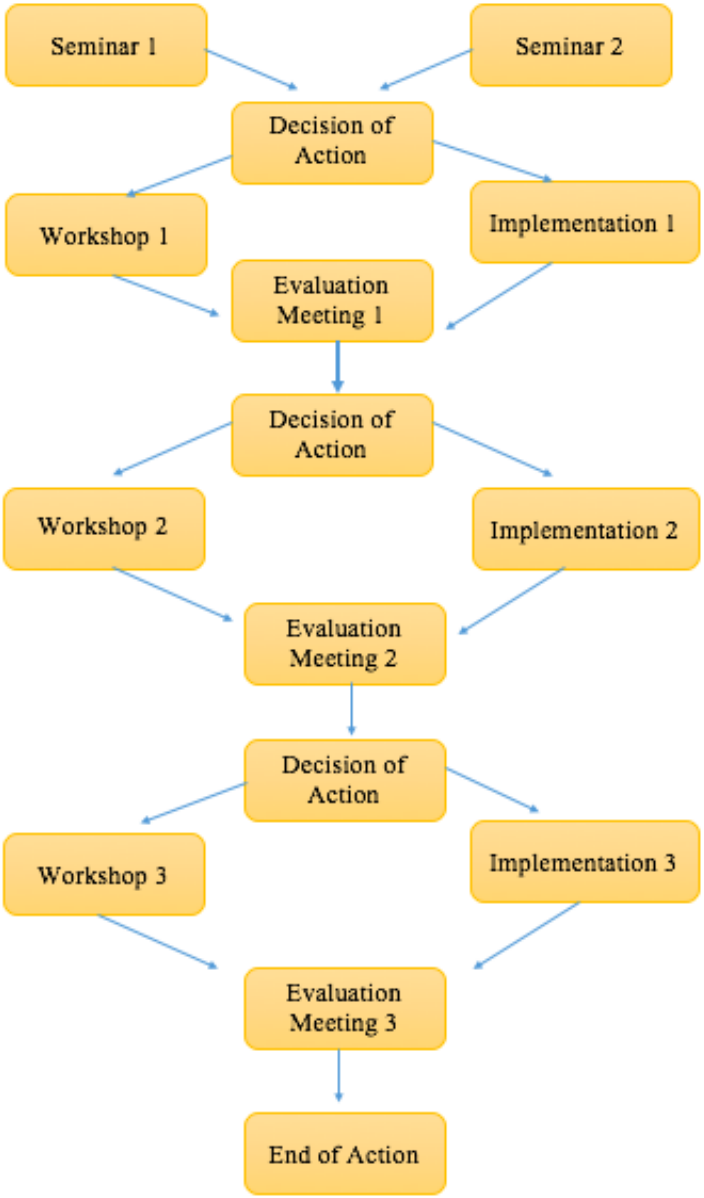

Figure 1. The flow of action

The action research began with the problematizing of some issues. Teachers mentioned that one of the main issues within the borders of the school was lack of professional development activities. Furthermore, they mentioned student-related problems such as low achievement scores and lack of language learning motivation. To develop a new perspective to these issues, we instrumented UbD since it was mentioned as a convenient tool for curriculum-focused professional development in the literature. Initially, the researchers started training teachers about UbD. At the beginning of the semester, the teachers participated in two main

seminars. In the first seminar, they received information about the principles of UbD as well as some materials and sample unit designs. The content of the first seminar included the description of basic terms such as big idea, essential question, transfer etc., and the demonstration of UbD template. After a week, we organized the second seminar to answer the teachers' specific questions and to go into more detail about UbD. In this seminar, teachers also tried to design units about EFL by following the basic rules of UbD cooperatively. After the seminars, we made a decision of action to create design groups in line with the teachers' working schedules and the types of courses they gave. In this vein, we created four design groups, two of which were Listening & Speaking groups and two of which were Reading groups. The groups achieved a consensus that the teachers designed unit plans by sticking to current curriculum's objectives and enriching the content by using UbD's guiding principles (e.g. bid idea, essential questions, performance tasks, enduring understanding, tailoring student needs, bringing methodological diversity etc.). The groups made three unit designs and three implementations in the rest of the study. This meant that all the teachers in the same group prepared the same unit design and implemented what they prepared in the same way without any change. They both received and gave feedback throughout the study. The data collected from one design and implementation process formed a foundation to make decision about the following steps. In addition, regular meetings were organized at the end of each design and implementation period. A final evaluation meeting was held after the third implementations were over. The teachers shared their experiences both about the implementations and the whole action research process. After the analysis of the collected data, the findings were shared with the school administration and staff.

Apart from the teachers, the study had reflections on students. During the UbD implementations, the teachers raised their awareness about the big idea, essential questions and the content of the unit. They were also supposed to show active participation in the lessons, prepare performance tasks, and choose the activities in line with their learning styles and individual differences.

2.3. Study Group

The study group included 10 EFL teachers working at the school of foreign languages of a state university in 2014-2015 academic year, spring semester. The study group was chosen through maximal variation sampling. Creswell (2012) states that maximal variation sampling provides the researcher with individuals that own different characteristics or traits, which help to gain multiple perspectives about a certain research question. Within this framework, we tried to include teachers with various years of experience; educational background; age, and gender by keeping the principle of voluntariness in mind. The information about the study group is presented in Table 1:

Table 1: Study Group

Teacher	Year of Experience			Education		Age			Gender	
	0-5	6-10	11+	BD*	MD+**	22-25	25-35	35+	M	F
T1		✓		✓			✓		✓	
T2			✓		✓		✓		✓	
T3			✓	✓			✓		✓	
T4			✓		✓		✓		✓	
T5		✓		✓			✓		✓	
T6			✓	✓				✓	✓	
T7		✓			✓		✓			✓
T8			✓		✓		✓			✓
T9			✓	✓				✓	✓	
T10	✓			✓		✓			✓	

* Bachelor's degree

** Master's degree and more

As presented in Table 1, one of the teachers had an experience of 0-5 years, three of them had the experience of 6-10 years, and six of them had an experience for more than 11 years. Six of the teachers had Bachelor's degree while four of them had a graduate degree. One of the teachers was at an age between 22-25, seven of them were between 25-35, and two of them were more 35 years old. Eight of the teachers were female while two of them were male.

As mentioned above, the context of the study was composed of 10 teachers. After the formal permissions, the researchers sent an e-mail to all the teachers at school to invite volunteers to the meeting that they organized to introduce the study. At the meeting, which included 25 teachers, the researchers explained the process, the responsibilities and the anticipated benefits of the study as well as answering the emerging questions. In the end, 10 teachers volunteered to take part in the study. As the teachers had already had their schedules, they were grouped in parallel with the skills they taught so that they could design unit plans in a cooperative way. The teachers mainly taught Listening & Speaking and Reading. Therefore, two listening and speaking, two reading groups were formed. In addition, the researchers tried to form groups by taking into consideration the teachers' office and teaching hours. During the study the researchers assumed that all the participants sincerely answered the questions that they asked via data collection tools as well as regarding these tools as valid and reliable.

2.4. Data Collection Tools

As data collection tools, self-reflection forms and peer reviews form were used. The purpose was to make the teachers think about their own unit designs and their colleagues' unit designs in a reflective manner so that the action plan was shaped in accordance with those opinions.

2.4.1. Self-Reflection Forms

The teachers used self-reflection forms to evaluate their own design and implementation process (See the sample in Appendix 1). This kind of self-evaluation writings help the researchers to interpret the research process more effectively as it provides opportunities to participants for sharing their experiences, opinions, and thoughts (Ortlipp, 2008; Shaw, 2010). Within this framework, each teacher completed four self-reflection forms. These forms were completed after the first UbD seminar, first design and implementation process, second design and implementation process, third design and implementation process, and final evaluation meeting. The researchers developed the self-reflection forms by taking the literature and necessary data into consideration during the process. Two experts from the field of educational sciences gave their opinions on the form.

2.4.2. Peer Review Forms

The teachers used peer review forms to evaluate the unit designs of their colleagues (See the sample in Appendix 2). Each teacher evaluated all the unit designs apart from his/her own group. They completed these forms three times after the unit designs were prepared. Wiggins and McTighe (2005; 2011) stated that peer review is among the most important aspects of UbD studies. Because the feedback provided helps teachers to strengthen their unit designs before they start implementing them. The researchers developed the peer-review forms by taking the literature and necessary data into consideration during the process. Two experts from the field of educational sciences gave their opinions on the form.

2.5. Data Analysis

The data were analyzed through the content analysis. The content analysis is carried out in order to define data and uncover the facts within it. It is the unification of data within the framework of similar concepts and themes. The organization of qualitative data in this way helps readers to understand and interpret it easily (Yildirim & Simsek, 2008). In addition, the

main objective in qualitative data analysis is to create patterns and themes instead of digitizing them (Glesne, 2012). In this scope, each sentence in the forms were read carefully and was coded accordingly. After the first researcher checked the codes, the second researcher made coding once again. At first, the researchers obtained different findings about coding and reaching the themes. They compared and contrasted them in order to bring the similar codes together. After they reached a consensus, they sent the obtained codes and themes to five different experts in the field of educational sciences. They also checked the codes and themes. There were slight differences in the experts' views. For instance, one of the experts reached the themes of creativity and interest for the first research question while another expert gave her opinion that one of the themes was collaboration. When the researchers reexamined the codes in accordance with the experts' views, they concluded that it would be more accurate to name the aforementioned themes as the strengths noticed. Finally, the codes and themes were sent to the teachers for audit trail and the teachers confirmed them.

2.6. Validity & Reliability of the Study

We referred to Lincoln and Guba's (1985) (1) credibility, (2) transferability, (3) dependability and (4) confirmability terms for the validity and reliability of the current study. To increase the credibility of the study, a long-term interaction was ensured during 16 weeks with the participants; in-depth data was collected and they were continuously compared; more than one source of data was obtained to provide diversity; expert opinion and audit trail were referred to during the process of deciding on research design, data collection tools, and data analysis techniques. Transferability is an important criterion for the readers to develop an understanding for similar environments and processes and to manage their own practices in a more experienced and conscious way (Yildirim & Simsek, 2008). In the current study, the researchers paid meticulous attention to depict the research process as clearly as possible. Dependability is about the maintenance of research and finding arrival process as clearly and reproducibly as possible (Morrow, 2005). To meet this requirement, a remarkable effort was made to create data collection tools, to follow the data collection process, to analyze data and to report the findings in a consistent way. Furthermore, the data obtained from the study was examined for its consistency. In this vein, codes and themes gained through the content analysis were sent to five experts. Confirmability refers to the confirmation of findings with the help of obtained data and presentation of them to the readers with judicious explanations (Creswell, 2012; Yildirim & Simsek, 2008). In the current study, after the transcript forms were created, the experts and the participants confirmed the accuracy of the forms.

2.7. The Roles of The Researchers

There were three main researcher(s) groups in the current study. The first one was the researcher who made this study within the framework of her doctoral dissertation; the second one was the thesis advisor; and third one was the group of teachers that took part in the study. The place in which the study was carried out was the institution where the first researcher worked for 10 years. Furthermore, the researcher made several studies about UbD before the current study and she was competent enough to anticipate possible problems and take measures about them in the process of implementing UbD. She also had an engaging role in training teachers, creating design groups, guiding the teachers, observing some of the implementations, collecting the data and controlling the whole action research process. The thesis advisor, who was the second researcher, took part in national and international projects about teacher education both as a coordinator and a counselor. She also had some ongoing projects. She had an active role about training the teachers about UbD, reviewing the unit designs made by the teachers, and organizing evaluation meetings. The teachers group, which was the third part in the research, had an important role about designing unit plans, implementing them in their

classes, making peer evaluation, and determining the succeeding and the failing aspects of the action research.

3. FINDINGS

3.1. Findings about the Contribution of Self-Reflection to Teachers' Professional Development

Self-reflection forms, which the teachers completed throughout the study, were examined through the content analysis within the scope of the first research question. Five themes emerged as a result of the content analysis. These themes are "Issues in the Unit Design Process", "Issues in the Implementation Process", "The Strengths Noticed", "The Weaknesses Noticed", and "Plans for the Following Unit Design". The themes, the total number of codes, and sample codes that belonged to first, second, and third design can be seen in Table 2:

Table 2: Themes, Categories, and Sample Codes about Self-Reflection

Themes	Total Number of Codes	Categories		
		Category 1: First Design	Category 2: Second Design	Category 3: Third Design
		Sample Codes	Sample Codes	Sample Codes
Theme 1: Issues in the Unit Design Process	28	• Being confused about the template • Having difficulty in integrating ideas to UbD • Cooperating	• Exchanging ideas • Having an easier unit design process • Enjoying the work share	• Having lack of time • Making simpler unit designs • Having experience in designing units
Theme 2: Issues in the Implementation Process	32	• Observing increase in student motivation • Having difficulty in time management • Observing positive effect of performance tasks on students	• Observing increase in student interest • Observing change in learning environment • Observing vocabulary success with six hats thinking method	• Observing active student participation • Observing student creativity • Observing positive effect of fun element on lessons
Theme 3: Strengths Notices	32	• Brainstorming • Arousing students' interest • Generating ideas quickly	• Using different teaching methods • Coping with student reluctance • Observing creativity	• Observing creativity • Observing fun element • Preparing good performance tasks
Theme 4: Weaknesses Noticed	24	• Managing time • Managing classroom • Designing unrealistic unit plans	• Providing inadequate materials • Not using fun element in the lessons • Choosing difficult activities to apply	• Preparing superficial performance tasks • Teaching vocabulary • Finding solutions to the sudden problems
Theme 5: Plans for the Following Unit Design	17	• Integrating performance tasks in the unit design • Explaining the objectives to students in a better way • Preparing better performance tasks	• Finding strategies to activate students • Addressing individual differences • Giving more feedback to students	

Theme 1: Issues in the Unit Design Process

The teachers expressed that the new concepts that were introduced with UbD were challenging and confusing for them at first and they had difficulty in the first unit design process. Another point they mentioned was that it was difficult for them to adapt their opinions to UbD template though they took decisions about the ideal framework of the unit design. They also stated that preparing the UbD template was too time-consuming; however, they really enjoyed working as a group.

> *We were able to make decisions about the ideal framework of the unit plan. However, I really had difficulty in including the relevant content in the template. I can say that the feedbacks I received were so helpful. We allocated much more time to complete the template than we spent time for conceptual aspects. (T2, Woman, 35).*

The second unit designs were again stressful though, it was more productive about the results. The teachers had less difficulty in making the unit design and they made a greater effort to get a better product than in the previous design. They also tried to implement six hats thinking method. The teachers followed a more efficient process about the exchange of ideas and the share of responsibility.

> *We exchanged ideas with my partner. We discussed about how we could implement six hats thinking method. It was an enjoyable process. The question how we could reach students more effectively motivated us. Performance tasks required creativity and it was shaped with the help of our negotiations. The process that I really enjoyed was the unit design process. (T9, Woman, 42).*

The third unit designs were the designs that the teachers made with the most experience. What made it different from the other unit design processes was the effort to provide the students with a different learning experience as the teachers considered the individual differences more than ever. In this process, the teachers were managed to anticipate what could be better or worse in the learning environment and the experiences they gained from the previous processes made the third unit design process much more enjoyable. One of their most important aim was to integrate differentiated instruction into the unit designs.

> *For the first time, we created a unit design that was only based on vocabulary for Listening & Speaking course. We prepared the performance task according to the differentiated instruction. That part was the most time-consuming part. (T7, Man, 32).*

Theme 2: Issues in the Implementation Process

The first implementations were important as they helped the teachers to get insights about how the students reacted to these unit designs in a real learning environment. The teachers mostly stated that the implementations took longer time than planned and the problem of timing created stress on them. On the other hand, the teachers mentioned that making the students aware of the objectives helped them take it more seriously. Lastly, they stated that students felt happy as they succeeded in doing something with the help of performance tasks, and, as a result, their motivation increased.

> *The implementations took longer than I thought. We referred to the essential questions and we talked about them. It was good to exchange opinions with the students. When I watched the videos they recorded as part of their performance tasks, I noticed that they managed to do something as a language learner, which made me feel really happy. I hope that this kind of learning will help students to make use of what they learn and stop complaining that they cannot produce (speak and write) although they comprehend the target language. (T7, Man, 32).*

The second implementations had a better process, as the teachers were able to implement what they planned on a large scale. Teachers' observations revealed that warm-up activities,

visual materials, group work, and performance tasks increased the students' interest. Activities such as discussion and vocabulary teaching through six hats thinking method helped to create a different learning environment in the classroom. The teachers pointed out that teaching with a planned unit design made considerable contributions to the students' participation in the lesson and their motivation. On the other hand, some teachers mentioned a few problems. One of those problems was that the time was not enough for some of the planned activities. Another problem was that some students had difficulty in transforming their knowledge into practice and they had difficulty in expressing what they thought in six hats thinking discussion part.

> *Our warm-up questions and the video discussion in the first stage of the unit design were good. More students started participating. The topic was interesting. The group work about the vocabulary study did not achieve its goal. They learned the essence of the six hats thinking method, but they were bad at creative thinking and speaking. (T2, Woman, 35).*

The third implementations were the ones in which students' participation were at its highest level. The most important reasons for this increase were that the students were in the center, the teachers considered individual differences and preferences, and there were real-life situations and topics throughout the units. During the performance tasks, the students had the right to choose what they wanted to prepare. The teachers also emphasized that the fun element increased the participation in the lessons, the students were more cheerful, and student creativity came into the prominence.

> *Almost all the things we envisioned during the design took place. The video in the warm-up phase was interesting. Although it was a bit difficult to understand, we tried to make it easier through the start-pause technique. When we were implementing differentiated instruction, we prepared performance tasks by taking their level of creativity into account (the most creative, creative, less creative). As we already predicted, only one group chose the performance task that required the highest level of creativity. Different options gave the students the right to choose and it had a positive influence on them. (T3, Woman, 33).*

Theme 3: The Strengths Noticed

In the first unit design and implementation process, the teachers felt strong about generating ideas in a rapid and productive way, finding various activities, enriching the learning experience, and arousing students' interest in a creative way. The teachers said that they worked as a group to brainstorm ideas and proceeded in a determined way without giving up.

> *As a group we generated ideas very quickly and it did not take a long time to write them down on paper. (T6, Woman, 40).*

> *My strength was to find various activities for the unit. I really enjoyed it. I do not want to have ordinary lessons. (T4, Woman, 33).*

In the second unit design and implementation process, the teachers mostly felt strong about controlling the in-class dynamics and managing the process with different teaching methods (for example, six hats thinking method). The teachers said that they felt strong about being beneficial to students, including the entire class in the lessons, awakening students' interest and curiosity throughout the lesson, and coping with student reluctance.

> *Having a technique like six hats thinking was my strength. The topic was stimulating. The performance tasks took the creativity to the foreground. (T7, Man, 32).*

The teachers felt the strongest about making a good design in the third unit design and implementation process. In this last stage, they felt strong about creating different products, preparing efficient performance tasks, including the majority of the students in the lessons and increasing the awareness of students about their own creativity.

The lesson plan was fun. And the content was so rich. The strength of the lesson was having a good warm-up and performance task. (T5, Woman, 34).

Theme 4: The Weaknesses Noticed

After the first unit design and implementation process, the teachers generally felt that they needed to improve themselves about time management, classroom management, increasing students' interest, preparing effective performance tasks, and coping with problems during the implementations. They stated that they had difficulty in catching up with the time and preparing more realistic and applicable performance tasks.

I realized that I needed to convert my thoughts into more applicable performance tasks and remember the classroom facts (student' motivation, level, and expectations). (T2, Woman, 35).

One of the frequently mentioned topics in second unit design and implementation process was the implementation period. The teachers stated that they should improve their skills about managing time, choosing easy and practical activities, including fun element in the lessons, providing various materials, and planning hook/warm-up parts.

I had difficulty in timing. I needed to skip a section in vocabulary part. We should have shorter activities. (T5, Woman, 34).

In the third unit design and implementation period, the teachers stated that they should improve themselves about choosing various evidence to evaluate, preparing more detailed performance tasks, taking individual differences into consideration more, and providing more diversity. In addition, they wanted to increase the number of different methods and techniques and discover new ways to teach vocabulary.

We could be better about providing variety about the evidence for evaluation. It would be easier for students to remember the words if we prepared a vocabulary quiz. However, we could not make a quiz because of time. (T1, Woman, 33).

Theme 5: Plans for the Following Unit Design

As the first unit designs included a process in which the teachers tried to have a strong grasp of the UbD-related concepts, they planned to correct their mistakes in the second unit designs. Among the frequently mentioned topics, there were telling the objectives of the lesson to the students more efficiently, demanding a product at the end of the performance tasks, and integrating performance tasks in the unit plan. In addition, most of the teachers mentioned that they wanted to produce a more quality and professional unit design in the following process.

It will be a better idea to integrate the performance task in the unit design. I'm thinking of finding more effective performance tasks. Similarly, I want to tell the aims and objectives of the lesson to the students in a better way and I want them to synthesize. (T5, Woman, 34).

The second unit design and implementation process helped the teachers to review their mistakes and act more efficiently. At the end of this process, the teachers stated that they wanted their students to become more active. Therefore, they decided to make unit designs that would help them to address individual differences and include more practical points in the learning plan. They also said that they wanted to prepare more creative performance tasks.

We're thinking of the differentiated instruction and its implementation in the classroom. We are going to individualize the performance tasks. I really wonder about the result. (T7, Man, 32).

In conclusion, the self-reflections that the teachers made during the current study contributed to their professional development as they helped them to review their learning process throughout the unit design and implementation process.

3.2. Findings about the Contribution of Peer Review to Teachers' Professional Development

Peer review forms, which the teachers completed throughout the study, were examined through the content analysis within the scope of the second research question. Three themes emerged as a result of the content analysis. These themes are "The Strengths of the Unit Designs", "The Weaknesses of the Unit Designs", and "Recommendations". The themes, the total number of codes, and sample codes that belonged to first, second, and third design can be seen in Table 3:

Table 3: Themes, Categories, and Sample Codes about Peer Review

Themes		Total Number of Codes	Categories		
			1st Design	2nd Design	3rd Design
			Sample Codes	Sample Codes	Sample Codes
Theme 1: The Strengths of the Unit Designs	G1	36	• Interesting performance task • Gripping videos • Student-centered activities	• Funny videos and performance tasks • Interesting content • Competitive learning	• GRASPS chart • Variety in performance tasks • Student self-reflection
	G2	41	• Knowledge transfer • Detailed unit design • Good essential questions	• Roleplaying • Increasing students' creativity • Challenging tasks	• Fun • Peer review • Authentic performance task
	G3	36	• Technology use • Creative big idea • Warm-up section	• Clear instructions • Authentic performance task • Detailed learning plan	• Essential questions • Activities addressing individual differences • Activities fostering creativity and speaking
	G4	43	• A good evaluation tool • The harmony with the school curriculum • Consistency between desired results and performance tasks	• Authentic materials • Cooperative study • Six hats thinking method	• Transfer statement • QR codes in warm-up section • Individualized performance tasks
Theme 2: The Weaknesses of the Unit Design	G1	10	• Lack of group work • Deatiled content	• The video in Turkish • Performance task	• Essential questions • Lack of visual materials
	G2	11	• Big idea • Other evidence	• Pessimistic performance task • Detailed content	• Lack of group work • Fun element
	G3	7	• Performance task	• Essential questions • Big idea	• Ignoring the listening skill
	G4	14	• Inconsistency between essential quations and big idea	• Integrating too many reading strategies in one lesson	• Evaluation
Theme 3: Recommendations	G1	13	• More group mork	• More vocabulary studies	• More visual elements
	G2	13	• More visual materials	• More interesting warm-up activities before reading sections	• More interesting PPT presentation

G3	9	• More time for performance task	• More creative essential questions. • Shorter big idea	• Making listening strategies more clear
G4	15	• More group work • More essetial questions	• Less reading strategies	• Using only one reading text

Theme 1: The Strengths of the Unit Designs

The teachers discussed different dimensions for each group under this theme. For instance, for the first group, the teacher emphasized the creativity and attractiveness of the first unit design. They stated that students' sharing their opinions about their language learning processes, students' having a real life experience, and the conformability of the topic to UbD were the strongest aspects of this unit design. The peer reviews for the second unit design indicated that the colleagues highlighted the fun, competitive, and challenging aspects of the design. The strengths of the unit design were that the content was interesting and it directed the students to different styles of thinking. For the third unit design, the teachers stated that it was a good unit design that individualized the instruction, helped the students to think creatively and let them have fun. Most of the teachers emphasized that the third unit design of the first group included variety in performance tasks and provided opportunities for the students to do self-reflection.

The peer reviews about the second group indicated that the teachers mostly regarded the first unit designs as detailed, target-oriented, and well organized. The strengths of the first unit design were that it gave the students the chance to transfer knowledge and practice speaking English. For the second unit design, the teachers stated that it was emotional, planned, and pessimistic. The strengths of this unit design were that the performance task encouraged the students to explore and empathize as well as stimulating their creativity and posing challenge to the learning environment. The feedback about the third unit design of the group showed that it was instructive, differentiated, and informative. The strengths of the third unit design were that it gave the students the opportunity to receive peer feedback, the performance task was related with the real life, and the essential question was good at providing awareness. In addition, teachers stated that the language was used as a tool rather than an objective in this unit design.

The peer reviews about the third group revealed that their first unit design was inspirational, target-oriented, and it reflected pieces of real life. The strengths of the first unit design were that it gave chance to the students to use the listening/speaking skills they acquired in authentic situations and there was conformity in between the lesson content and the performance task. For the second unit design, the teachers stated that it was creative, thought provoking, and fun. The strengths of the second unit design were that the performance task was authentic, it enhanced students' learning in an enjoyable way, and the unit design was clear. For the third unit design of the group, it was stated that the design was detailed and intriguing as well as being a good model for addressing different learning styles. The strengths of the unit design were that the performance tasks were compatible with differentiated instruction, speaking activities were in the forefront, and the students received frequent feedback.

The peer reviews about the fourth group indicated that the first unit design was strategy-oriented and it prioritized reading techniques. The strengths of the unit design were that it was in accordance with the school's curriculum, it enabled the students to develop their vocabulary and the performance task was achievable for the students. The peer reviews showed that the second unit design was vigorous, thought provoking and informative. The strengths of the second unit design were that it helped the students to empathize and promoted deeper thinking by including the students in the learning process. The teachers stated that the third unit design was product-oriented and it helped the students to learn certain strategies through its rich

content. The strengths of the third unit design were that it involved performance tasks suitable to different learning styles, it made the students more active during the lessons, and it contained fun element.

Theme 2: The Weaknesses of the Unit Designs

When the first group was evaluated in terms of its weaknesses, the peer reviews indicated that the first unit design was overloaded, there were not enough opportunities for group work, and the evidence (quiz) was insufficient to assess learning. For the second unit design, the Turkish video in the warm-up and superficial definition of the performance task were criticized. In the third unit design, the teachers stated that essential questions, vocabulary study and visual aspects of the design needed improving.

The peer reviews about the weaknesses of the second group indicated that the first unit design needed to be improved about visual materials, the big idea and being more appealing to the students. For the second design, the teachers stated that it was overloaded as it included two reading texts. For the third unit design, the peer reviews revealed that the unit design was criticized for providing few opportunities for individual and group studies as well as involving a pessimistic film in the program.

For the third group, the peer reviews indicated that the first unit design might be challenging for students with a lower level of speaking skill because of the performance task, which required the students to hold interviews with the professionals in the target language. In the second design, the group was criticized because of the essential questions and the big idea. In the third unit design, the only weakness mentioned was that it kept the listening skill in the background.

When the peer reviews about the weaknesses of the fourth group were examined, it was concluded that the first unit design lacked the fun element, there were too many essential questions, the big idea was not mentioned, and there was unconformity between the performance task and essential questions. In the second design, the teachers criticized the group for trying to integrate more than one strategy in the same lesson, for not preparing a good basis for six hats thinking method, for integrating too many activities, and lacking the warm-up part. In the third unit design, the group received criticism about the popularity of the topic and timing problems.

Theme 3: Recommendations

The teachers warned the first group about the amount of the usage of mother tongue throughout the lesson in the second design. In addition, they advised the group to do more vocabulary activities and show the students a video about successful robot functions in addition to the unsuccessful robot functions. In the third unit design, they recommended that the group use more visual materials, be more careful about timing, and ask students to tell their own experiences after the warm-up activity.

The teachers recommended the second group to improve their big idea and performance task as well as carrying out a vocabulary quiz as an evidence in the first unit design. In the second unit design, the teachers advised the group to enrich the content and to include more warm-up activities before the reading activities. In the third unit design, the teachers advised the group to bring a Greenpeace documentary into the classroom instead of a film and to support their presentation with visuals.

For the third group, some of the recommendations for the first unit design were to watch the video records prepared for the performance task, to provide guidance to the students to prepare their interview questions, and to manage the time well during the performance tasks. For the second unit design, they advised the group to find more creative essential questions,

shorten the big idea, add a video for the performance task, and to exclude the listening test that was used as the other evidence. For the third unit design, the teachers recommended the group to indicate the strategies they address in listening part.

For the fourth group, the peer reviews for the first unit design indicated that they should explain the materials and tools they used in a more detailed way and add more fun element. In addition, they recommended that the performance task and the essential questions be in harmony. For the second unit design, the teachers recommended the group to include a more interesting warm-up activity, use fewer reading strategies and implement the six hats thinking skill in a more efficient way. For the third unit design, they advised the group to integrate various evaluation techniques, revise the first essential question, and simplify their unit design.

In general, the peer reviews about the first group indicated that the teachers focused mostly on the creativity of the group. In addition, they said that the following designs were more student-centered and individualized. The group made necessary changes in the light of the peer reviews and the feedbacks and prepared more simple, student-centered, and differentiated unit designs. The peer reviews about the second group emphasized that the first unit designs were too detailed and pessimistic. These reviews helped the group to prepare less complicated and meaningful products that enriched the students' learning experience. The peer reviews about the third group indicated that all the unit designs were suitable to the student profile and thought provoking as well as being intriguing for the students. The group did not receive much criticism apart from the technical details. In the light of the feedback, the group made the necessary changes to shorten the big idea and improve the essential questions. The fourth group generally received feedback about adding more fun element to the unit designs and centralizing the students. In the following unit designs, the peer reviews indicated that their designs were more enjoyable, exciting and engaging. In this respect, the group made considerable progress about creating more simple, enjoyable and attention-grabbing unit designs including authentic performance tasks.

4. DISCUSSION and CONCLUSION

4.1. Discussion about the Contribution of Self-Reflection to Teachers' Professional Development

Findings of the study indicated that self-reflections in the action research process helped teachers to review their learning process throughout the unit design and implementation process, specifically, the issues in the unit design process, the issues in the implementation process, their strengths, their weaknesses, and their plans for the following unit design.

The teachers' self-reflections within the scope of the current study yielded a great many profits to the teachers about reviewing their designing and implementation process and thinking reflectively. The reason for this can be that teachers had the opportunity to pause and think about what they were doing in a more detailed way. Establishing the professional development process on the basis of teachers' reflective thinking is an important issue to consider (Birman et al., 2000; Garet et al., 2001; Ingvarson et al., 2005). Considering this issue help teachers to give and receive feedback about the studies and to collaborate with their colleagues (Darling-Hammond & McLaughlin; 1995; Joyce & Showers, 2002; Lieberman & Pointer-Mace, 2008). In this framework, it can be argued that self-reflection process helped teachers evaluate the positive and negative aspects of their work on a regular basis.

It can also be argued that the current study helped the teachers to improve themselves about realizing their strengths, weaknesses, and plans for the following unit design. The reason behind this was self-reflection, which was the part of the action plan. The self-reflection period directed them to think and make new plans after each unit design and implementation. As

Brown (2004) points out, during the integration of UbD into the school program, friendly and supportive small group studies and giving them feedback by coaching throughout designing contribute to functioning of the process effectively. Actually, this situation is also associated with teachers' taking responsibility of evaluating their own teaching. According to McTighe (2008), when teachers learn to evaluate their own teaching and combine it with the feedback from the outside, they gain awareness about making the instruction more efficient. This is a crucial and expected step in achieving consistency and building an active learning process for an effective professional development program (Garet et al., 2001). Therefore, it can be claimed that self-reflection process helped teachers to take on more responsibility about the things to be taught in the classroom as well as evaluating their own work.

When we reviewed the literature, we came across some studies though they were not directly related to the current study. Lee (2014) aimed at examining the effect of teachers' participation in professional learning communities and their perceptions about professional development. At the end of the study, it was concluded that professional development programs about developing teachers' content knowledge helped teachers to gain a positive attitude towards that kind of programs and that teachers' motivation and school contexts were two important parameters about welcoming professional development opportunities. Kabadayi (2013) aimed at carrying out a needs analysis for ESL teachers at a foundation university. The findings of the study indicated that the teachers had a positive attitude towards professional development, they shared their experiences with their colleagues, and the worst thing hindering their professional development was the lack of time. Onkol (2011) aimed at examining how English teachers perceived professional development and the findings of the study showed that the teachers preferred informal professional development activities to the formal ones. In addition, they preferred to have autonomy in choosing the materials to be used in the lesson, which would also be supportive for their professional development. All in all, findings of both the current study and similar studies in the literature contribute to our knowledge that teachers are an important aspect of school improvement and they need to pursue their professional development. Specifically, for the current study, self-reflection during the action research helped them to take more reasonable steps and reflect on their practices in a stronger way.

4.2. Discussion about the Contribution of Peer Review to Teachers' Professional Development

Findings of the study indicated that peer reviews throughout the action research process helped teachers to realize the strengths and weaknesses of their unit designs as well as receiving some recommendations about how to improve their unit designs in the future.

The peer reviews within the framework of the study made positive contributions to the teachers' systematic interaction without being remote to each other, support each other productively, and continue their professional development in this way. The reason behind this can be the considerable power of peer support since peer collaboration is mentioned as a prerequisite to sustain teachers' professional development in several studies (Benedict, 2014; Gokmen, 2014; Grado; 2014; Orlovsky, 2014; Spollen-LaRaia; 2013). When teachers review each other in a professional way, it helps teachers to support the development of one another (Diaz-Maggioli, 2004).

The peer reviews within the context of the study helped teachers to evaluate the designs in three dimensions and to make comments to make them more applicable. As the peers reviewed the unit designs within the frame of strengths, weaknesses, and recommendations, it helped the teachers to sustain their professional development through their colleagues' feedback. An important aspect of the unit design is the evaluation of it by the colleagues and their recommendations to make it better. As Wiggins and McTighe (2007) suggests, teachers are too busy with the unit during the design process and they may fail to perceive the failing or

succeeding aspects of their unit designs. For this very reason, a critical eye looking from the outside can provide important clues about the design's dilemmas, effectiveness, and applicability to the designer (Desimone, 2011). The current study provided the teachers with this critical eye about their work and peer reviews helped them improve their unit plans and implementations to obtain more fruitful results.

Peer reviews also enable the designers to receive feedback about their designs and improve them. This is actually an important part of professional development, because these reviews contribute to teaching and learning in their essence (Diaz-Maggioli, 2004; McTighe, 2000). Each feedback provided by the teachers made significant contributions to the teachers' professional development during the designing process. For instance, the peer reviews for the first group emphasized that the designs should involve more variety of materials and tools though they were creative. This feedback helped the group to incorporate diversity and variety into their designs. Likewise, the peer reviews indicated that the initial design of the second group involved so much tragedy, pessimism and the learning plan was too heavy. The group revised their unit designs and tried to make simpler and more appealing plans in which learning activities were organized more effectively.

In the peer review process, the mission of the reviewer is to give objective, trustworthy, and content-focused feedback. Similarly, the mission of the designer is to adopt an objective approach without making justifications or explanations about the decisions made (McTighe, 2000). Establishing a positive and strong commitment among the teachers helps them to support the professional development of one another (Diaz-Maggioli, 2004; Guskey, 1997). In this respect, the peer reviews throughout the study continued in a professional and design-focused manner without containing any piece of sarcasm or personalization. For instance, for the first design of the fourth group, all the peer reviews highlighted that fun element was missing and the learning plan was too heavy. The group took into account all the feedback given and researched about how to add fun element into their unit designs. In addition, they placed so many interesting and fun activities such as hurricane experiment, taboo game, QR code implementation to attract their students' attention. Within this context, peer reviews in the current study made considerable contributions to the unit designs in the short run and to the teachers' professional development in the long run.

Two similar studies were found in the literature. Orlovsky (2014) aimed at evaluating the professional development activities and the findings of the study indicated that professional development programs, which were prepared by considering teachers' and students' needs, helped the teachers to improve their content knowledge and instructional practices. In addition, having a collaborative professional learning process helped teachers to learn from their colleagues. Benedict (2014) aimed at examining the effect of professional learning communities on student achievement. At the end of the study it was concluded that teachers' giving and receiving reflections about their teaching and learning within the borders of a professional learning community had a significant share in students' achievement.

To summarize, peer review made considerable contributions to teachers' professional development and to studies developed in a professional community, which we can also see in the literature. These evaluations made within the framework of the current study played an important role in supporting teachers' professional development.

4.3. Conclusion

It can be concluded that teachers' self-reflection during the action research process facilitated their thinking about the unit design and implementation process, specifically, the issues in the unit design process, the issues in the implementation process, their strengths, their weaknesses, and their plans for the following unit design. With the help of self-reflection, they

could easily concentrate on how to tackle problems or how to improve their own actions. Furthermore, peer reviews throughout the action research process provided teachers with different perspectives apart from self-reflection and it helped them to realize the strengths and weaknesses of their unit designs as well as receiving some recommendations about how to improve their unit designs in the future. All in all, it can be argued that self-reflection and peer review supported the action research process in a way that teachers had the opportunity to look back on their unit plans and implementations from different angles and perspectives without losing their awareness.

Based on the collected data, it can also be deduced that the current study helped teachers to gain a point of view, which encouraged them to arouse students' interest by taking into account their needs and interests; to apply different teaching methods in accordance with the content of the unit; and to assess whether learning really occurred with the help of performance tasks. Creating a sharing atmosphere among the colleagues, learning from the peers with the help of their feedback on the unit designs, and trying to establish a language teaching setting, in which actions and decisions were negotiated among researchers were the other contributions of the study to the field.

This study was limited to 10 EFL teachers working at the school of foreign languages a state university in the spring semester of 2014-2015 academic year. At the end of the study it was concluded that the current study made crucial contributions to teachers as they helped them gain insights about their unit design and implementations process through self-reflection and peer review processes. Based on these findings, UbD can also be used by different practitioners in the future as the current study made a positive change in teachers' professional development. In addition, action research studies can be given priority to support teachers' professional development as action research studies give teachers the chance to be part of the action rather than the sole implementers of the plans that are given to them.

For practitioners we recommend that they should give priority to the unit designs as a group work rather than individual unit designs since group work promotes collegiality. In this way, they can create a more supportive atmosphere in which teachers can role as part of a community. In addition, the administrative support is crucial to get better results during and after the implementation process.

For the future researchers we recommend that they include peer observation, peer review, and self-reflection in the framework of UbD studies. Although peer observation was one of the most important aspects of teachers' professional development, it was not impossible for our study to integrate it as there was time constraint. Future researchers can extend peer observation to teachers' observing the lessons of one another to give and receive more concrete feedback.

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Uzun Özet

Profesyonel gelişim, kişinin meslek hayatı boyunca devam eden, öğretmenlerin profesyonel yaşantılarını sürdürmeleri açısından kritik öneme sahip bir olgudur. Hatta öğretmenlerin profesyonel yaşamları dışında, öğrenci ihtiyaçlarının karşılanması için gerekli bilgi, beceri ve öğretim uygulamalarının öğrenilmesi açısından da profesyonel gelişim önemlidir (Benedict, 2014; Cooper, 2014; Ingvarson, Meiers, Beavis, 2005; Lee, 2014). Öğretmenlerin profesyonel gelişimlerinin sürdürülmesi konusunda pek çok kaynak, yöntem ve araç kullanılabilir. Bu araçlardan biri UbD'dir. UbD hem öğretmenlerin profesyonel gelişiminde (Brown, 2004), hem de öğrencilerde kalıcı anlamayı sağlamada (Wiggins, 2010; Yurtseven ve diğerleri, 2013) bir araç olarak kullanılabilir. UbD'nin odak noktası, sınıfta tesadüfi öğrenmeler ya da doğuştan gelen yetenekler sonucunda gerçekleşecek olan rastlantısal öğrenmeleri en aza indirerek, tüm öğrenenleri ve onların öğrenmeye yönelik tercihlerini dikkate almaktır. Bunu yaparken, öğretim programının önceliklerinin belirlenmesi ve iyi bir tasarım gerçekleştirilerek öğretime başlanması hedeflenmektedir. Bu hedefler, hem öğrenci başarısını artırmada, hem öğretmenlerin profesyonel yaşamları boyunca gelişimlerini sürdürmede bir araç olarak kullanılabilir (Brown, 2004, 144; Wiggins, McTighe, 1998).

Öz-değerlendirme ve akran değerlendirme, öğretmenlerin profesyonel gelişiminde önemli bir payı olduğu düşünülen dinamiklerdir (Blanford, 2001). Çünkü bilgi ve öğrenme, sosyal bağlamlarda, etkileşim ve yansıtmaya dayalı deneyimler yoluyla birbirine aktarılır. Bu tür topluluklara katılmak, öğretim uygulamalarının değişmesine ve öğrencinin öğrenmesinin kolaylaştırılmasına yardımcı olur (Caena, 2011). Profesyonel gelişim topluklarına katılmak ve meslektaşlarla öğretimin iyileştirilmesi konusunda işbirliği yapmak, öğretmenlerin mesleki tatminleri ve öz-yeterlik algıları üzerinde olumlu etkiler meydana getirmektedir. Gerek profesyonel öğrenme çalışmaları yapmak, gerek uygulama hazırlıkları için meslektaşlarla işbirliği içinde bulunmak, eğitimde etkililiğe olumlu katkılarda bulunmaktadır (TALIS, 2013; Yurtseven, 2016). Benzer bir şekilde, öz-değerlendirme, bireylerin kendi gelişimleri hakkında farkındalık geliştirmeleri, gelişimlerini takip etmeleri ve hedefleri doğrultusunda sistematik kararlar alabilmeleri açısından önemlidir (Darling-Hammond & McLaughlin; 1995; Joyce & Showers, 2002).

Bu araştırma, öğretmenlerin program odaklı profesyonel gelişimlerinin sağlanmasında, UbD'nin bir araç olarak kullanılması ve öğretmenler arasındaki diyaloğun öz-değerlendirme ve akran değerlendirme yoluyla arttırılması konusunda önem arz etmektedir. Bu doğrultuda, bu araştırmanın amacı Bu araştırmanın amacı Anlamaya Dayalı Tasarım (UbD) çalışmaları kapsamında öz-değerlendirme ve akran değerlendirmenin öğretmenlerin profesyonel gelişimleri üzerinde nasıl bir değişime neden olduğunu incelemektir. Araştırma soruları aşağıdaki gibidir:

Öğretmenlerin kendi çalışmalarına yönelik öz-değerlendirmeleri öğretmenlerin profesyonel gelişimlerine nasıl bir katkı sağlamıştır?

Öğretmenlerin meslektaşlarının tasarımlarına yönelik akran değerlendirmeleri öğretmenlerin profesyonel gelişimlerine nasıl bir katkı sağlamıştır?

Araştırma eylem araştırması deseni ile yürütülmüştür. Eylem araştırması, eğitsel bir problemin tespit edilmesi ve sistematik olarak çözümüne yönelik bir uygulama ile süreç boyunca incelenmesi, bu süreçte ortaya çıkan veriler ışığında çözüm önerilerinin şekillendirilmesi ve bu sayede eğitsel uygulamaların iyileştirilmesi amacıyla gerçekleştirilen araştırmalardır (Creswell, 2012, 577; Burns, 2010, 2; Berg, 2001, 180). Araştırmanın çalışma grubunu 2014-2015 akademik yılı bahar döneminde, bir devlet üniversitesinin Yabancı Diller Yüksekokulu'nda (YDYO) görev yapmakta olan 10 öğretmen oluşturmaktadır. Araştırmada veri toplama aracı olarak öz-değerlendirme formu ve akran değerlendirme formu kullanılmıştır. Bu formların kullanılmasındaki amaç, öğretmenlerin hem kendi tasarımları hem de meslektaşlarının yapmış oldukları ders tasarımları konusunda yansıtıcı bir biçimde düşünmesini ve eylem planının bu görüşler doğrultusunda şekillenmesini sağlamaktır.

Eylem araştırması problemin belirlenmesiyle başlamıştır. Öğretmenler, okul sınırları içindeki ana sorunlardan birinin profesyonel gelişim faaliyetlerinin eksikliği olduğunu belirtmiştir. Ayrıca, düşük başarı puanı ve dil öğrenme motivasyonu eksikliği gibi öğrenci ile ilgili problemlerden de söz etmişlerdir. Bu problemlere çözüm üretmek için UbD'ni, program odaklı profesyonel gelişim için kullanılacak bir araç olduğu düşünülmüştür. Bu yüzden, öncelikle öğretmenler UbD hakkında eğitim almışlardır. Dönem başında, öğretmenlere bu konuda iki ana seminer verilmiştir. Birinci seminerde, UbD ilkeleri ile bazı materyal ve örnek birim tasarımları hakkında bilgi almaları sağlanmıştır. Öğretmenlerin sorularını cevaplandırmak için bir hafta sonra UbD hakkında daha ayrıntılı bir seminer düzenlenmiştir. Eğitimler bittikten sonra, öğretmenlerin çalışma saatleri ve verdikleri ders türleri doğrultusunda tasarım grupları yaratmak için harekete geçilmiştir. Bu bağlamda, ikisi Dinleme ve Konuşma, ikisi Okuma grubu olmak üzere dört tasarım grubu oluşturulmuştur. Gruplar, öğretmenlerin mevcut öğretim programının hedeflerine uyarak ve UbD'nin rehber ilkelerini kullanarak ve zenginleştirerek (örneğin, teklif fikri, temel sorular, performans görevleri, anlayışı sürdürebilme, öğrencilerin ihtiyaçlarını karşılama, metodolojik çeşitlilik getirme gibi) ünite planlarını tasarlama konusunda fikir birliğine varmışlardır. Çalışmanın geri kalanında üç tasarım ve üç uygulama yapılmıştır. Bir tasarım ve uygulama sürecinden toplanan veriler, gelecek adımlarla ilgili karar vermek için bir temel oluşturmuştur. Her tasarım ve uygulama döneminin sonunda düzenli toplantılar gerçekleştirilmiştir. Üçüncü uygulama tamamlandıktan sonra nihai bir değerlendirme toplantısı yapılmıştır. Öğretmenler deneyimlerini, uygulamaları ve tüm eylem araştırması sürecini bu toplantıda değerlendirmişlerdir. Araştırma süresince toplanan verilerin analizinden sonra elde edilen bulgular okul idaresi ve personel ile paylaşılmıştır.

Araştırmadan elde edilen veriler içerik analizi ile analiz edilmiştir. İçerik analizi, Yıldırım ve Şimşek'in (2008, 227) ifade ettiği gibi, verileri tanımlamak ve verilerin içinde saklı olabilecek gerçekleri ortaya çıkarmak amacıyla gerçekleştirilir. Araştırmanın geçerlik ve güvenirliği konusunda Lincoln ve Guba'nın (1985) (1) inandırıcılık, (2) transfer edilebilirlik, (3) güvenilmeye layık olma ve (4) onaylanabilirlik kavramlarından yararlanılmıştır.

Birinci araştırma sorusunun cevaplandırılması kapsamında öğretmenlerin eylem araştırmasına dayalı UbD çalışmaları süresince doldurmuş oldukları öz-değerlendirme formları içerik analizine tabi tutulmuştur. İçerik analizi sonucunda beş temaya ulaşılmıştır. Bu temalar "Tasarım Sürecinde Yaşananlar", "Uygulama Sürecinde Yaşananlar", "Fark Edilen Güçlü Yönler", "Fark Edilen Geliştirilmesi Gereken Yönler" ve "Bir Sonraki Tasarım İçin Planlar" şeklindedir. Öğretmenlerin mevcut araştırma sırasında kendi çalışmalarına yönelik yapmış oldukları öz-değerlendirmeler, tasarım yapma ve uygulama konusunda profesyonel gelişimlerine önemli katkılarda bulunmuş, kendi öğrenme süreçlerini gözden geçirmelerine yardımcı olmuştur.

İkinci araştırma sorusunun cevaplandırılması kapsamında öğretmenlerin eylem araştırmasına dayalı UbD çalışmaları süresince doldurmuş oldukları akran değerlendirme formları içerik analizine tabi tutulmuştur. İçerik analizi kapsamında üç tema oluşmuştur. Bu temalar "Tasarımların Güçlü Yönleri", "Tasarımların Geliştirilmesi Gereken Yönleri" ve "Öneriler" şeklindedir. Öğretmenlerin meslektaşlarının tasarımlarına yönelik akran değerlendirmeleri, tüm gruplar için aynı sistem takip edilerek ve her grubun her tasarım için tüm öğretmenler tarafından değerlendirilmesi sağlanarak gerçekleştirilmiştir. Akran

değerlendirmeleri aracılığıyla öğretmenlere verilen geri bildirimler, onların yeni yapacakları tasarımlarda kullanacakları unsurları belirlemek açısından yol gösterici olmuş, öğretmenler verilen geri bildirimlere önyargısız bir bakış açısıyla ve kendi tasarımlarını irdeleyici bir gözle bakmayı tercih etmişlerdir. Bu doğrultuda akran geri bildirimlerinin, mevcut araştırma süresince öğretmenlerin profesyonel gelişimlerine olumlu katkılarda bulunduğunu söyleyebilmek mümkündür.

Appendix 1. Sample Self-Reflection Form

1. Write your experience and opinions about the first design process.
2. Write your experience and opinions about the first implementation process.
3. How much did your students learned what you planned?
4. Which evaluation evidences have you reached?
5. What was the most efficient strategy you used?
6. In what way did you provide feedback to the students?
7. What are your strengths and weaknesses in the second design and implementation?
8. What are your plans for the third design?
9. Have your colleagues' evaluations for you contributed to your professional development process?

Appendix 2. Sample Peer Review Form

Questions	Group Name	Group Name	Group Name
1. Which three words would you consider using to evaluate this design?			
2. What do you think are the strengths of this design?			
3. What do you think are the weaknesses of this design?			
4. Please indicate you general views and recommendations.			