

The Impact of Participatory Action Research on EFL Teachers' Professional Development

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Abstract

Professional development is critical in providing constant updates on EFL teachers' teaching practice. This mixed methods study was conducted to explore the effects of participation in action research on EFL teachers' practice. Eighteen junior school English teachers participated in this study. Teacher participants conducted their action research during a five-month period. The quantitative phase of the study utilized Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) Perception Questionnaire and Teacher Advancement Program Rubrics (TAP). In the qualitative phase of the study, reflective journals were used. The quantitative findings showed that conducting action research had a significant effect on teachers' practice. The quantitative findings demonstrated a statistically significant positive change in the individual rubrics, namely, Designing and Planning Instruction and Instruction but not in Learning Environment rubric. The qualitative findings also supported improvement in teacher practice. The major implication of the study is that professional development of the EFL teachers needs to receive focal attention.

Keywords: Participatory Action Research, Professional Development, In-service Teachers, Communicative Language Teaching, EFL

1. Introduction

Professional development is crucial for both teacher growth and student achievement (Curry & Killion, 2009). To develop professionally, teachers often take part in workshop-style training activities (Darling-Hammond, Wei, Andree, Richardson, & Orphanos, 2009) that are found ineffective by numerous researchers (for example, Guskey, 2000; McNiff, 2002; Sparks, 1994). They believe that more effective professional development needs to be an inside-out teacher-driven approach rather than an imposed top-down one (Tyack & Cuban, 1994), of longer duration (Porter, Garet, Desimone, Yoon, & Birman, 2000), and grounded in research (Sparks, 2002). It must include follow-up phases (Joyce & Showers, 1995) and help "participants anticipate and plan for barriers" (Ottoson, 1997, p. 105). Professional development is more likely to change teacher behavior when it is focused on content knowledge (Garet, Porter, Desimone, Birman, & Yoon, 2001), on learning rather than teaching, and on reflectiveness and problem-solving rather than learning new techniques (Sparks, 1994). Proponents of participatory action research claim that it embodies all the characteristics of effective professional development. In fact, it can help teachers with the process of professional development (McNiff, 2002).

Current changes in the approaches to foreign language teaching have highlighted the necessity of professional development for Iranian EFL teachers more than before. In recent years, ELT curriculum designers of Iran have encouraged EFL teachers to adopt Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) in their classrooms. However, numerous researchers revealed that EFL teachers are not capable of implementing CLT in their classes (Ashari & Zarrin, 2014; Nikian, 2014). Effective teachers are critical for promoting student achievement (Guskey, 2003; Owens, 2002). Also, "the professional development of teachers is a key factor in ensuring that reforms at any level are effective" (Villegas-Reimers, 2003, p. 25). Therefore, it needs to be explored how teachers can progress professionally and become effective.

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The findings of this study may provide policy makers, the Ministry of Education, and teacher educators with some information that leads to re-conceptualizing in-service teacher education programs, adopting the most useful techniques and designing more effective courses regarding continuous professional development in teachers.

The following research question was posed in this study:

- Does participatory action research have any significant effect on the professional development of junior school English teachers?

2. Methodology

A mixed qualitative and quantitative research method was employed to explore the experiences of the teacher participants with the action research process, reveal their perceptions of the changes they might have confronted in their experience with action research and assess these possible changes quantitatively.

2.1. Participants

The sample for this study consisted of 18 in-service junior school English teachers whose perceptions of CLT principles were not at an acceptable level (below the mean) based on CLT Perception Questionnaire. Participants included both male ($n = 12$) and female ($n = 6$) teachers. Eleven of them had BA in TEFL and 7 of them had BA in English Literature. Their teaching experience ranged from 6 to 26 years with a mean of 10.94. The age range of the participants was 27 to 47 years of age with the mean age of 33.33.

2.2. Instruments

CLT Perception Questionnaire

A researcher-made questionnaire (see Appendix A) was designed based on the principles and important characteristics of CLT (Richards & Rodgers, 2014). CLT Perception Questionnaire includes 31 items of Likert-type scale including *strongly disagree* (1), *disagree* (2), *neither agree nor disagree* (3), *agree* (4), and *strongly agree* (5). Two EFL university instructors were asked to review the questionnaire and provide comments regarding the flow, understandability, and structure of the items. Their feedback was used to revise the items. The pilot phase supported the design of the questions in terms of being understandable and unambiguous.

To examine the internal consistency of the questionnaire, a pilot study was conducted. Cronbach's alpha coefficients were computed using SPSS software, version 19. The reliability of the questionnaire was found to be 0.82 indicating a good index of reliability.

Teacher Advancement Program Rubrics

Teacher Advancement Program Rubrics (TAP) include a set of standards for evaluating teachers. These curriculum-independent standards "were developed based on education psychology and cognitive science research focusing on learning and instruction, as well as extensive review of publications from national and state teacher standards organizations" (The National Institute for Excellence in Teaching, 2013, p. 16). In fact, "the work of Danielson (1996) served as a valuable resource for defining the teaching competencies at each level of teacher performance. Rubrics were designed based on the work of Rowley (1999) and various teacher accountability systems" (p. 16). The National Institute for Excellence in Teaching (2013) changed Danielson's domains into three main categories: the learning environment, designing and planning instruction, and instruction. Nineteen subgroups formulate the three TAP rubrics. Teachers are offered a score based on a scale of 1–5, where 1 stands for *unsatisfactory*, 3 stands for *proficiency*, and 5 stands for *exemplary practices*.

Reflective Journals

Journal prompts were adjusted to the research question (see Appendix B). Participants described successes and challenges associated with implementing the interventions. The use of journals served

two purposes: first, they could give better understanding of the participants' thoughts and second, journals could boost the reflection process of the participants.

2.3. Procedure

A pilot study was conducted to determine the internal consistency of TAB rubrics. Cronbach's alpha coefficients were determined using SPSS software, version 19. The TAP Rubrics were found to have a Cronbach alpha of 0.81 for designing and planning, 0.86 for instruction, and 0.86 for the learning environment. Since TAP Rubrics are based on a rating system that requires more subjective judgments, its rating reliability was determined through calculating inter-rater reliability. Therefore, ten English teachers of a private institute were evaluated by one of the present researchers and an experienced teacher independently. The correlation of the scores given by both raters was calculated using Spearman rank order correlation coefficient. The computed coefficient of correlation was 0.76 that showed an acceptable degree of agreement between the raters.

This study was conducted in the academic year 2014-2015. The data collection was carried out over a five-month time span that essentially covered the second semester of the participant teachers' school year. The intervention program included a training course and action research meeting sessions.

Because most of the participants were unfamiliar with participatory action research, the researchers conducted a training course for them before starting the program. After the training course, the participants formed a research team to conduct their action research. Action research focus areas were determined by teacher participants. The action research conducted by teacher participants was of cyclical nature to determine the effectiveness of the interventions employed by the participants. The enhanced support was provided to the participants by the instructor of the training course.

The research team was divided into nine inquiry groups including two members in each group. They were grouped based on shared needs and purposes. The inquiry groups could meet each other in meeting sessions to collaborate with each other. During their action research, the teacher participants took part in seven meeting sessions. Table 1 shows a summary of activities during these sessions. The collaborations took place in five steps: (a) recognizing a research question, (b) developing a plan of action, (c) analyzing collected data to examine the effectiveness of the action plan, (d) reflecting upon the results of the action plan to make sense of the processes, constraints, and problems, and (e) planning new action steps based on what was learned. Journal notebooks were given to the teachers in the first session. They were required to retain the journals throughout the intervention in order to document their teaching practice, feedback they receive in the classroom, and challenges and successes associated with their interventions. The journals were collected at the end of the intervention for analysis.

The groups' action research followed the parallel inquiry model of collaboration, where groups in a team work on various projects but support each other (Dana & Yendol-Silva, 2003). Also, it followed the shared inquiry model as defined by Dana and Yendol-Silva (2003), where a pair or a group of teachers are working on the same topic. Meeting sessions and group work were facilitated by a mentor teacher.

At the beginning of the study, the participants were evaluated applying the TAP rubrics to gain a baseline Rubric Domain Average and an average score for each rubric. The Rubric Domain Average is an average of the three scores obtained from each rubric, Instruction, Designing and Planning, and Learning Environment. These baseline averages served as the participants' pre-intervention evaluation scores. The researchers conducted a second round of TAP evaluations at the end of the intervention.

Quantitative data were analyzed using procedures of descriptive statistics. The mean scores and standard deviation for each mean score for the pre- and post-intervention data were computed. A paired samples t-test was also run to determine the significance of the differences between the pre- and post-intervention data. Qualitative data were analyzed using a coding system based on the recommendations of Creswell (2008).

Table 1: Summary of Research Timeline and Activities during Winter 2014 – Spring 2015

Date	Activity	Data
December 8- December 21	Demographic forms were completed.	Baseline RDA
	Initial TAP evaluation was completed.	
December 22- January 10	Training course was conducted.	
January 15	Meeting session 1: Making decision on how to identify major problems	
January 29	Meeting session 2: Analyzing video-taped samples to identify major problems	
January 30	Meeting session 3: Analyzing video-taped samples to identify major problems (continued)	
February 5	Meeting session 4: Planning action research and assigning responsibilities to group members	
February 12	Meeting session 5: Presenting literature reviews by groups and making decisions about intervention and data collection	
May 14	Meeting session 6: Presenting a summary of implementation and data collection process	
May 15	Meeting session 7: Sharing & analyzing the findings	
May 17- May 28	No activity	Baseline RDA

3. Results

3.1. Quantitative Findings

Participants' teaching practices were evaluated using the TAP rubrics in the areas of Designing and Planning Instruction, Instruction, and Learning Environment prior to and after the intervention. Pre-intervention evaluations were conducted and a baseline average score for each rubric and a baseline Rubric Domain Average (RDA) from all three rubrics were established. Upon completion of the intervention, a second TAP evaluation was carried out. The rubrics offered us a means to evaluate each participant's performance using the indicators and the descriptors of the three TAP rubrics. Teacher performance was rated on a five-point Likert scale with performance labels of *exemplary*, *excellent*, *proficient*, *needs improvement*, and *unsatisfactory*.

After the evaluations were completed, the individual rubric averages and the baseline RDAs were calculated (see Table 2). In order to examine the normality of the distribution of the data, first, Kolmogorov-Smirnov test was run. The results showed that the data were normally distributed ($p > .05$).

Table 2: TAP Pre- and Post-Evaluation Mean scores, Overall and Rubrics

Rubric	Pre-evaluation	Post-evaluation
Designing and Planning Instruction	2.31 (.37)	2.54 (.39)
Instruction	2.21 (.35)	2.80 (.34)
Learning Environment	2.41 (.37)	2.46 (.35)
RDA	2.31 (.30)	2.60 (.29)

Note. RDA = Rubric Domain Average. Standard Deviations appear in parentheses below means.

A paired-samples t-test was conducted to compare the pre- and post-intervention TAP data. This process was run to determine the difference between pre- and post-evaluation scores. Table 3 presents the overall results:

Table 3: Comparison of TAP Pre- and Post-Evaluation, Overall (Designing & Planning Instruction, Instruction, and Learning Environment Rubrics)

M	95% CI		t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
	Lower	Upper			
-.23333 (.07238)	-.32822	-.25623	-17.128	17	.000

Note. $p < .05$. Standard Deviation appears in parentheses below mean.

Table 3 shows the comparison of the participants' overall pre- and post-evaluation mean scores in the areas of Designing and Planning Instruction, Instruction, and Learning Environment. Results showed that there is a significant statistical difference between pre- ($M = 2.31$, $SD = .30$) and post-evaluation ($M = 2.60$, $SD = .29$) scores for the participants, $t(17) = -17.12$, $p = 0.000$. These results indicate that the treatment of action research resulted in significant improvement in the participants' teaching practice.

Table 4 presents the comparison of the participants' pre- and post-evaluation mean scores for the rubric of Designing and Planning.

Table 4: Comparison of TAP Pre- and Post-Evaluation, Designing and Planning Rubric

M	95% CI		t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
	Lower	Upper			
-.23333 (.11662)	-.29133	-.17534	-8.489	17	.000

Note. $p < .05$. Standard Deviation appears in parentheses below mean.

There is a significant statistical difference between pre- ($M = 2.31$, $SD = .37$) and post-evaluation ($M = 2.54$, $SD = .39$) scores for the participants, $t(17) = -8.48$, $p = 0.000$. These results indicate that teachers conducting action research significantly improved in the area of designing and planning.

Table 5 presents the comparison of the participants' pre- and post-evaluation mean scores for the rubric of Instruction.

Table 5: Comparison of TAP Pre- and Post-Evaluation, Instruction Rubric

M	95% CI		t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
	Lower	Upper			
-.59111 (.11483)	-.64822	-.53401	-21.839	17	.000

Note. $p < .05$. Standard Deviation appears in parentheses below mean.

A significant statistical difference between pre- ($M = 2.21$, $SD = .35$) and post-evaluation ($M = 2.80$, $SD = .34$) scores was found for the participants; $t(17) = -21.83$, $p = 0.000$. These results indicate that the participants showed a positive improvement in the area of Instruction.

Table 6 presents the comparison of the participants' pre- and post-evaluation mean scores for the sub-scale of Learning Environment.

Table 6: Comparison of TAP Pre- and Post-evaluation, Learning Environment Rubric

M	95% CI		t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
	Lower	Upper			
-.05222 (.12288)	-.11333	-.00889	-1.803	17	.089

Note. $p < .05$. Standard Deviation appears in parentheses below mean.

The results revealed that there was not a significant statistical difference between pre- ($M = 2.41$, $SD = .37$) and post-evaluation ($M = 2.46$, $SD = .35$) scores for the participants; $t(17) = -1.80$, $p = 0.89$. These results indicate that teachers conducting action research did not show any significant improvement in the area of learning environment.

3.2. Qualitative Findings

Qualitative data were collected using the participants' reflective journals. The data sources were analyzed through a coding system presented by Creswell (2008). Table 7 presents a list of overarching themes of the study.

Table 7: Overarching Themes Derived from Qualitative Data Sources

1. Increased teaching effectiveness
2. Increased knowledge and use of strategies in the area of instruction
3. Teachers' increased awareness of their abilities and needs and those of their students
4. Changes in attitude toward teaching and the role of teacher

Theme 1: Increased teaching effectiveness

The first overarching theme that was derived from reflective journals was increased teaching effectiveness. All teacher participants believed they had become more effective teachers. They depicted action research as a very effective professional development experience that provided them with many benefits to their instructional practice. Teachers stressed the value of action research in assisting them to improve their teaching practices and become better teachers.

For example, Teacher D stated: “I don’t think I’m a great teacher, but I think that I am a much better teacher than I was last year, and I think I couldn’t be without having been a part of this program.” Teacher B also stated:

I think action research has helped me improve my teaching. It is very helpful for teachers to come together and discuss their teaching practices. This helps them come up with new ideas. The goal is to create something better for the students and I think my classes are very different now.

Theme 2: Increased knowledge and use of strategies in the area of instruction

The second overarching theme derived from qualitative data was increased knowledge and use of strategies in the area of instruction. Teacher participants (72%) reported that they have become more competent in their knowledge and use of instructional strategies as stated by Teacher E:

The most valuable insight I gained as a result of participating in action research was how unique each student is and how the strategies change with the student. There is no one successful strategy. What makes a lesson successful is knowing how your students learn best.

Theme 3: Teachers’ increased awareness of their abilities and needs and their students’ needs

There were many comments made by teacher participants (88%) regarding learning more about their own weaknesses, capabilities, and needs as teachers:

I know quite a bit and I still have much to learn. There were very few educational courses I felt that I got to implement what I learned. During my action research, I found that I could use what I learned and see if they work. I could focus on one at a time and then move on to something else (Teacher k).

As a result of conducting action research, the participants came with the new realization of the need to change. For example, Teacher D stated: “Action research made me think deeper about some of the things I do in the classroom. Often we know we are doing what we believe is best, without really thinking about it.”

The participants (66%) also reported that conducting action research developed their knowledge and ability to focus on and recognize their students’ needs and differences. Teacher O commented,

In the process of my action research, I observed the students more closely and learned so much about them. I tried to really understand everyone’s strengths, weaknesses, and personality types. I changed the activities and even the questions in the activities to adjust to their learning styles.

Theme 4: Changes in attitude toward teaching and the role of teacher

As a result of conducting action research, the participants (55%) articulated a change in their attitude toward their roles as teachers as well as teaching practice. Teacher Q stated,

Action research changed my attitude toward teaching. It helped me understand that teaching is not just listening, questioning, and responding, but is a continuous search of what helps students to be successful in the classroom.

Teacher M commented:

In my action research, I realized that with each group of students, it’s different because I conducted my action research in multiple classes and saw how differently it worked in each class. Therefore, as a teacher, I shouldn’t be just a doer but I have to be an observer, watching what works and what does not work, interacting with students, and getting their feedback.

4. Discussion

The results from this study suggested that teacher practice improves when teachers are given an opportunity to engage in participatory action research. The results are influenced by several factors, including nature of the intervention, teachers’ focus of the action research, perceived relevance of the intervention, participant grouping, and time constraints.

Concerning the nature of the intervention, teacher participants could improve their teaching practice because they were engaged in participatory action research. The results substantiate the findings from prior studies that categorized inquiry models, as an effective professional development tool (Loucks-Horsley, Love, Stiles, Mundry & Hewson, 2003). The results are also consistent with the findings of Desimone et al. (2002), Garet et al. (2001), and Penuel, Fishman, Yamaguchi, and Gallagher (2007). These studies found that participating in reform type professional development programs such as participatory action research, study group, etc. because of involving key features such as collective participation, longer duration, active learning, coherence, and content focus are related to positive changes in teacher practice.

The results are influenced by teachers' focus of the action research. Action research topics were selected based on teachers' feelings toward what they may perceive as major problems. This means that teacher participants prioritized their problems based on their perceptions of the significance of the problems. The problems dealt with applying CLT in the classroom and the selected topics mainly focused on instructional issues. Therefore, the greatest amount of growth was seen in Instruction rubric (0.59), while the least amount was seen in Learning Environment rubric (0.11). Similarly, Desimone et al. (2002) found that "professional development focused on specific instructional practices increases teachers' use of those practices in the classroom" (p. 81).

The study results are also influenced by perceived relevance of the intervention to the teacher participants. The teachers improved in terms of their TAP scores and reported a benefit from taking part in the intervention. This means that professional development was linked to the needs of the teachers and adequately met their needs. This is consistent with the findings of some of the prior studies which indicated that professional development focused on specific content and the ways students learn compared to professional development that focuses on general pedagogy is more helpful and more likely to lead to student achievement (Cohen & Hill, 2002; Stigler & Hiebert, 1999). Also, it is in line with Buczynski and Hansen (2010) who found that teachers were more likely to transfer what they learned to their instructional practices when professional development was related to what they were doing in the classroom.

The results have also been impacted by participants' grouping. When teachers are to be grouped for professional development programs, some factors must be taken into consideration. The learning community should be homogeneous in the sense that it should consist of teachers who teach similar content at similar grade levels and pursue very similar research interests (Zhang et al., 2009). "Establishing compulsory groups of teachers to form networks may not yield positive results in the action research process" (Bradley-Levine, Smith, & Carr, 2009, p. 160). The participants of this study were grouped in line with the aforementioned factors. As a result, the teachers who were placed together had similar instructional needs, and those needs were specifically targeted. This type of grouping helped teachers improve their teaching practice. Additionally, grouping based on shared needs and purposes provided the participants with an opportunity to "develop more supportive and collegial relationships with one another" (Fleming, 1996, para. 12). Lick and Murphy (1998) contended that teachers who belonged to a strong support system found themselves as experts in their situations.

The results have also been influenced by the limited time of the intervention. The teachers indicated that the length of the intervention was too short. Although teachers' scores increased, they reported not having enough time to cover all problems regarding implementing CLT. In spite of numerous benefits action research gives educators, it "is demanding and time-consuming and requires a great commitment from teachers" (Hendricks 2005, as cited in Zhang et. al., 2009, p. 176). Therefore, during five months, teachers could improve on two rubrics, Designing and Planning Instruction and Instruction but not on Learning Environment rubric.

5. Conclusions and Implications

Results from this study provided evidence that conducting action research was effective in changing teacher practice. It helped teachers reflect on their teaching practice and build their capacity to solve the problems. Action research provided teachers with a framework to identify their own

professional development needs and define the actions necessary to improve their teaching strategies with the support of the research team. It made them adopt a systematic and conscious way of gathering information and being more reflective in the process. Deeper learning occurred in the teachers as a result of their reflection. At early stages of their action research, teacher participants had a linear view of their instructional practices. As they conducted their project, they did practices that were reflective rather than routine. Collaboration among teachers led to generating new ideas which were examined directly in the classrooms. "This two-way interaction of experience and competence is crucial to the evolution of practice" (Wenger, 1998, p. 139).

This study provided further evidence that critical reflection is a key element in professional development. It can help teachers move from a level where their actions are guided by their intuitions to a level where they are guided by reflection. This study suggested that participatory action research provided teachers with the opportunity to study and reflect on their teaching practice and, consequently, promoted teacher professionalism and effectiveness.

In addition, this study can guide teachers to make decisions about their instructional practices. Through participatory action research, teachers can shift their routine instructional practices to more effective and innovative ones that are grounded in research. It can also help teachers to find answers to their own questions and evaluate current theories, and, as a result, "significantly influence what is known about teaching, learning, and schooling" (Johnson, 1993, p. 3).

Finally, "given the size of investment in professional development and the dependence of education reform on providing effective professional development" (Desimone et al., 2003, p. 82), ministry of education, policy makers and teacher education centers should first consider types of professional development and then determine which type can be best designed to improve teacher effectiveness. This study revealed that conducting action research helped in-service teachers improve their instructional practice by changing their strategies or by trying totally new strategies. Therefore, it can be implied that participatory action research can be selected as an effective professional development tool for teachers. However, the inclusion of critical reflection and action research should be considered at education planning level; that is, it should be ingrained in the pre-service programs. Teachers, having the experience of conducting action research in their pre-service period, are more likely to conduct action research during their in-service period (Vogrinc & Zuljan, 2009).

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Appendix A: CLT Perception Questionnaire

This questionnaire was designed to help us gain a better understanding of your perception of CLT principles and characteristics. Your answers are confidential.

Directions: Please indicate how much you agree or disagree with each of the following statements by marking any one of the five responses, Strongly disagree, disagree, Neither agree nor disagree, Agree, Strongly agree

- | | Strongly disagree | Disagree | Neither agree nor disagree | Agree | Strongly agree |
|---|-------------------|----------|----------------------------|-------|----------------|
| 1. Teaching should mostly focus on language structures rather than meaning. | | | | | |
| 2. Language learning is learning just structures, sounds, and words. | | | | | |
| 3. Authentic and meaningful communication should be the goal of classroom activities. | | | | | |
| 4. Knowing a language is the ability of using the linguistic items fluently, correctly, and appropriately. | | | | | |
| 5. In order to facilitate the process of learning, students must work with language at the sentential level. | | | | | |
| 6. Students learn best when they are first presented with a clear explanation of grammar rules, then, they can apply them freely. | | | | | |
| 7. The sequence of units is determined just by linguistic complexity. | | | | | |
| 8. Translation is forbidden at early levels. | | | | | |
| 9. Students learn the language by using it authentically. | | | | | |
| 10. Teachers must engage students in activities that need negotiation of meaning | | | | | |

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11. Communicative activities are postponed after the mastery of forms has occurred (through a long process of rigid drills and exercises).
 12. Teacher input needs to be rich but comprehensible if learning is to take place.
 13. We should not worry too much about students producing perfect structures right away. It is best for teachers not to overcorrect.
 14. Teachers must provide students with activities that help them develop both accuracy and fluency.
 15. Teachers are expected to specify the language the students are to use.
 16. Teachers must provide opportunities for students to try out what they know.
 17. Students are to be encouraged to practice skills (reading, writing, speaking, and listening) individually, one piece at a time.
 18. Teachers must use group-based activities to create a context for interaction between students.
 19. Teachers must provide students with activities that help them recognize and produce language according to various settings and participants (formal/informal, written/spoken).
 20. Native-speaker-like pronunciation is sought.
 21. Students can learn language by memorizing the patterns of language.
 22. Intrinsic motivation will spring from an interest in what is being communicated by the language.
 23. Teachers must give many opportunities to students to use language authentically.
 24. Teachers must teach students different communication strategies to use in order to maintain communication despite having limitations in language knowledge.
 25. Evaluation is carried out in terms of both fluency and accuracy.
 26. In class, teacher has the primary responsibility of making students produce plenty of error-free sentences.
 27. In class, the teacher is a model for correct speech and writing.
 28. The use of the student's native language is forbidden in the classroom.
 29. Accuracy, in terms of formal correctness, is the primary goal.
 30. The teacher must provide the students with activities that help them recognize and produce different types of texts (reports, interviews...).
 31. In class, the teacher has a dominant role, i.e. he/she decides about everything in the classroom.
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Gender: Male *O*
 Female *O*

Age: years
Teaching Experience: years

Appendix B: Reflective Journal

Please answer these questions before conducting your action research.

1. What do you think about your current instructional strategies? Are they effective or not? Please explain.
2. What were your criteria for choosing the instructional strategies?
3. What do you think about your instructional role? Do you believe that you are a high quality teacher? Why?
4. What are the areas you believe that you need to improve in your teaching practice?

Please complete this part while you are in the process of conducting action research. Tell me about your thoughts and feelings regarding your experience with action research. The following are some examples of information you can provide.

- In the meeting session I learned a new instructional strategy... I would like to try in my class.
- Discussion about this particular strategy made me think about...
- I thought about the idea presented by one of my colleagues. I believe by changing the activity in this way... it may help my students learn the material more effectively.
- I felt excited about discussing this topic... in our meeting session because...
- I am a little nervous about implementing this strategy because...

Questions

1. Did you do anything different in your instruction as a result of conducting action research? Please explain.
2. Did you use the same strategies suggested to you in the meeting session or a modified version? What worked well and what didn't work well? Explain what you learned.
3. What do you think and how do you feel about your instructional practice as a result of conducting action research? Please explain.
4. What do you think and how do you feel about conducting action research?

Please answer these questions after conducting your action research.

1. Compare your previous instruction and current instruction. Explain how they are different or similar.
2. How do you evaluate participatory action research as a professional development?
3. Did participatory action research have any effects your thoughts and behaviors regarding teaching practice, the role of teacher, students' needs, reflection on teaching practice, collaboration with colleagues, etc.?
4. What were the major problems that you confronted while conducting action research?