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The First Year in Teaching: Changes in Beginning Teachers' Visions and Their Challenges

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The First Year in Teaching: Changes in Beginning Teachers' Visions and Their Challenges

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Abstract

The present study examines both the changes in beginning teachers' visions and the challenges they face during their first year experience in teaching. A basic qualitative research methodology was used, and the data were collected through semi-structured interviews and a questionnaire that included open-ended questions from eighteen beginning teachers who started teaching in public schools in Eskisehir, Turkey. A vision-oriented teacher education model provided the conceptual framework for identifying the changes in participants' visions. The challenges were also emerged through inductive analysis of the data. The findings provide some evidence of considerable changes in beginning teachers' visions and challenges in their first year teaching experience. They also present evidence for the significance of first year teaching experience in beginning teachers' visions. The study also highlights the crucial role of learning through experience in the teaching profession. In the end, some further research trajectories on teacher education, particularly changes in visions and challenges are suggested.

Keywords: teacher education, teacher vision, beginning teachers' challenges, learning through experience



El Primer Año de Enseñanza: Cambios en las Visiones de los Docentes Noveles y sus Desafíos

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Resumen

El presente estudio examina tanto los cambios en las visiones de los maestros principiantes como los desafíos que enfrentan durante su primer año de experiencia en la enseñanza. Se utilizó una metodología de investigación cualitativa básica. Los datos se recopilaron mediante entrevistas semiestructuradas y un cuestionario que incluía preguntas abiertas de dieciocho maestros principiantes que comenzaron a enseñar en escuelas públicas en Eskisehir, Turquía. El marco conceptual lo proporcionó un modelo de educación docente orientado a la visión, para identificar los cambios en las visiones de los participantes. Los desafíos también surgieron a través del análisis inductivo de los datos. Los resultados proporcionan evidencias de cambios considerables en las visiones y desafíos de los maestros principiantes en su experiencia docente durante el primer año. También presentan evidencias de la importancia de la experiencia docente en las visiones de los maestros principiantes. El estudio destaca el papel crucial del aprendizaje a través de la experiencia en la profesión docente. Al final, se sugieren algunas trayectorias de investigación adicionales sobre la formación del profesorado, en particular los cambios en las visiones y los desafíos.

Palabras clave: formación docente, visión docente, desafíos iniciales de los docentes, aprendizaje a través de la experiencia.

Teacher education period is of great importance in creating effective educational systems. Accordingly, developing effective teacher education periods will contribute to increase the development levels of countries (Darling-Hammond, 2006; Darling-Hammond & Lieberman, 2012). This crucial period is underlined in theory by various scholars. While Stronge (2007) emphasizes the importance of this period by stating its strong and lasting effects on teachers' learning, Day (1999) highlights the good practices during preservice and in-service teacher education periods as directly affecting students' achievement. On the other hand, Casey (2005) categorizes teacher education period under four phases, particularly baseline requirements for preservice teacher education, initial teacher education program, preparedness for teaching and independent teaching. In her categorization, the preparedness for teaching which refers to the first year experience of teachers is highlighted as an important phase of teacher education. In a similar way, Feiman-Nemser (2001) and Ingvarson, Beavis and Kleinhein (2007) describe the first year experience of teachers as an important period in teachers' professional development. Feiman-Nemser (2001) also posits that beginning teachers try to learn how to teach while trying to teach in their first years of teaching and stresses that the first year experience might form the future teaching visions of these beginning teachers.

Along with the theoretical background and significance of first year experiences in teaching profession, this critical period has received considerable attention by a number of researchers. Ergunay and Adiguzel (2019) suggest that the studies on this critical period can be classified under four categories: the studies focusing on (a) suggesting implications for pre-service teacher education curricula, (b) the effects of pre-service teacher education on the first year teaching period, (c) the changes in beginning teachers' competences during this period and (d) the challenges beginning teachers face during this period. In addition, Kozikoglu (2017) examines the studies on the challenges of beginning teachers and concludes that their challenges are classified into four categories: instructional challenges such as classroom management, planning and implementing instruction; relational challenges such as in relations with parents, administrators, colleagues; adaptation challenges such as in adapting to the school, environment, profession; challenges in physical infrastructure and facilities of the school such as insufficient social facilities and absence of the necessary teaching

materials. On the other hand, the findings in Yetkiner and Bikmaz's (2019) recent study – a large scale survey with 812 participant novice teachers – imply that novice teachers do not feel they will have many problems during the first years in teaching, which may refer to a contradiction in the relevant body of literature and to a need for further investigation on the challenges during this critical period.

In addition, the evidence for the changes in beginning teachers' competences or other professional qualities during the first years in teaching has still appeared to be limited. Few studies have been found that surveyed the changes in beginning teachers' professional competences in the literature. In Clark's (2009) study with 123 beginning teachers as participants, for instance, the efficacy levels of beginning teachers are found to fall during the first year in teaching, which refers to a negative change in teachers' competences. The changes in beginning teachers' professional competences are also examined by Wasserman (2011) in a different context, and he concludes that beginning maths teachers has improved their competences in classroom management and valuing students' characteristics in choosing instructional methods and techniques through experience during the first year in teaching. Bumen and Ercan-Ozaydin's (2013) longitudinal study also reveals that the self-efficacy of beginning teachers significantly increases during the first year in teaching.

Taken together, the first years in teaching seem to be one of the important phases in teacher education in terms of both theory and practice. Examining this critical period still appears to be valuable as it is widely accepted that the experiences during this period will influence the actual and future professional qualities of beginning teachers. Therefore, further studies are needed to examine the experiences of beginning teachers during the first year in teaching. Moreover, drawing on a theoretical framework while examining the changes in beginning teachers' professional qualities is needed. In this regard, the literature review leads us to a conceptual framework based on the term 'teacher vision'. Preceding the purpose and significance of the study, term 'teacher vision' is explained below.

Teacher Vision

Teacher vision is defined as teachers' wider understandings of the teaching objectives and practices that enable them to adopt a course of action on how

they teach in an accurate and effective way (Kosnik & Beck, 2009). Similarly, Kennedy (2006) defines teacher vision as involving realistic purposes and directions of teaching beyond an idealist sense. In addition, Hammerness (2006) examines teacher vision with regard to teachers' first year experience and explains it as encompassing teachers' practices and affective responsibilities, instead of teaching philosophies or approaches. Overall, there appears to be some evidence that developing a better vision of teaching may be closely related to the first year professional experience of beginning teachers. This relation is also highlighted by Hammerness, Darling-Hammond and Bransford (2005) and they propose a teacher education model which centers upon developing teachers' visions (Figure 1):

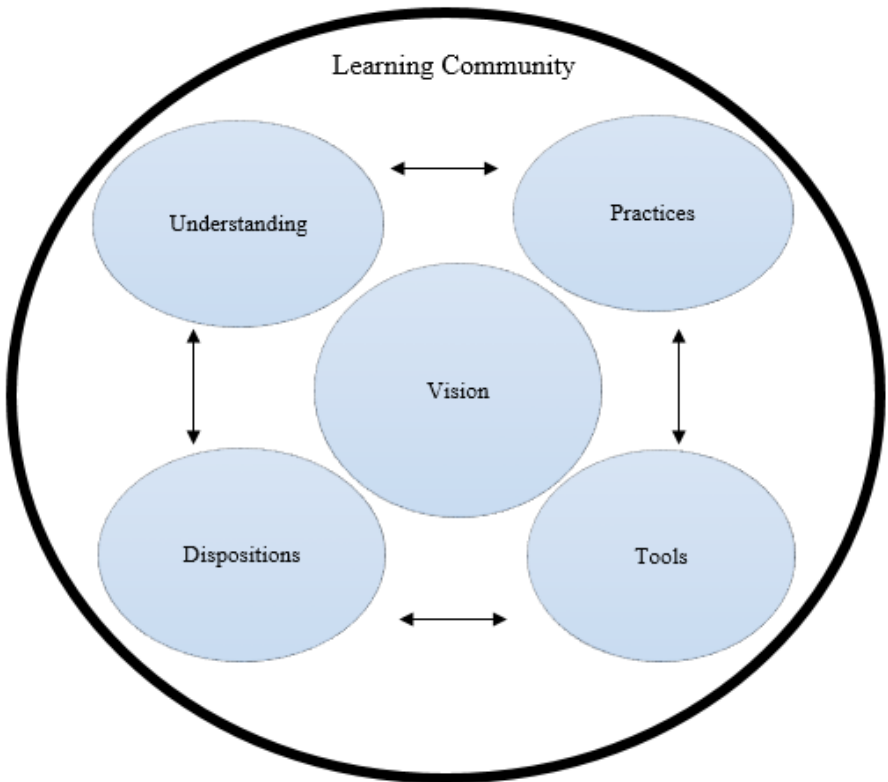


Figure 1. Hammerness, Darling Hammond and Bransford's (2005) Teacher Education Model

The teacher education model presented in Figure 1 suggests that teacher education takes place within a learning community. The details of the model are explained as follows:

This framework suggests that new teachers learn to teach in a community that enables them to develop a *vision* for their practice; a set of *understandings* about their teaching, learning and children; *dispositions* about how to use this knowledge; *practices* that allow them to act on their intentions and beliefs; and *tools* that support their efforts.[The words are italicized in the original text] (Hammerness et al., 2005, p. 366).

Teacher vision includes the views and images of teachers towards becoming a powerful teacher and underpins other components of the teacher education model. Therefore, each component in the model is deeply rooted in and associated with teacher vision. The first component ‘teachers’ understanding’ encompasses their knowledge of content, pedagogy, students, social contexts and classroom management. The second component is labelled as ‘tools’ which tend to be used to put teachers’ understandings into their practices. More specifically, these tools consist of conceptual resources, such as adopted learning theories and approaches, and practical resources, such as instructional strategies, methods, materials, assessment tools. The third aspect ‘practices’ include planning, implementing and evaluating instructional activities, and feedback and correction procedures. The last component in the model is called dispositions which comprise teachers’ overall stance on their own roles as teachers, the role of the learners, and their personal and professional learning. (Hammerness et al., 2005).

In addition, learning from experience is also highlighted in the model as an underlying term. The model suggests that preservice teacher education period is not enough to develop sufficient teacher visions and teachers may enlarge their visions through learning from their teaching experience from the very beginning of their careers. A considerable amount of evidence has already been published on the role of experience in all learning contexts (Kolb, 1984; Dewey, 1986). In a similar vein, recent evidence suggests that the experience has a vital role in teacher education processes (Craig, 2006; Knight, Tait, & Yorke, 2006; O’Dyer & Athi, 2014; Shaver, 2010). Moreover, there is some evidence that the first year experience of teaching

appears to be crucial for developing beginning teachers' visions and these teachers also try to cope with numerous problems during that period (Calderhead & Shorrock, 1997; Fantilli & McDougall, 2009). Hence, it is claimed to be essential to enhance our understanding of this critical period through research studies (Loughran, Brown & Doecke, 2001; Wanzare, 2007). The first years of teaching are also highlighted in Hammerness et al.'s (2005) model as influencing beginning teachers' future visions in their career. Therefore, the model is suggested as a framework for the studies focusing on the early years of teachers' careers.

The study was undertaken with the purposes of describing both the changes in beginning teachers' visions during their first year experience in teaching within the framework of Hammerness et al.'s (2005) teacher education model, and the challenges they face during that period. Particularly, this study sought to address the following questions:

- How do beginning teachers' visions change during their first year teaching period?
- What challenges do beginning teachers face during their first year teaching period?

Examining and describing the details of the first years of beginning teachers in teaching appear to be valuable for implementing the theories and practice in teacher education. Although there seems a growing body of studies on the challenges faced by beginning teachers in the relevant literature, obtaining the perceptions of these teachers on their challenges in the profession during their first year experiences will contribute to the development of more effective further pre-service and in-service teacher education. In addition, focusing on the changes in teacher qualities during this critical period seems to get far too little attention in the relevant literature. Using a teacher-vision oriented conceptual framework for the changes in beginning teachers' qualities can lead to further discussions on this framework which values the continuity of teacher education from the pre-service teacher education period to induction phase and further professional learning practices.

Method

Research Design

A basic qualitative research design was employed in the study. This methodology is defined as qualitative studies which provide ‘descriptive accounts’ based on qualitative data and within which the target is “to understand a phenomenon, a process, or a particular point of view from the perspective of those involved” (Ary et al., 2019, p. 391). Similarly, Merriam (2009) suggests “how people interpret their experiences, how they construct their worlds, and what meaning they attribute to their experiences” (p. 23) would be interested in basic qualitative studies. The changes in beginning teachers’ visions and challenges they faced during their first year of teaching were viewed as two central phenomena in the study. To describe and interpret how they perceived and what meaning they attributed to their first year teaching experience were examined. Therefore, the data were obtained through semi-structured interviews and a questionnaire that included open-ended questions.

Participants

A total of 18 beginning teachers who started teaching in public schools in the city of Eskisehir, Turkey, participated in the study. Purposeful sampling was used to select the participants involved, and the criteria of not previously teaching at any school, variety in teaching profession and convenience was applied in the study. Table 1 presents a summary of participant characteristics:

Table 1.
Summary of Participant Characteristics

Participant	Gender	Subject	School Level	Undergraduate - Graduate Education / Pedagogical Formation Certificate
P1	F	Biology	High School	Faculty of Education
P2	F	Mathematics	Secondary School	Faculty of Education - Mathematics Education (M.A continuing)
P3	M	Physical Education	High School	Faculty of Education
P4	M	Philosophy	High School	Faculty of Arts and Sciences – Pedagogical Formation Certificate
P5	M	Music	Secondary School	Faculty of Education
P6	F	English	Primary School	Faculty of Education – English Language Teaching (M.A continuing)
P7	M	Turkish Language and Literature	High School	Faculty of Arts and Sciences – Non-Thesis M.A on Pedagogy
P8	F	Mathematics	Secondary School	Faculty of Education – Elementary Mathematics Teaching (M.A continuing)
P9	F	Mathematics	Secondary School	Faculty of Education

continue

Table 1.
Summary of Participant Characteristics (continuation)

Participant	Gender	Subject	School Level	Undergraduate - Graduate Education / Pedagogical Formation Certificate
P10	F	Mathematics	Secondary School	Faculty of Education
P11	M	Mathematics	Secondary School	Faculty of Education
P12	F	Mathematics	Secondary School	Faculty of Education
P13	F	Biology	High School	Faculty of Arts and Sciences – Pedagogical Formation Certificate
P14	F	Mathematics	Secondary School	Faculty of Education
P15	F	Religion and Ethics	Secondary School	Faculty of Education
P16	F	Mathematics	High School	Faculty of Arts and Sciences – Pedagogical Formation Certificate Faculty of Education –
P17	M	Turkish Language and Literature	High School	Turkish Language and Literature Teaching (M.A continuing)
P18	F	Religion and Ethics	Secondary School	Faculty of Theology – Pedagogical Formation Certificate

As shown in Table 1, the participants consisted of 12 female and 6 male beginning teachers who teach a range of different subjects at different school levels. They also vary in types of their teacher education certification, raduate education level and pedagogical formation certificate, particularly 12 of them are graduates of education faculties which are by law basic institutions to train teachers, whereas the others have teaching certificates of alternative teacher training programs such as pedagogical formation and non-thesis master degree in pedagogy certificate programs. Although all these programs have different curricula for training teachers, no difference occur among them in terms of the teaching status and legal rights after they are assigned as teachers.

Data Collection

The data was collected through semi structured interviews and a questionnaire including open ended questions. The study was conducted by two researchers and both of them participated in all phases of the study collaboratively. The first researcher had worked as a teacher at state schools in the context of the current study for ten years before starting a career as instructor at a state university in the context of the current study. The first year experience in teaching as a beginning teacher in the same context contributed to the first researcher a lot in understanding and interpreting the experiences of the participants in the current study. The second researcher works as a teacher trainer in the faculty of education at a state university in the context of the current study. With a long period of experience in teacher training and conducting research in teacher education, the second researcher's position also help interpreting the the experiences of beginning teachers during the critical period in the study. The information on two data collection procedures is presented below.

Semi structured interviews

Two interviews were carried out with each participant, particularly the one at the outset of their first year teaching experience and the other at the end of it. The interviews at the beginning of the schooling year were used to identify participants' beginning teacher visions and nineteen beginning teachers participated in them. However, one of the participants could not take part in

the interview at the end of the term due to some private matters and thereby was excluded from the study. So, the participants comprised eighteen beginning teachers. The interviews lasted between forty and sixty minutes on average.

The interview form was developed by two researchers. First, the interview questions were formed in line with each aspect of the teacher education model. Second, the initial interview form was reviewed by three scholars with PhD degrees in curriculum and instruction for expert review. They are also engaged in teacher education and qualitative research. They were asked to evaluate the interview form in terms of its appropriateness to the aims of the study and the components of the teacher education model. After the review, the interview form was re-arranged, and then a pilot interview was done with a beginning teacher who did not take part in the study. Following some minor revisions, the final version of the interview form was developed.

The participants were contacted before the interviews and a detailed interview schedule was planned. They were informed about the aims of the study and the interview procedures preceding the interviews. In addition, an informed consent was obtained from each participant and all the interviews were audio recorded. The same procedures were applied for the interviews at the end of the term; however, an extra question on the challenges was added (Appendix A).

Questionnaire

A questionnaire was developed by the researchers and delivered to each participant via e-mail at the end of the first semester in January. It included two open ended questions (Appendix B). Only twelve participants responded to questionnaires although two reminder emails were sent to the other participants. Therefore, the responses from twelve participants were analyzed in the study.

Data Analysis

Content analysis was used to analyze the collected data, and the responses by the participants were coded in association with the concept of teacher vision and the components in the teacher education model. These components constituted the main themes, and after the coding was done under each theme,

sub-themes for each main theme were identified. Thereafter, the beginning teachers' views on the changes in their teaching visions were specified in all data sets to reach the findings related to the first research question.

All the data were coded again to respond to the second research question in terms of the challenges of the participants in their first year teaching experience. The codes were categorized under emerging themes and the findings related to the second research question were obtained.

Research logs are also kept by the researchers throughout the study, but they were not coded. They were used to support the findings and the interpretations when required (Appendix C).

Trustworthiness

Several measures were taken by the researchers to ensure the trustworthiness during the study. The procedures that were followed are presented below:

- The data sources, collection methods and coding were triangulated. Specifically, purposeful sampling method was adopted and the participants were selected from diverse districts of the city, i.e. urban and rural areas, and from different school levels. The multiple data sources were also ensured with selecting participants with different subjects and who completed different preservice teacher education programs such as faculty of education and alternative teacher training programs. To triangulate the data collection methods, three data sets were gathered with two semi-structured interviews and a questionnaire at three different periods. In addition, the coding was done by two researchers independently, and the consistency was ensured through several meetings.
- The interview protocol were reviewed by three field experts, and the necessary revisions were made on the questions accordingly.
- Member checking was also considered during the study and thus the participants were constantly asked to confirm their responses themselves during the interviews.
- All interviews were audio recorded and then transcribed. The consistency of the audio records and the transcriptions was checked by the researchers and a language expert.
- The procedures in the study were carried out with rigor. The findings were presented in correlation with the research questions and the

findings were supported with quotations from the participants' responses.

Research Ethics

The researchers adhered to ethical principles in all phases of the study and the following measures are taken as Creswell (2013) suggests for ethical considerations in qualitative studies. Prior to the study, an official permission was taken from the local authorities. Before the data collection, the aims and the procedures of the study were conveyed to each participant, and written permissions were obtained via a consent form. In addition, the confidentiality of the data was ensured, and the data were only used for the study purpose. Accordingly, the names of the participants were hidden and codes such as P1, P2, etc. were used.

Limitations

The analysis of the data and the findings of the study were based on the participants' views in the interviews and the questionnaire. That might be considered as the first limitation of the study. In addition, the findings of the current study were limited to a group of participants in a particular context, i.e. a city, which is another limitation of the current study. The changes and challenges which were examined in the study were within a period of the schooling year, so the study was also limited to the data obtained in a period of schooling year.

Results

The results of the study are presented in two parts regarding two research questions. First, the changes in the participants' visions are outlined in relation to each component of Hammerness et al.'s (2005) model through referring to the quotations of the participants. Then the emerging themes on the challenges faced by the beginning teachers are explained.

How do beginning teachers’ visions change during their first year teaching period?

The findings confirm that several changes occurred in the participants’ teacher visions during their first year teaching period. As for the changes in the participants’ understandings, eleven sub-themes were emerged under four main themes (Figure 2).

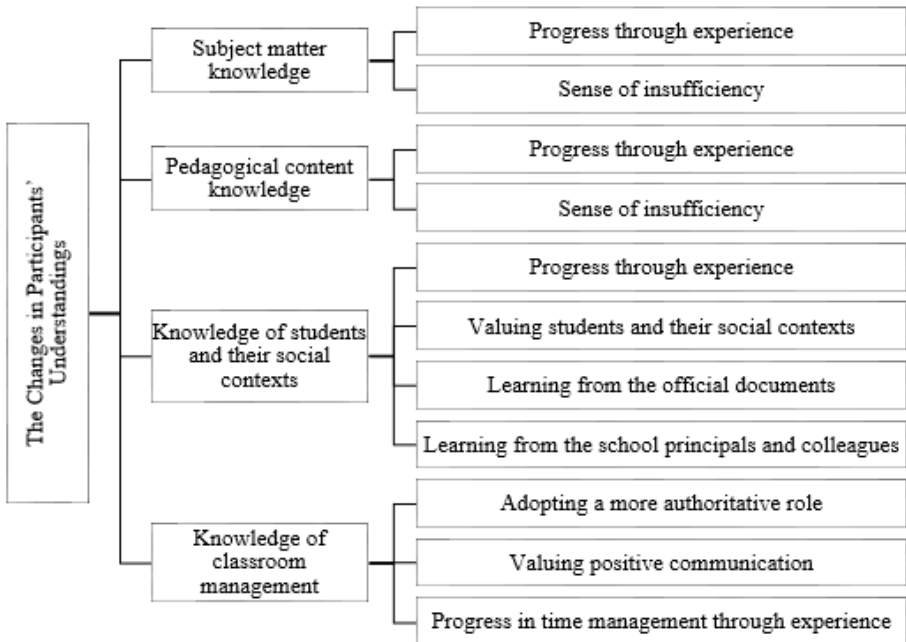


Figure 2. The Changes in Participants’ Understandings

Figure 2 clearly shows that ‘progress through experience’ and ‘sense of insufficiency’ were emerged in participants’ both subject matter and pedagogical content knowledge. Beginning teachers in the study mostly appeared to start their careers with self perceptions at high levels in their subject matter and pedagogical content knowledge; however, they started to feel sense of insufficiency and tended to improve their understandings through experience:

I felt my knowledge of teaching progressed. I gained much experience in teaching. I was feeling competent in teaching at the beginning of the schooling year too; however, I was lack of knowledge on when and how to teach more effectively. Now I am much better in that. (P6, End of schooling year interview [ESYI])

Progress through experience was also identified as sub-themes in beginning teachers' knowledge of students, their social contexts and time management. Taken together, the results indicate that beginning teachers appear to reflect on their experiences and increase their professional understandings during their first years in teaching, which refers to a positive change in their visions. Two quotations below from the participants display the changes in their understandings of different aspects:

It has increased a lot. I have always complained about the same issue. We were not taught how to write a petition or other official reports during preservice teacher education. Now I learnt how to do them by doing it. (P5,ESYI)

I remembered well that a change occurred in that. At the outset of the schooling year, I could not manage the time effectively. To illustrate, I used to complete the target objectives in the middle of the lesson and did not know whether I had to review or continue to the following objectives. However, I gradually managed the time better. (P17,ESYI)

P5 illustrates that he tried to learn a lot of institutional duties while doing them, which refers to progress in social context knowledge through experience. Moreover, the fact that he was eager to learn these duties might indicate that he values learning about the social context. This also refers to another emerging sub-theme under the theme "knowledge of students and their social contexts".

Regarding the changes in beginning teachers' knowledge of classroom management, two contrary changes seemed to emerge in the study. While a change towards adopting a more authoritative teacher role was identified (P8), another change emerged as a positive one as valuing positive

communication with students (P15). The quotations displaying two unsimilar changes are as follows:

Unfortunately, I had to adopt a more authoritarian role, which resulted in a more teacher centered learning context. I noticed that it often worked! Well, we should be a guide in the classroom but I learnt them we must adopt a more teacher centered and authoritative role in some cases. It was a change. (P8,ESYI)

Most colleagues advised me to be strict and not to smile while interacting with the students. However, I noticed that it did not work. Once the students start to love you, they never bother you. You feel that even the naughty students care about you. (P15,ESYI)

Referring to P8’s adopted role as a guide, she explicitly stated the change towards a more teacher centered view in her knowledge of classroom management. Apparently, the disorder she observed in the classroom might lead to the change in her vision. On the contrary, P15 became aware of the value of positive communication with the students despite the opposite views by the colleagues. That could lead to a change in her knowledge of classroom management towards building a positive relationship with the students.

Turning to the evidence on the changes in the beginning teachers’ conceptual and practical tools, a number of sub-themes were identified in the study. Figure 3 presents the changes in their conceptual tools:

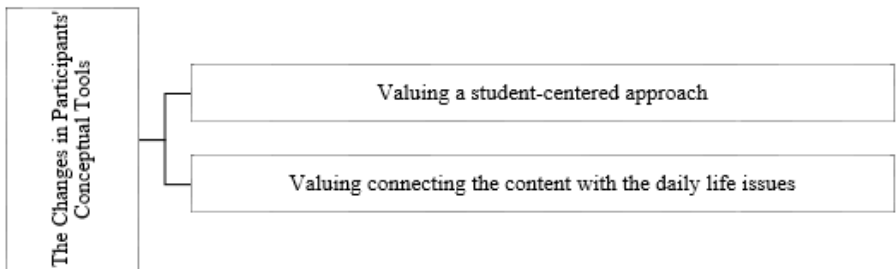


Figure 3. The Changes in Participants’ Conceptual Tools

Two emerging changes in beginning teachers’ conceptual tools seemed to be positive and interconnected. It appeared that a change towards both

valuing students' lives and adopting student-centred approach emerged in the study. One of the beginning maths teacher explicitly stated the change in her conceptual tools towards valuing the connection between the content and the daily life issues with the example of Pi number:

During the first term, I did not connect the mathematical content with the daily lives of the students; however, I tried to do it in the second term. For instance, the students in sixth grades learnt Pi number and I prepared a presentation about it for the first time. I tried to connect Pi number with their daily lives by referring to where and how it was used. (P14,ESYI)

A remarkable positive change in P14's conceptual tools was apparent and she seemed to consider the significance and functions of the content for the students from the second term on as she stated explicitly. In addition, change towards valuing students' characteristics also emerged in the changes in participants' practical tools (Figure 4).

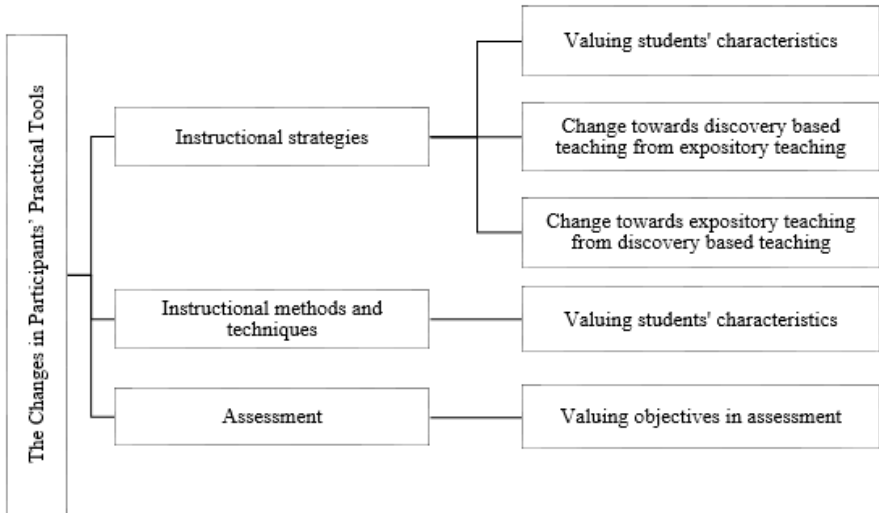


Figure 4. The Changes in Participants' Practical Tools

Figure 4 displays that a change towards valuing students' characteristics emerged under the categories of both instructional strategies, methods and

techniques. However, these changes referred to a bi-directional change in choosing instructional strategies. Two extracts (P4 and P10) about the changes in the beginning teachers' practical tools are as follows:

P4: I usually used expository teaching and I just transmitted them the content during the the first two or three months. Then I started to use question-answer technique and use discovery learning. I started to ask them some questions such as 'what would you think or do if you were in that context?' It gradually turned into an inductive style.

Interviewer: In your opinion, what is the reason for the change?

P4: Actually I felt that the students used to learn nothing when I used expository teaching. Most of the students used to forget what were taught only after a week because they were not active. I thought about the ways to make them engaged and decided to use a more discovery based teaching strategy. As they engaged in the lessons, they started to remember what were taught. I also noticed that they could write what they learnt on the exam sheets. (P4,ESYI)

Well, we were taught the discovery learning was a good thing. So, I used to try it but the students were challenged by it in some classrooms. They explicitly stated that they were not familiar with this strategy and thus they were puzzled. Therefore, I preferred to apply expository teaching in this classroom which included students who do not love maths. (P10,ESYI)

Considering the changes in the beginning teachers' practical tools, it appeared that they changed their practical tools according to the characteristics of students. P4 mentioned a change from expository teaching to discovery based one, whereas P10 expressed a change vice versa. They both justified the change with regard to the characteristics of the students. It seemed that the characteristics of students had an effect on the direction of the change in the beginning teachers' practical tools.

The interconnectedness of the elements in the conceptual framework also reflected on the changes in the beginning teachers' practices. A number of changes emerged under the theme of practices are displayed in Figure 5.

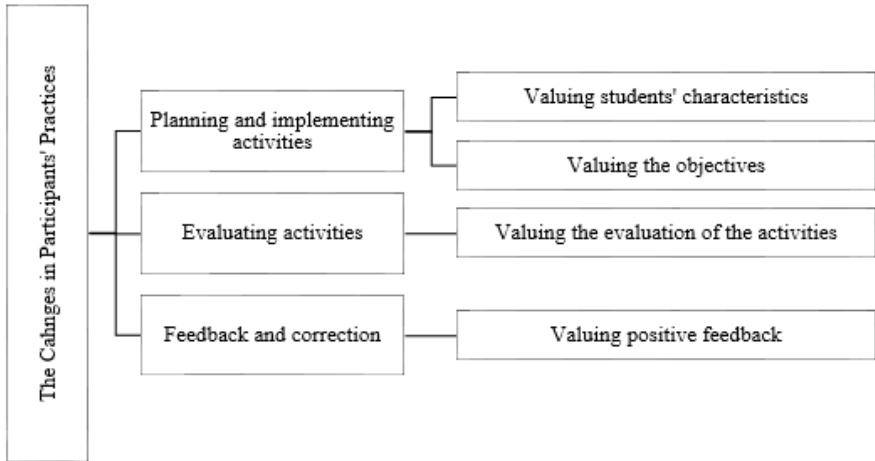


Figure 5. The Changes in Participants' Practices

The changes in the beginning teachers' visions with regard to the practice aspect of the model indicate that all the changes occurred in the beginning teachers' values of practices. The findings highlighted the changes towards valuing students' characteristics and the objective in planning and implementation process. In addition, evaluation of the activities and positive feedback appeared to be valued by the beginning teachers. It is remarkable that all the changes in this aspect looked towards a positive teacher vision. This can be because of the effect of the learning from the experience again as the practice aspect of teacher vision is highly associated with the actual teaching practices. A quotation that reflected a change towards valuing students' characteristics and the objectives together is as follows:

The objectives reflect the philosophy of the curriculum and your activities must be consistent with it. They must be parallel to the students' outcomes. The activities must attribute to the students and improve their skills in my opinion. They must be designed according to the students' level of understanding. These are changes I feel now. (P3,ESYI)

Another change in practices of the beginning teachers emerged as valuing positive feedback. In fact, this aspect is a highly emphasized in pre-service

teacher education and it was surprising that some beginning teachers understood the value of positive feedback during the second term through experience.

I often tried to use positive words such as ‘well done’, ‘very good’ in the classroom. I did not do it in the first term but I noticed that it was very important for the students. (P6,ESYI)

Fortunately, P6 noticed the value of positive feedback in the second term through experience and began to use it more. In addition, she learnt through experience that it appealed to the students a lot.

Another aspect of teacher vision is the dispositions of teachers and the changes in the beginning teachers’ dispositions were also examined in the study. Although the role of students is included as an element of dispositions in the model, no emerging theme for that element could be identified in the study. Thus, the findings were classified under three main themes as illustrated in Figure 6.

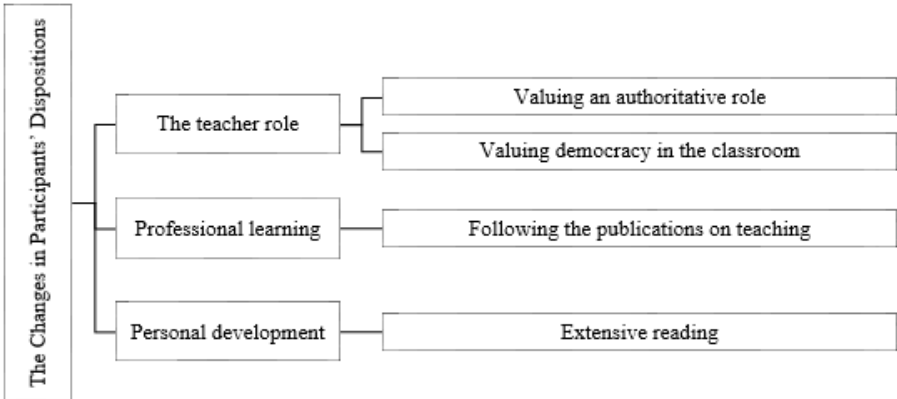


Figure 6. The Changes in Participants’ Dispositions

As for the teacher role, a change towards adopting a more authoritative or more democratic role is identified in the participants’ responses. P3 explicitly stated that she felt a change towards being more authoritative with the following quotation: ‘To ensure the authority in the classroom, I started to adopt a more authoritative and teacher centered approach. It was a change in my teacher role. (ESYI)’ and highlighted having a more authoritative role due

to his negative experience whereas P11 expressed that he could not build a democratic classroom atmosphere at first but knowing the students well helped him build it in time. The quotation below reflected the change in her disposition towards her perceived teacher roles:

I adopted a more formal manner at the beginning of the school year and the students were a bit reluctant to interact with me. We got used to each other by the end of the schooling year and built a friendly atmosphere. I mean a democratic one where their opinions were valued. (P11,ESYI)

The experience of two participants led them to change their roles in their first years of teaching. However, the directions of the change in their roles differed. This may be due to their different priorities as teachers. It was likely that P3 valued ensuring the authority in the classroom, yet P11 focused on building a friendly and democratic atmosphere where the students could share their opinions.

The changes in the participants' professional learning and personal development are also examined in the study. In general, most of the participants complained about not allotting time for their professional learning and personal development during their first year experience. P13 expressed that she decided to read a lot and follow the publications about the teaching profession in the second term after she faced with some problems in teaching.

Overall, the findings of the study revealed considerable changes in beginning teachers' visions. Most of the participants expressed that they felt change in the second term of the schooling year. This might be because the beginning teachers perceive the first term as an induction period to the profession and/or a period of a rest after the long route to be assigned as a teacher in [country name], which was also argued by some of the participants in the study.

What challenges do beginning teachers face during their first year teaching period?

The challenges that the participants faced during their first year teaching experience were also examined to answer the second research question. A

total of four broad themes emerged from the analysis of the views from the participants (Figure 7).

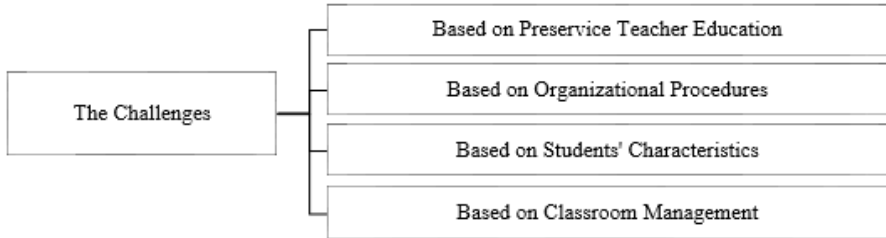


Figure 7. The Challenges during the First Year Experience

The challenges that the participant beginning teachers faced during their first year teaching period were categorized under four themes. Specifically the themes emerged as the challenges based on their preservice teacher education, organizational procedures, students’ characteristics and the classroom management. The results revealed that most participants linked some of their challenges directly to their preservice teacher education (Figure 8).

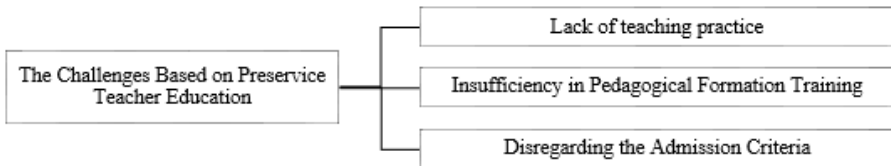


Figure 8. The Challenges Based on Preservice Teacher Education

Lack of teaching practice emerged as nearly all participants complained about the implementations without real practice opportunities during their pre-service years. The answer to the questionnaire by one of the beginning teachers reflected the insufficiency of the preservice education in practice as follows:

It could be much easier, much better and much more realistic for me if I had undergone a more practice-based preservice education. We

were taught what to teach but not how to teach. This was a big challenge for me during the schooling year. I learnt it through experience. (P14, Questionnaire)

Another challenge based on the participants' preservice years emerged as the insufficiency of the pedagogical formation training. It was remarkable that all participants with a pedagogical formation certificate complained about the insufficient training in these certificate programs:

I got a pedagogical formation certificate. The whole program was a mere formality and there was no rigor. It was just for the sake of giving and taking a certificate. Therefore, I do not think it trained me as a teacher. (P4, ESYI)

A third challenge based on participants' preservice education is identified as disregarding the admission criteria while selecting the students for preservice education. A quote by P13 reflected the emerged challenge as follows: 'I wish there were a filter for eliminating candidates who are not humanistic and patient. This filter should be used while selecting students for the preservice education (ESYI).

The challenges based on organizational procedures emerged as the second theme of the challenges faced by the beginning teachers (Figure 9). As shown in Figure 9, insufficiency in organizational structure, negative attitudes towards beginning teachers and conflicting views of the colleagues emerged as the challenges the participant beginning teachers faced with during the first year teaching experience:

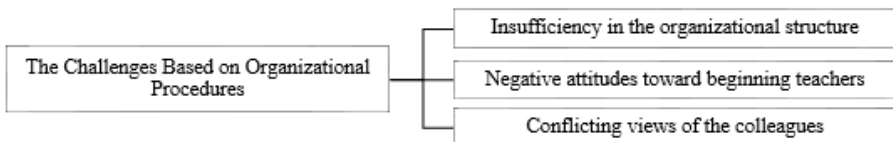


Figure 9. The Challenges Based on Organizational Procedures

It appeared that most beginning teachers in the study felt the negative attitudes towards them as beginning teachers and lack of procedural knowledge in the organizational structure. P15 explained this challenge as

‘Some colleagues intentionally used to address to us as trainee teachers and order us to do some institutional tasks. I often felt as if I was a slave instead of a beginning teacher’ (ESYI).

The challenges based on students’ characteristics were identified as the third emerging theme in the study (Figure 10). The challenge of insufficiency in students readiness was stressed by most of participants in interviews. This finding was also supported by P10 in the questionnaire as follows ‘Another challenge I faced was students’ lack of prior knowledge. Whenever I started to teach an issue, some lack of prior knowledge always appeared. Thus, they could not understand the issue’ (Questionnaire).

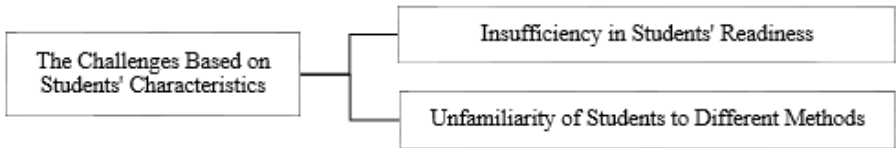


Figure 10. The Challenges Based on Students’ Characteristics

The challenges based on classroom management was also identified in the findings of the study (Figure 11). Some participants mentioned the challenges in managing the students’ behaviors and time. For example, P2 put her main challenge as the problematic behaviors of the students in her response to the questionnaire as “the main challenge was their problematic behaviors. I tried a lot to build an authority in the classroom but I could not manage it, particularly in 8th grades” (P2,ESYI).

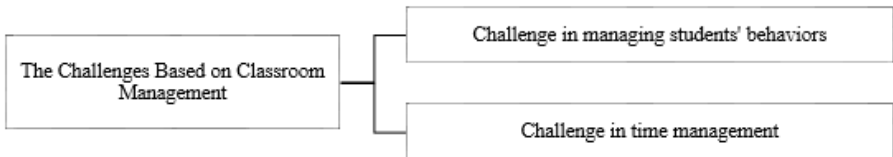


Figure 11. The Challenges Based on Classroom Management

Discussion

This study set out to describe both the changes in beginning teachers’ visions and the challenges they faced during their first year experience. The changes

in their teaching visions were explored and explained through Hammerness et al.'s (2005) teacher education model. The findings point to the changes in the beginning teachers' visions with regard to nearly all the components of the model, which appears to provide further evidence for more considerable insights into the model and somehow confirm the components of it. In addition, the study found that the beginning teachers faced numerous challenges during their first year experience. This result supports the common literature trends indicating that the first year teaching is a crucial period when the beginning teachers try to deal with numerous problems (Casey, 2005; Ergunay & Adiguzel, 2019; Feiman-Nemser, 2001; Ingvarson et al., 2007; Kane & Francis, 2013; Kozikoglu, 2017; Kozikoglu & Senemoglu, 2018; Wanzare, 2007).

A salient change in the participants' visions was identified towards valuing the students' characteristics. The findings indicate that there appeared changes in their understandings, tools and practice. Although 'valuing students' characteristics' was not heavily underlined by the participants at the beginning of the schooling, it seemed to be a common feature in their visions at the end of the first year experience. They often referred to learning through experience as the source of the change.

Another change was identified as the participants' increasing their organizational knowledge through learning from official documents, school principals and some colleagues during the first year of teaching. This might indicate that the preservice teacher education period is not effective enough to prepare the participants for the organizational procedures. Moreover, this may reflect the lack or inadequacy of an effective induction program by the schools or local authorities although it was widely stressed in numerous earlier studies (Anthony, Haig, & Kane, 2011; Bullough, Young, Hall, Draper, & Smith, 2008; Kardos & Johnson, 2010; Langdon, 2011; Stokking, Leenders, De Jong, & Van Tartwijk, 2003; Yusko & Feiman-Nemser, 2008).

The results on the challenges of the beginning teachers have a number of similarities with Wanzare's (2007) findings including a list of ten challenges faced by beginning teachers. Although no categorization seemed to be applied in Wanzare's (2007) findings, the identified challenges of heavy workload, poor support, lack of resources, isolation and undefined role expectations in his study are likely to refer to the challenges based on the organizational procedures. Moreover, the challenges of managing the classroom and students' discipline problem in his findings are in line with

the ones based on classroom management in this study. The challenge of beginning teachers in classroom management was also found in numerous earlier research (Battle, 2005; Bielicki, 2014; Ergenekon, 2004; Heath, 2015; Lebel, 2010; Loughran et al., 2001; Moore-Hayes, 2008; Ozturk, 2008; Pettway, 2005; Robertson, 2011; Sali, 2008; Thompson, 2010). Furthermore, the challenges of students' and parents' demands and reality shock seem to refer to emerging themes of challenges based on students' characteristics and preservice teacher education, respectively. On the other hand, the challenge of personal versus professional demands in Wanzare's (2007) findings is not emerged as a challenge in the current study. Nevertheless, most of the participants complained about not allotting time for their professional learning and personal development, which is likely to be consistent with the finding of challenge in balancing the time committed to personal versus professional demands in Wanzare's (2007) study.

The results of the current study regarding the challenges of the beginning teachers mostly corroborates the findings in national context. The categories of challenges in Kozikoglu and Senemoglu's (2018) study are hardly distinguishable from the ones of current study. Beginning teachers' being challenged in teaching planning and implementing due to lack of experience in their study seems to be consistent with the lack of teaching practice in the current study. Inadequate training in pre-service teacher education is highlighted in the results of both studies. In addition, challenges in classroom management occur in both studies. It also appears that being challenged in classroom management is associated with inadequate pre-service education by beginning teachers. Nevertheless, it needs to be noted that the sub-themes are differed in both studies. To illustrate, being challenged in time management is not found in their study findings. Similarly, the perceived challenge in managing multicultural classrooms in their study is not represented in the results of the current study. A possible explanation for this difference can be attributed to the different study contexts of both studies. Although the current study was carried out in a context of city, they obtained data from a variety of contexts which includes multicultural contexts. This fact could lead the beginning teachers in the study to be challenged by managing a multicultural classroom. The multi-site study context in Kozikoglu and Senemoglu's (2018) appeared to lead beginning teachers to be challenged by the socio-cultural characteristics of the society such as language problems, which did not emerge in the current study.

The present results also seem to be consistent with Kozikoglu's (2017) study findings which are based on the content analysis of the studies concerning challenges faced by beginning teachers. The findings of the current study appear to be well-substantiated by the studies in both national and other contexts except for the challenges in physical infrastructure and facilities of the schools. Surprisingly, no findings emerged about the inadequacy of the physical facilities of the schools in the current study. Instead, the problems in organizational procedures were perceived as challenges by some beginning teachers in the study.

In the study, nearly all of the participants agreed that the preservice teacher education period was lack of involving enough teaching practice, and more teaching practice was required during that period. This finding confirmed the necessity for more practice based preservice teacher education curricula as already suggested in a great deal of the earlier research in the field of teacher education (Akdag, 2012; Battle, 2005; Cakiroglu & Cakiroglu, 2003; Ergenekon, 2004; Feiman-Nemser, 2001; Loughran et al., 2001; Pettway, 2005; Pikula, 2015; Sali, 2008). However, none of the participants defined the preservice period as 'a waste of time' or their diplomas as 'a piece of paper', which was perceived as common folklore among experienced teachers over time as Loughran et al. (2001) asserted.

Conclusions

The results of this study on both the changes and the challenges of the beginning teachers would seem to underline the significance of learning through experience in teaching profession once again. This prevalent notion is supported with the evidence of valuing professional experience, professional learning and progress through experience in nearly all of the aspects of the study. Similarly, the results has provided further evidence for the crucial role of experience in teacher education, in particular during the first year teaching period.

The findings implies that designing more practice based preservice teacher education curricula might help beginning teachers more confident durig their first years in teaching. Another implication for the preservice education appears to be evaluating the pedagogical formation certificate programs in the country since all the participants with these certificates reflected dissatisfaction with these programs. Finally, the perceived negative

role of being beginning teachers seems to imply that these teachers may benefit from effective induction programs to adapt to the organizational procedures.

To conclude, the study suggested that considerable changes occurred in beginning teachers' visions and these teachers tried to deal with numerous challenges in their first year of teaching. It is likely that there is a close relationship between the challenges and the changes of beginning teachers' visions, which may be explored in further research. In addition, further research on the changes in beginning teachers' visions and challenges of these teachers in diverse regions with larger sample sizes might provide a more detailed examination of beginning teachers. Furthermore, the results in this study are grounded on what the participants shared in the interviews and the questionnaires. It could have revealed much deeper findings if more data sources had been used, which can be stated as another limitation in the study. Further longitudinal studies involving observations might help elaborate on both the changes in beginning teachers' visions and their challenges.

Notes

¹The initial findings of the study were presented at 4th International Conference on Curriculum and Instruction ICCI, Antalya/ Turkey

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Appendix A

Interview Questions

How do you define your profession at the end of your first year experience?
What are the characteristics of an ideal teacher in your opinion?

A. Understandings

At the end of your first year teaching experience, how do you describe your professional knowledge in terms of the elements below?

- Knowledge of content
- Knowledge of pedagogy
- Knowledge of social context
- Knowledge of students
- Knowledge of classroom management

B. Conceptual and Practical Tools

During your first year teaching experience,

- what learning approaches did you adopt?
- what instructional strategies did you prefer?
- what methods and techniques did you use?
- how did you assess learning?

C. Practices

What were the main concerns for you in:

- planning the activities?
- implementing them?
- evaluating the effectiveness of them?
- giving feedback and making correction?

D. Dispositions

What were your priorities in the profession?

- How did you define your role as a teacher?

- How did you define your students' role in learning?
- What did you do for your personal development?
- What did you do for your professional development?

E. Challenges

What challenges did you face with during your first year of teaching? How did you cope with them?

Appendix B

Questionnaire

1. The first term of the schooling year has just ended. Can you evaluate the term considering the elements presented below?
 - What were the challenges you cope with during the term?
 - How did you feel while dealing with these challenges?
 - How did you cope with them?
2. What did you learn about your profession in the first term? Did you feel any changes in your teacher vision? If so, can you explain them?

Appendix C

Table 2

The contents and the numbers of the research logs

Content	Number
Post interview logs following each interview at the beginning of the schooling year	18
Generic log following all interviews at the beginning of the schooling year	1
Generic log preceding the interviews at the end of the schooling year	1
Post interview logs following each interview at the end of the schooling year	18
Generic log following all interviews at the end of the schooling year	1