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I am honored and happy to write this paper to share my experiences at University of Bristol, UK. By receiving ESERA travel award for the year 2009, I had a chance to visit Graduate School of Education in Bristol and spent a week full of exciting academic events and studies.

My area of interest is argumentation in science classrooms. My research is about the investigation of the argumentation practices in science classrooms and the main aim is to encourage pre-service science teachers in the use of argumentation during science laboratory work.

The purpose of my visit was to extend my knowledge about the argumentation studies. Since my research area focuses on argumentation in science classrooms, I wanted to learn more about the theoretical and methodological approaches to integrate argumentation in science laboratories. Thanks to Dr. Sibel Erduran, who is an experienced researcher in the area of argumentation, for being so supportive and patient in spending a lot of time helping and teaching me the methodology during my visit and her valuable comments and suggestions towards the improvement of my research.

Beginning from the first day of my visit, I shared my study with other PhD students who have the same research interests with me. I presented my research to them, and had a chance to view theirs. It was a great time to get an overview of research in my area of interest in a multi-cultural environment. We had productive talks and discussions on approaches in analyzing argumentative dialogues. It was interesting to see different ways of integrating argumentation in science education and various ways of studying it.

I did another presentation to the faculty on the second day of my visit. It was very exciting to see people from other areas, such as music, technology and language, interested in my study. Their point of view provided me with a wider perspective to look at my work. For example, we had a brief exchange about how I match the pre-determined argumentation schemes with the dialogues in my data. I received valuable feedback of my study as well as a route to extend my study further. Thanks to members of staff and students who introduced me to useful resources. It was a very fulfilling experience in terms of understanding the strong and need-to-be-improved aspects of my research.

My experience in Bristol was not limited to discussions on my project. I also participated in a session of Bonding Chemistry Seminars. It was an inspiring event organized and chaired by Dr. Erduran. This event brought philosophers, educators and chemists together to exchange and debate across philosophy of chemistry and chemistry education research. This learning experience was a distinctive one for me because I had a chance to see how interdisciplinary contributions may add to science education. I am looking forward to organizing a similar event in Turkey, where philosophers of science and science education faculty can meet to share and discuss the implications of their theories for teaching and learning science in schools.

We had several meetings to frame the purpose of my study and the theoretical background as well as methodological appropriateness. In terms of writing an academic paper and a dissertation, Dr. Erduran made meaningful contributions to my preliminary writings. I revised the 'purpose of the study' section in a nutshell to give the exact meaning and the aim of the study right after she provided me with useful guidelines to follow. While discussing the methodological appropriateness of the study, she guided me to focus on the main data and eliminate the data which do not directly address the research questions of the study. It was very useful for me because I had been dealing with lots of data and had many questions in terms of how to frame all data to meaningfully represent my purpose of the study. We revised the selection of the unit of analysis and talked about how codes match with the dialogues in my data. Moreover, in the discussions on the theoretical approach, I outlined the structure of the theoretical presentation of my study. I also had a chance to look at a number of resources for me to follow the recent theoretical approaches in the area of argumentation.

I also had an opportunity to visit a hands-on science center. I learnt about the professional development programs for in-service teachers in collaboration with science center. I think it is an amazing idea because teachers experience inquiry work outside the school through learning processes that they are expected to use in their science classrooms. After my return, I mentioned about this project to my advisors and we are enthusiastic to design a similar project in collaboration with the science center in my country. It will be a professional development program in which teachers are active participants of scientific inquiry in a hands-on science center.

In conclusion, I have been equipped with recent theoretical and methodological approaches of my area of study, I revised my study in the light of valuable recommendations of an experienced researcher, and I extended my insight after the presentations I did to researchers in and out of the field of science education. I want to thank to ESERA and to the University of Bristol for providing me with this opportunity of visit.