

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT CHALLENGES EXPERIENCED BY
LANGUAGE INSTRUCTORS AT A FOUNDATION UNIVERSITY: A CASE
STUDY

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CASE STUDY**

submitted by **BURCU YÜKSEL** in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of **Master of Arts in English Language Teaching, the Graduate School of Social Sciences of Middle East Technical University** by,

Prof. Dr. Yaşar KONDAKÇI
Dean
Graduate School of Social Sciences

Prof. Dr. Çiğdem SAĞIN ŞİMŞEK
Head of Department
Department of Foreign Language Education

Prof. Dr. A. Cendel KARAMAN
Supervisor
Department of Foreign Language Education

Examining Committee Members:

Assist. Prof. Dr. Müge GÜNDÜZ (Head of the Examining
Committee)
Middle East Technical University
Department of Foreign Language Education

Prof. Dr. A. Cendel KARAMAN (Supervisor)
Middle East Technical University
Department of Foreign Language Education

Assist. Prof. Dr. Ufuk ATAŞ
Artvin Çoruh University
Department of English Language and Literature

I hereby declare that all information in this document has been obtained and presented in accordance with academic rules and ethical conduct. I also declare that, as required by these rules and conduct, I have fully cited and referenced all material and results that are not original to this work.

Name, Last name: Burcu Yüksel

Signature :

ABSTRACT

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT CHALLENGES EXPERIENCED BY LANGUAGE INSTRUCTORS AT A FOUNDATION UNIVERSITY: A CASE STUDY

Yüksel, Burcu

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Supervisor: Prof. Dr. A. Cendel Karaman

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This qualitative case study has been conducted in order to explore the challenges experienced by English language teachers regarding their professional development. The study was carried out in the English language preparatory program at a foundation university in central Turkey. Eight English language instructors working in the program participated in the study. The data were gathered through semi-structures interviews and researcher's field notes. The results of the study demonstrated that even though participants attributed a high importance to their professional development, there are several factors which hinder their professional development. Those factors are grouped under individual characteristics and context-bound factors. Teachers in this study reported that they suffered most from lack of time and lack of autonomy over their own professional development. In the light of the challenges experienced, the participants proposed suggestions regarding their perceived needs and expectations to have a more *efficient* professional development to achieve the intended goals of teacher growth.

Keywords: Professional Development, English Language Teaching, Higher Education, Continuous Professional Development, Challenges in Professional Development

ÖZ

BİR VAKIF ÜNİVERSİTESİNDEKİ DİL OKUTMANLARININ PROFESYONEL GELİŞİMLERİNDE KARŞILAŞTIKLARI ZORLUKLAR: BİR DURUM ÇALIŞMASI

Yüksel, Burcu

Yüksek Lisans, İngiliz Dili Öğretimi Bölümü

Tez Yöneticisi: Prof. Dr. A. Cendel Karaman

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Bu nitel durum çalışması Türkiye’de bir vakıf üniversitesinin İngilizce hazırlık programında çalışmakta olan okutmanların profesyonel gelişim süreçlerine yönelik yaşadıkları zorlukları incelemeyi amaçlamaktadır. Çalışmaya ana dili Türkçe olan sekiz İngilizce okutmanı katılmıştır. Veri toplama sürecince yarı yapılandırılmış görüşmeler ve araştırmacının alan notları kullanılmıştır. Çalışmanın sonuçları, katılımcıların mesleki gelişimlerine yüksek bir önem atfetmelerine rağmen, mesleki gelişimlerini engelleyen bazı ortak faktörler olduğunu göstermiştir. Bunlar, bireysel özellikler ve bağlamsal faktörler olarak iki ana kategoride gruplandırılmıştır. Çalışmaya katılan öğretmenlerin profesyonel gelişim faaliyetlerine katılımının önündeki en büyük engel yeterli zamanlarının olmaması ve kendi gelişim faaliyetleri üzerinde yeterince özerkliğe sahip olmamaları olarak belirtilmiştir. Katılımcılar, kendi profesyonel gelişimleri sırasında yaşadıkları zorluklar ışığında, daha etkili bir profesyonel gelişim için bazı önerilerde bulunmuşlardır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Mesleki Gelişim, İngiliz Dili Eğitimi, Yüksek Öğretim, Sürekli Mesleki Gelişim, Mesleki Gelişimde Yaşanan Zorluklar

*To My Family
and
My Beloved Father in Heaven*

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

CELTA	Certificate in English Language Teaching to Adults
COTE	Certificate for Overseas Teachers of English
DELTA	Diploma in Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages
EAP	English for Academic Purposes
ELT	English Language Teaching
HEC	Higher Education Context
ICELT	In-Service Certificate in English Language Teaching
MONE	Ministry of National Education
OECD	The Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development
TALIS	Teaching and Learning International Study

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.0. Presentation

This chapter consists of four main sections. Initially, the background to the study is provided. This section is followed by the purpose of the study and the research questions along with the significance of the study. In the final section, the definitions of the key terms which are frequently used in the study are presented.

1.1. Background to the Study

For the last 20 years, unlike the situation in the previous century, learning English has become a prerequisite and a privilege for many educational institutions and the competitive job market because of its function as an international medium of communication. In Turkey's context, starting from elementary education to higher education, English language instruction is obligatorily offered both in state and private institutions. Still; however, the expected quality and outcome have not been achieved, which puts required teacher qualities and teacher education on the spot (Seferoğlu, 2006; Coşkun & Daloğlu, 2010, Karataş & Karaman, 2013).

21st century has witnessed an accelerated change in many fields of our lives including economy, politics, science, technology, social practices and values. Another area where this rapid change has become visible is education. Along with many other changes, the importance of English language has been increasing at an incredible pace, as well. The effect of globalization on societies and economy with the increasing global mobility has resulted in a dramatic increase in the demand for the field of teaching English to speakers of other languages (TESOL). Therefore, all

those shifts in focus including different approaches to English Language Teaching (ELT), the rapid change of instructional technologies, changing roles attributed to teachers as well as other pedagogical improvements have an impact on teachers and their practices. In respect to this, teachers are now in conflict in terms of their ideals and in-class realities as well as ever-increasing demands of students, their parents and educational institutions (Paran, 2012, p.457). As a result of these changes, teachers are expected to better themselves in their knowledge and skills (Karataş & Karaman, 2013). These expectations lead scholars and policy makers to review pre-service teacher education and professional development of teachers during their service.

Professional development plays a vital role in the improvement of teachers' both personal and professional knowledge as well as cultivating their profession by assisting them to review their values, beliefs and attitudes and understandings (Villegas-Reimers, 2003; Desimone, 2009). For that reason, there is a considerable increase in the willingness to support teachers regarding their professional development. This is also evident in the extensive literature available showing the acknowledgement of international and national donor agencies about the importance of professional development; the support of many international and national organizations to enhance teacher education (Villegas-Reimers, 2003).

In Turkey, teacher education is considered to include two phases, which are pre-service education and in-service education. Essentially, language teacher education programs and departments base their instructions on what teacher candidates need to know (core skill courses in pre-service education), how to teach (pedagogical courses) and how to learn to teach (pre-service teaching practice) (Doğan, 2016). The common courses with the content of these provide pre-service teacher candidates with mostly theoretical adequacy required to be authorized to assume a professional teaching status. The knowledge obtained at the undergraduate level; therefore, is prominently different from its potential use in language classrooms (Ünal, 2010). Considering that pre-service teacher candidates are mostly equipped with theoretical knowledge; many teachers acknowledge that learning to teach –in

essence- starts when they are in their own classrooms to teach (Farrell, 2012; Busher, Gündüz, Cakmak & Lawson, 2015).

When it comes to in-service teacher education, for many years, professional development has been seen as ‘in-service training’ or ‘staff development’ (Villegas-Reimers, 2003, p.12), in which teachers are expected to attend one-shot trainings including seminars and conferences on a particular issue (Dikilitaş, 2013). However, there is evidence in the literature that (Hunzicker, 2011, p.177; Villegas- Reimers, 2003) this ‘sit and get’ kind of trainings have not shown desired outcomes neither in improving teachers’ practices nor resulting in better student performance. This brings the dichotomy “training” and “development”. According to Ur (1997), there is a distinct difference between teacher training and teacher development. She implies that in training sessions, teachers are put in a position where they are expected to receive the knowledge offered without their own initiative to come up with new outcomes, thoughts or practical skills, which can be viewed as more like pre-service training. The term “training” is associated more with the current responsibilities and immediate goals of teachers and it involves understanding fundamental requirements in applying teaching (Richards & Farrell, 2005).

As for “development”, Freeman (1998) suggests that a longer term of teacher growth should be highlighted. In the same vein, Richards and Farrell (2005) point out “development” serves a longer-term goal and seeks to facilitate growth of teachers’ understanding of teaching and of themselves as teachers” (p. 4). Despite the different approaches to the terms “training and development” presented in literature, most of the time they overlap as “professional development” which incorporates both immediate and long-term goals (Korkmazgil, 2015).

Bredeson (2003, p.14) acknowledges that to have professional development functioning efficiently, it should have “continuity”. Workshops, conferences, guest speakers and a variety of in-service meetings have been utilized as the main source of professional development opportunities provided for teachers to equip themselves with the necessary expert knowledge and skills required to handle educational problems and diverse needs of today’s students. The significance of those practices

is unquestionable. Still; however, they have been mainly criticized to be insufficient to provide *constant* guidance for teachers. The complex nature of teaching is better to be improved with *continuous* professional development since isolated inputs which do not build on one another do not help to achieve the expected outcomes both regarding teacher development and students' performance (Lessing & De Witt, 2007). Besides, the dissatisfaction of many isolated pieces of professional development programs has brought a growing need for teachers who are committed to life-long nature of effective continuous professional development (Alan, 2015).

As a broader concept, professional development in teaching profession embodies any type of activity, strategy or program designed and implemented to improve teachers' beliefs and practices both inside and outside the classroom to reach better student achievement (Guskey, 2002). Professional development has only recently been regarded as *a long-term process including regular opportunities and experiences planned systematically to promote growth and development in the profession* (Wells, 2014, p.1). This change has led many researchers in the field to address it as “a new model” of teacher education and “a new paradigm” of professional development (Walling & Lewis, 2000).

1.2. The Purpose of the Study and Research Questions

The present case study aims to develop a thorough understanding of the professional development challenges experienced by language instructors working in a preparatory program of a foundation university in central Turkey. Semi-structured interviews with eight English language instructors whose native tongue is Turkish are utilized as the primary source of data for the study with the aim of exploring their views, lived experiences and challenges faced regarding their professional development. To this end, the study aims to answer the following research questions;

1. How do instructors working at the foundation university view professional development?
2. How do instructors working at the foundation university experience professional development?

3. What suggestions do they propose regarding challenges associated with their own professional development and the opportunities provided in their institutions?

1.3. The Significance of the Study

Due to political, social and economic changes the world has gone through, language teachers today are required to possess different skills and competencies from what was expected in the previous decade (OECD, 2011). Higher education has also undergone major changes, which has resulted in a sense of “*unpredictability and uncertainty*” among teachers (Brancato, 2003). Ever increasing demands of society, educational organizations and students make institutions find new ways to enhance the effectiveness of their instruction through professional development to help their teachers stay up-to-date. In such a field which is subject to a constant change both due to the nature of the profession and the global status of English language, even the most recent literature may not be comprehensive enough to provide up-to-date models, experiences or results. Hence, there is a call for continuous research on the views of teachers on their own professional development, teacher education and professional growth opportunities provided for them as well as the challenges they experience. The investigation of those can pave the way for the improvement of the quality of education for all parties included (Tarhan, Karaman, Kemppinen & Aerila, 2019).

Secondly, there is still room for further inquiry at tertiary level. Despite a huge body of research on professional development in primary, secondary and high schools especially for the last ten years (Özer, 2004; Bümen, 2009; Özdemir, 2013; Bayar, 2014; Yirci, 2017; Eroğlu, 2019; Can, 2019; Kulbak, 2019); at tertiary level, the viewpoints, challenges and future implications may differ to a great extent. Even within higher education itself, it is important to explore differences between instructors working in different contexts regarding their perceptions towards professional development, including the hardships they encounter. Their commitments may show differences based on the work environment as well as the opportunities provided to them to enhance their knowledge and skills in different

Turkish ELT contexts (Coşkuner, 2001). Thus, context-bound inquiries are essential (Eksi, 2010; Seferoğlu, 2001; Özdemir, 2013).

Lastly, the study at hand covers an in-depth combination of various elements including teachers' perceptions, their perceived needs, lived experiences, challenges faced and suggestions for a better professional development program, as addressed as an immediate need in the literature (Borg, 2015). This may provide an insight for future decisions on professional development of teachers at tertiary level. A deeper understanding of language teachers' perceptions and experiences on their own professional development may guide decision-makers and teacher-trainers to revisit their existing professional development understanding and their conduct. It may help to build a stronger and more effective communication between program developers and teachers, which –in turn- may assist teachers to realize their own perceptions and the value of their own professional development as well as leading to better student outcomes, especially in the institution the study takes place. For the institution and program developers, the feedback gained through the results of the study may be of great value as an initial step of change for improvement.

1.4. Definition of the Key Terms

Below is a list of frequently referred terms throughout the study;

Professional Development (PD): Systematic efforts including any activity, strategy or program to make changes in classroom practices of teachers, in their beliefs, values and attitudes to improve students' performance can be referred as PD (Guskey, 2002). In the current study, professional development covers any top-down or bottom-up, formal or informal, short-term or long-term activities and practices engaged in by teachers (Ganser, 2000).

Continuous Professional Development (CPD): A life-long, continuous learning experience, having the perception that effective teacher is the one who never stops learning. It is a constant and never-ending process of becoming better for all the parties of education (Wells, 2014; Doğan, 2016).

Professional Development Activities/Practices: Any type of activity/practice with the aim of improving teachers' effectiveness and their professional "self" based both on skills and knowledge required for the profession. Attending seminars, workshops, observations, conferences, being a part of MA, PhD studies or more informally chatting with the colleagues about teaching profession or reading scholarly publications can be given as an example (Ganser, 2000).

Professional Development Programs: These are systematically developed to improve the competence and performance of teachers. Those can be institution-based or common nation-wide or international programs aiming to improve teaching profession and teachers as professionals.

Pre-Service Teacher Education: The education provided to student-teachers prior to service to help them prepare themselves for the profession.

In-Service Teacher Education: The education provided to teachers during their service.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0. Presentation

In this chapter, firstly the notion of professional identity is discussed. Secondly, definitions of terms and explanations regarding professional development is provided. This is followed by the sections which cover the requirements of “effective” professional development along with the barriers and limitations to it. Studies relevant to professional development, existing research in Turkey’s context, current approaches to professional development and the status of teaching are also presented in this chapter. Finally, a brief historical overview of English language teaching and professional development in Turkey context are covered. The chapter ends with the issue of evaluation on professional development.

2.1. The Notion of Professional Identity

Vignoles et al. (2006) defines identity as subjective psychological experience affected by the interpersonal communications with the others within the professional context rather than merely referring to an objective “essence of self”. With our personal communication and interactions with our context, hereby, it is possible to learn others’ expectations from us and to try to meet those. Hence, it is not wrong to assume that personal identity namely “the subjective perception of self” is the basis of the formation and the maintenance of professional identity (Caza & Creary, 2016). According to Gee (2001), identity development is a continuous process of identifying one’s own self as a specific type of person and being characterized as such in a certain context and it takes place in an intersubjective domain. In a much simpler way, it is the answer to “who I am”. It is not merely *an accumulation of*

skills and information, but a process of becoming—to become a certain person or, conversely, to avoid becoming a certain person (Wenger, 1998, p. 215).

Professional identity is an essential theoretical construct including one's conception and perception regarding how they perceive themselves as professionals serving in the domain of their selected profession and how they communicate this to the others within the occupational context (Stricker, Westhauser, Lyle, Lowry & Sheets, 2019). This construct affects one's beliefs, attitudes, motives and experiences in the work setting and beyond (Schein, 1978; Karataş & Karaman, 2013). The importance of professional identity lies under its meaning-making process for individuals. While constructing a professional identity, individuals can identify a purpose and meaning for themselves as well as assuming a role which benefits the society (Caza & Creary, 2016).

Even though the term “professional identity” is commonly referred as a singular notion, the relevant literature has emphasized that the perceived concept of “self” is neither unitary nor fixed (Taner & Karaman, 2013). Instead, it is recognized as a “*complex, multidimensional and dynamic system of representations and meanings which develops over time as the result of interactions between the person and an environment*” (Kelchtermans & Vandenberghe, 1994, p.47).

In the field of education as well, professional identity and the process of teacher professional development formation have become a separate field for an inquiry for researchers in the last decade (Sachs, 2001; Beijaard, Meijer & Verloop, 2004; Luehmann, 2007; Luehmann & Tinelli, 2008; Beauchamp & Thomas, 2009; Taner & Karaman, 2013; Livingston, 2016). Professional development of teachers does not only entail acquisition of the subject-matter and the required teaching skills and practices but it also embodies the formation and mediation of identity. Therefore, this identity development at the very intersection of professional context and personal experience is an essential element of professional learning (Mockler, 2011). For Connolly and Clandinin (1999), this “identity work” which lies at the center of professional development as a means of creating personal “*stories to live*

by” is sensitive to the question of who teachers are and how they perceive themselves as practitioners (p.102).

Teachers’ identity is formed and shaped through pre-service and in-service education programs, the changing roles they assume in their career path and their interactions within and outside their educational communities (Taner & Karaman, 2013; Dikilitaş & Yaylı, 2018). For Goodson and Cole (1994), teachers are the people and professionals whose lives and work are given meaning to and -in a broader sense- are shaped by conditions and factors both in and beyond classroom and school. Professional identity can be defined as a complex and dynamic equilibrium in which teachers’ self-image regarding their own profession is equilibrated with various roles teachers feel they have to assume (Volkman & Anderson, 1998; Tezgiden Cakcak, 2015). In the same vein, Coldron and Smith (1999) states that;

Being a teacher is a matter of being seen as a teacher by himself or herself and by others; it is a matter of acquiring and then redefining an identity that is socially legitimated. This process begins with the conferment of qualified status on teachers and it continues in the way colleagues, children and parents respond to them (p.713).

Teaching experience includes and requires a constant construction of a sustainable teacher identity. This identity construction is directly linked to creating one’s own social position in social space and it is the direct result of the communication between the agent and the environment surrounding the agent. Regarding the role of the agent in the identity construction, we can conclude that some parts of teachers’ identity are inborn and some are obtained by them. The rest; on the other hand, is thrust upon them, meaning that they are socially given.

The notion of professional identity of teachers is affected by the educational traditions enclosing them. Coldron & Smith (1999) mention some of these traditions as “*the craft tradition, the artistic tradition, moral tradition and the scientific tradition*” (pp. 716-720). In their terms, teachers can be considered as crafts-persons due to their actions to achieve pre-determined contextual goals. The success of these actions is based on teachers’ immediate reactions to contextual factors and on the exercise of obtainable teaching skills. These actions and the communication

between the agent and the environment via every confirmation or the rejection of the practice by the contextual environment contributes to the professional identity formation of the teachers.

Teaching requires teachers to make moral judgements constantly inside and beyond the classroom. In the meaning-making and decision process, teachers actively (re)consider their social and professional position in the context. During such a mental process, their personal and professional values are constantly at work, which develops their professional identities.

As for the artistic tradition, it starts with the claim that teaching cannot be accepted as an unenthusiastically maintained technical or moral activity, nor can it be externally enforced. The demands of professional context, the effects of personal traits and the prerequisites of the social environment require teachers to find the balance among those in their own ways between creativity and control, which contributes to their professional identity work.

To be able to engage with the scientific tradition, teachers are expected to have required skills and be experts on their subject matter. To this end, they are expected to analyze the recent relevant literature critically, become aware of their perceptions and conduct their own research by testing their assumptions. Investing in such an investigation is of great value to form a professional “self” as a teacher (Coldron & Smith, 1999).

Teachers’ identity construction changes depending on the context, teaching-learning approaches of the teacher/institution and the relationships between different parties in the educational domain. For some, re-forming their teacher identity may not be an easy and smooth process while it is comfortable for others (Livingston, 2016).

A successful process of teacher identity formation can be apparent only when teachers are open and willing to change and motivated to be engaged in a self-directed developmental process, which oftentimes requires a longer period of time unlike “sit-and-get” kind of workshops (Hunzicker, 2011). Strong commitment and

awareness towards one's self and pedagogical issues are recognized as the key stones of identity construction of teachers as well as having an objective evaluation of their own practices and having flexibility (Dikilitaş & Yaylı, 2018).

2.2. Professional Development

Teachers' professional development is a vital component of teaching. With our fast-moving world and all the changes this brings, now teachers have more options around to serve the best. Theoretical knowledge provided to teacher candidates in pre-service programs may not necessarily match with what is expected from teachers in actual classrooms (Seferoğlu, 2006; Coşkun & Daloğlu, 2010). The challenges waiting for teachers in classrooms may be unique to the context, meaning that those cannot be presupposed during the initial trainings (Clarke, 1994). Although practicum courses in pre-service education may give an idea about the experience of teaching (Oosterheert & Vermunt, 2003), teaching environment in a real classroom and teaching in a different environment may be totally unfamiliar to teachers regarding learner profile, the policy of the institution, physical facilities and the materials available (Karataş & Kraman, 2013). Besides, those practicum courses are typically offered at the very end of the pre-service training courses, which is too late for student teachers to get prepared enough for their actual teaching contexts.

Since it is not possible for pre-service teacher training programs to fully equip student teachers with all the competencies and requirements expected to be assumed to perform well in the profession, in-service teacher training programs are approached as a continuum of the pre-service education. In-service teacher development programs include a range of professional development activities and practices a) to enhance PD competence of teachers, b) to help teachers reflect their competencies in their performance and to increase student performance (Avalos, 2011; Özdemir, 2013; Vescio, Ross & Adams, 2008).

As stated earlier, education has been going through some reforms throughout the world. With those rapid changes in the field of education and the mindset that *an education system is only as good as its teachers* (UNESCO, 2014, p. 9), teachers are

now expected to keep up with the most recent improvements in the field and to be adaptive to those changes in order for them to equip their students with the skills and competencies required to perform well in our fast-changing world (OECD, 2011; Tarhan, Karaman, Kemppinen & Aerila, 2019). This situation makes professional development for teachers both a privilege and a prerequisite to survive in this demanding and competitive field.

Along with the growing body of research which highlights the necessity and the value of professional development, institutions have started to seek ways to encourage their teachers to be engaged in some professional development activities, including doing peer observations, conducting action research, doing reflective teaching to combine learning and teaching to get positive peak in their career (Yeşilbursa, 2009; Bozak, 2018).

There is an overlap in the literature regarding the terms “professional development” and “in-service teacher training” (hereafter INSET). For Craft (2000), INSET is with more emphasis on short terms aims and specific strategies that can be employed in classrooms. The goal of INSET programs is to widen teachers’ horizon by providing information and practice opportunities on issues like effective in class strategies to start a lesson, material adaptation and providing feedback on students’ performance (Richards & Farrell, 2005). While INSET programs aim to help teachers on specific issues in a limited time period, teachers’ professional development is associated more with long term gains providing teachers with a holistic understanding of the steps of second language acquisition, changing roles assumed by teachers, different teaching practices in class and in turn, their own language teaching theory (Dinç-Ayaz, 2019).

As for professional development as a term, the literature provides a wide range of definitions. Elliott (1991, cited in Kervin & Rodwell, 2007) states that professional development is more than just experiences teachers have - “*Professional development is the individualistic and possessive process of acquiring techniques*” (p.106). According to Guskey (2002), professional development can be defined as systematic efforts including any activity, strategy or program to make changes in

classroom practices of teachers, in their beliefs, values and attitudes to improve students' performance. Wells (2014) states that it is a long-term process with continuous opportunities and experiences which are systematically organized in order to support growth throughout one's career starting with initial preparation phase (pre-service and in-service teacher education) until retirement. This dynamic process embodies both formal learning experiences like attending conferences and informal experiences which may include reading scholarly publications (Ganser, 2000). Bolam (2000, p.272) views professional development as *the process by which teachers and headteachers learn, enhance and use appropriate knowledge, skills and values*. With a much broader definition of professional development, Day (1999, p.4) states that

Professional development consists of all of natural learning experiences and those conscious and planned activities which are intended to be of direct or indirect benefit to the individual, group or school and which contribute, through these, to the quality of education in the classroom. It is the process by which, alone, and with others, teachers review, renew and extend their commitment as change agents to the moral purposes of teaching; and by which they acquire and develop critically the knowledge, skills and emotional intelligence essential to good professional thinking, planning and practice with children, young people and colleagues through each phase of their teaching lives.

Professional development can be perceived as a conscious learning process which is the direct outcome of the meaningful interplay between teachers and the professional context they are surrounded by. Ultimately, this interplay results in improvements in teachers' teaching practices and experiences as well as their assumptions and perceptions towards those practices/experiences (Kelchtermans, 2004).

Considering all of these, research has shown that professional development itself may be understood as an entity which is far from being continuous; and therefore "continuity" has been attached to the term (Güçlü, 2019).

2.3. Continuous Professional Development

Whether the pre-service education is quality enough or not, it –by itself- is not sufficient enough to equip prospective teachers for their rapidly-changing and a

highly demanding profession. For teachers, especially those who are relatively new to the teaching profession, in-service programs are of great value to better prepare them for the expectations of the institution, requirements of the teaching profession, potential challenges along with developing their own professional development plan.

Globalization – and increasing mobility as a result of it- rapid changes in economy and technological improvements have had a deep impact on the system of schooling and educational policies worldwide. Since today's classrooms and students is going to shape the future of the world, students are expected to be well-prepared to have a variety of complex skills and experiences for the increasing demands of the future world which are difficult to foresee (Korkmazgil, 2015).

To this end, teachers have *“a need, as never before, to update and improve their skills through professional development”* (Craft, 2000, p. 6). In the same vein, being concerned with higher expectations and better quality that teaching profession requires, even the experienced teachers are expected to be well-equipped with quality subject matter and skills, highly motivated and updated about the recent advances and changes in the field of education not just at the point of entry into teaching profession but also until the end of their careers (Day & Sachs, 2005). Thus, the need for higher standards of achievement put an increasing pressure on all parties of educational institutes, especially on teachers. This perception has resulted in a closer and a deeper look at Continuous (or Continuing) Professional Development (CPD) as it is termed in the contemporary literature (Güçlü, 2019). To this end, many educational institutions have found their own CPD units to cater for various needs of their instructions (Alan, 2015).

Though in 1990's, taking part in PD activities and experiences were an individual choice for many teachers in the field of education; in 2000's, PD was reintroduced as *“ongoing and/or continuous”* professional development (Craft,2000) and it has started to be considered as a *“compulsory, long-term process including regular opportunities and experiences planned systematically to promote growth and development in the profession”* (Wells, 2014, p.1). CPD refers to a life-long,

continuous learning experience, having the perception that effective teacher is the one who never stops learning. It is a constant and never-ending process of becoming better for all the parties of education, including teachers, teacher trainers, administrators and the students in the direction of their predetermined goals (Doğan, 2016).

Throughout their career, teachers improve both personally and professionally as a matter of course due experience built up every day. However, this natural learning just based upon the experience alone restricts improvement in the long run (Day, 1999). The literature has also provided a plethora of studies highlighting the importance of ‘continuity’ of the learning as well as the importance of being adaptive to the changes, enriching teachers’ pedagogical repertoire and the ability to utilize new knowledge and experiences to better themselves (Turner-Bisset, 2001; Bransford, Darling-Hammond & LePage 2005; Cumming, 2011).

Keeping in mind the necessity of continuous and career-long professional development for all professions, teaching profession encompasses several differences, which require them to be adaptive and competent more. Teachers constantly confront the complex nature of decision-making depending on their pedagogic and academic knowledge, their personal traits, the needs of the students as well as their learning differences and the requirements of the context. This decision-making process may include high-stake consequences for the learners. Bransford et al. (2005) stated that –for this reason- teachers are required to have what is the best for the learners as the base of their decisions. Since the above-mentioned variables are never constant and unitary, continuous professional development is a prerequisite of success.

The need for a constant professional development for teachers in the field of education is even more apparent for English language teachers since the field of second language education has witnessed more changes and fluctuations compared to other fields of education (Celce-Murcia, 2001).

Globalization- as one of the factors affecting education- has been impacted by two major mediators, which are technology and English Language. English language as a lingua-franca of today's political, cultural and economic interactions, along with the new trends and paradigms in educational fields have created a considerable and understandable need for a career-long development especially for English language teachers (Celce-Murcia, 2001, p.3).

Regarding teacher education, literature has provided the terms “training” and “development”. Those terms – professional development and in-service training- can be confused frequently as being synonymous (Muijs, Day, Harris & Lindsay, 2004). While “training” is oftentimes referred to as short-term goals to be achieved in a specified time and specific way, especially in the forms of INSET activities/ programs, the term “development” centers more on a long-run teacher growth (Freeman, 1989). Even if these two terms may have different connotation and assumptions for some, they are often used interchangeably. However, the common point given in the literature is that professional learning may be achieved through ‘sit and get’, ‘one shot’, ‘spray-on’ (Mockler, 2005) PD experiences. Nevertheless, still they are not–on their own- the equivalent to continuous professional development. CPD itself is a container term including both short-term and long-term goals and experiences. It may arise from workshops, seminars, conferences, action research, peer coaching, in-class observations, mentoring (Lieberman, 1996) and all other kind of informal/ formal activities teachers are engaged in regardless of being self-initiated/self-directed or institution mandated/ planned (Conlon, 2004).

Holloway (2000) states that “sit-and-get" type of professional learning activities are effective only when ample amount of time is given to the participant teachers to implement what is obtained into their classrooms. Likewise, it is suggested that sit-and-get kind of activities are fruitful only when they are organized as series of events following each other (Özbilgin, Erkmén & Karaman, 2016). Besides, in-house CPD activities may not be as effective as they are meant especially if the more experienced teachers are not knowledgeable about relevant and the recent inquiry-based practices that they are expected to introduce to other teachers/participants. From a different angle, Guskey and Yoon (2009) claim that involving experts out of

the institution may bring more encouraging results as long as a structured monitoring and follow-up practices are implemented within the institution. Even though individual initiatives and efforts for CPD are of great value in improving teachers' teaching practices, a close, structured monitoring and some core principals are prerequisites of a successful CPD (Guskey & Yoon, 2009).

2.4. Requirements for “Effective” Professional Development

Professional development is the sum of both formal and informal learning experiences gained by teachers and the school administrators which advance their personal and professional knowledge and practice as well as improving the collective success of the institution so as to address current and the upcoming challenges regarding education (Borg, 2015). “Effective” professional development can be defined- in broader terms- as activities /experiences which result in enhancements in teacher knowledge or/and practice or in learner outcomes (Jaquith, Mindich, Wei & Darling-Hammond, 2010).

What constitutes professional development varies in the literature with diverse approaches and understandings towards it. Besides, all educational contexts are quite different from each other regarding both their priorities, educational policies and the opportunities they can provide for their teachers to develop themselves. Still; however, there are some common grounds for an efficient CPD available in the literature.

When well-performing educational systems around the world are examined, the results can show that they rely on continuous professional development for their teachers to;

- update their knowledge about recent advances
- help them review and renew their beliefs, attitudes and practices regarding contemporary research in their fields.
- create an opportunity for them to adapt the changes

- support the novice and weaker teachers to become more efficient and professional (Schleicher, 2012, pp.74-92).

More specifically, the objectives of an English language teacher development program are having the teachers become familiar with the second language acquisition process, helping them understand in which conditions their teaching roles change based on their learner profile, helping them be aware of their own decision-making process and the factors affecting it, providing teachers with opportunities to review and renew their own teaching theories and their pedagogical expertise (Richards & Farrell, 2005).

To be able to succeed in above-mentioned goals, various studies in literature have aimed to identify factors which positively affect the success of professional development practices (Broad & Evans, 2006; Borg, 2015). Based on the literature, there seems to be an emerging consensus on some factors which may dramatically increase the effectiveness of teacher professional development and therefore, help to meet the intended outcomes (Beavers, 2009). Still, however, it must be emphasized that the notion of “effectiveness” is *dynamic, fluid, personal, culture- and context-dependent, and ever-changing* over time (Akcan, et al., 2017, p.687) and therefore, a universal template for professional development is not possible to create.

Even within diverse contexts, though, it would be plausible to reach some consensus on the factors positively contributing to teacher professional development due to the overarching aim of education in general. According to Borg (2015) for example, a CPD activity/program must;

- Be suitable for the necessities of teachers and their learner profiles.
- Include teachers in decision-making process about all kinds of educational processes.
- Provide contextual alignment considering institutional, educational, social and cultural environments.
- Canalize administrative support to teachers.

- Create both internal and external support for teachers.
- Appreciate teachers' experiences and knowledge (Borg, 2015, p.6).

In the same vein, Darling-Hammond, Wei, Andree, Richardson and Orphanos (2009) proposed the following criteria to achieve an efficient and well-performing CPD. According to them; CPD must be intensive, constant and linked to everyday practice. It must be grounded on student learning and specific curriculum content. Likewise, (Webb, Robertson & Fluck, 2005) concluded that professional development process can be fruitful when it is a part of work day on a daily basis, when it is not formed as serious of events, when it leads to practical, collective and relevant outcomes for teachers for their everyday use. CPD must embrace the priorities and aims of the institution and it should provide a powerful interplay among colleagues. Wei (et al., 2009) also provides some additional strategies which may help to improve the quality of CPD. These include “*institution-based coaching*” and “*mentoring and induction programs*” (p.12) for novice teachers so as to enhance their effectiveness through the initial years of their profession (Karataş & Karaman 2013).

When all well-performing educational systems around the world are analyzed, it can be concluded that they do two important things for this higher performance. For an effective teaching, first teaching and learning should be personalized so as to meet the diverse needs of learners. The second thing is that a very high position and value should be attributed to teaching as a profession (Tarhan, Karaman, Kempainen & Aerila, 2019). High-achieving educational systems around the world consider investing in professional development as an investment rather than a cost (Robinson, 2013). It is also noted that the support provided to teachers must be constant and communicated with the teachers. Hence, institutional communication and support are needed when it comes to a fruitful professional development process.

Besides, Hirsh (2009) states that to boost student performance and meet the expectations of the rapidly-changing age; teachers are required to be competent in their subject-matter, knowledgeable about the underlying principles and assumptions of language learning, well-informed about student profile, their needs

and interests -while at the same time- be talented at the craft of being a teacher. These high expectations from teachers can be met only with the bolster of the institutions and educational departments of the country by planning and organizing high-quality and sustainable professional development opportunities for teachers. Those PD organizations and activities should be level/content dependent and data-driven to be effective. The mentioned data should directly be based on student performance and achievement regarding the expectations. Additionally, the continuity of the CPD activities is of value to attain higher and more sustainable outcomes regarding professional teacher development.

Despite the diverse aims and expectations leading teachers to be engaged in PD activities, some PD practices show considerably better and more efficient outcomes. While attending to one-shot events like conferences or one-off observational visits to other institutions is of the least effectiveness; collaborative studies, long-term qualification programs and informal dialogue are reported have been reported to have the most effective outcomes (Hunzicker, 2011; Villegas- Reimers, 2003; Özbilgin, Erkmen & Karaman, 2016). Furthermore, professional development is the most effective if it is "*relevant, collaborative and future-focused*" (AITSL, 2012 p.4). It should also scaffold teachers to reflect on, examine and deliberately improve their professional selves and their practice (AITSL, 2012).

On the other hand; however, Kennedy (1998) claims that one-fits-all kind of professional development activities are not only criticized because they are too brief to be engaged in. He states that another problem- maybe more importantly- is their content which can be regarded as irrelevant by most people. An effective professional development program or an activity must have a meaningful content for teachers and the word "content" here must not be understood wrong. It does not necessarily mean subject-matter content only. An in-service professional development program -for instance- may cover how to promote classroom management and discipline in different situations, how to teach a specific subject, how students learn, how to define sexual harassment and bullying legally and so forth. Besides, it should be organized such a way that trainees/attendees should not feel that they are jumping from one to another (Kennedy, 1998).

After their literature review on current approaches on PD; Borko, Jacobs and Koellner (2010) have grouped the essential components of “effective” professional development under three categories, which are common content, process and structure characteristics. Under the title of content characteristics, it is emphasized that the content of professional development should be grounded on everyday practice and student learning. In particular, it should encourage teachers more for teacher research on concrete tasks they can in a real sense benefit from, diverse teaching practices, assessment as well as theories about students’ thinking and learning. The content should be specific and suitable to guide teachers for ways to elicit and interpret students’ responses or any kind of student outcome. As for the procedural and the structural base of “effective” professional development, the literature review reports that there should be encouragement for active teacher participation before, during and after professional development efforts. The process should engage teachers in collaborative inquiry and reflection in and on action. For a collaborative work and professional community, trust and respect are the fundamentals. Additionally, PD must be grounded on the institutional context and expectations. Sustainability and continuity of these PD process and activities should be maintained (Borko, Jacobs & Koellner, 2010).

Besides all the above-mentioned ground rules for a more efficient PD, Guskey (2000) argues that one of the most important reasons why teachers fail to integrate what they have gained in their PD activities into their or why those gains cannot translate into positive learning outcomes for students is that the factors motivating teachers are often not taken into consideration by the ones who plan and organize those activities. This situation adversely affects teachers’ willingness to participate in PD activities and it is considered as an obstacle to an effective PD. Thus, it is possible to state that for a more “effective” PD, the above-mentioned factors must be considered while planning, organizing and evaluating professional development activities. The obstacles that hinder teachers’ participation in PD activities should first be identified and removed, and teachers should be constantly supported in establishing and implementing their professional development plans by identifying their needs and the expectations of their teaching context at every stage of their careers (OECD, 2016).

In short, relevant research available has revealed some features of professional development that can be correlated with increasing teacher quality as well as better teaching quality, which is also promising for better student performance. Those features reflect a consensus regarding the efficiency of professional development activities on (1) content of the activities, (2) procedural and structural characteristics, (3) teacher engagement and willingness in the activities (4) duration of the activities and (5) collective learning practice within the institutions (Guskey, 2000; Jeanpierre, Oberhauser & Freeman, 2005; Borg, 2015).

2.5. Barriers to Effective Professional Development

Although identifying the barriers and limitations to effective professional development is a valuable step to better educational policies, is not a simple task due to the complex nature of professional development regarding what it entails and various levels where professional development efforts operate. Factors working well for the effectiveness of the desired outcomes in a professional development effort may be quite irrelevant to a different context, level, an institution or an individual. So, it can be expected to get different responses when individuals and different stakeholders are asked to identify the factors that limit and/or hinder their professional development. Relevant literature; however, shows that those different responses are in a way interrelated, which leads us to the understanding that it is possible to mention some commonalities which hinders or decreases the desired effectiveness of professional development practices. The table below presents some common factors identified as barriers to effective professional development in the relevant literature.

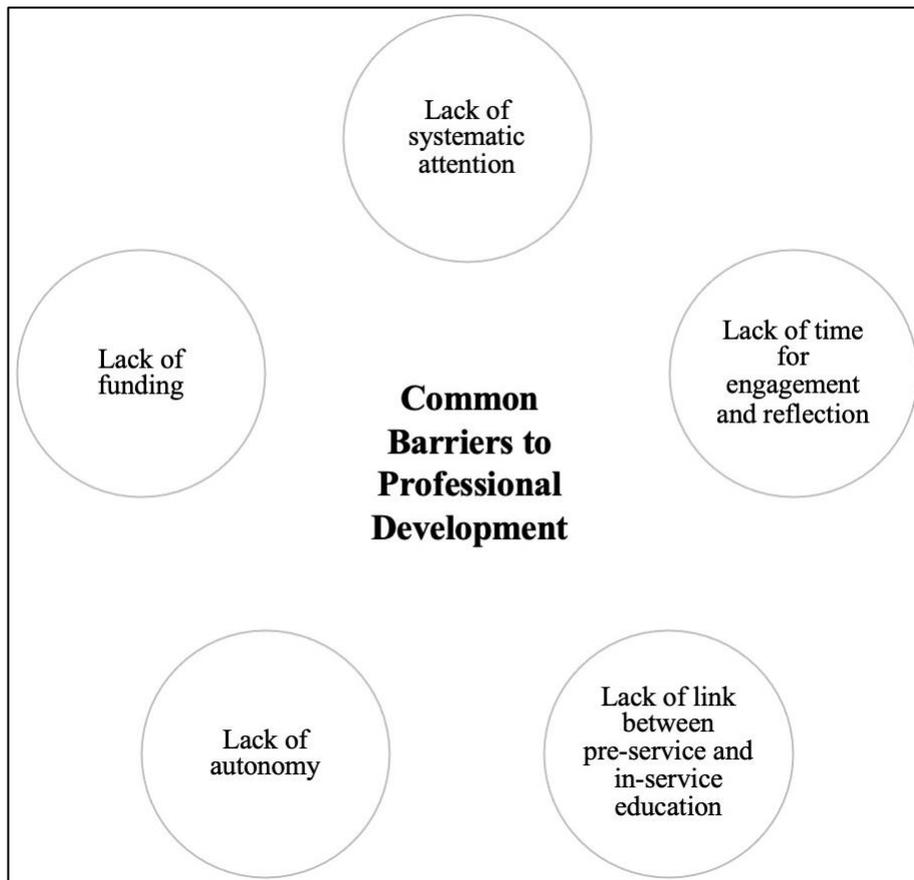


Figure 1. Common barriers to an effective PD

As can be seen in *Figure 1* above, the absence of some factors has been reported to have a negative effect on desired outcomes of professional development practice and processes. There is no single, best method for professional development, likewise the factors hindering it may show variety depending on the educational context. Firstly, lack of attention and importance given to PD of teachers may contribute to the reluctance of teachers to be engaged in PD activities. The initiation, continuous support and working atmosphere of an institution are pivotal for effectiveness of PD efforts (Johnson, 2006; Earley & Bubb, 2007; Johnson & Marx, 2009). In the same vein, lack of a professional community may also prevent teachers from initiating or being engaged in PD activities with the fear of no help being provided (Desimone, 2011).

Another commonly referred barrier to professional development is lack of relevance between preservice education and in-service practices. These two are expected to be

relevant and complementary. Teacher education programs expect institutions where prospective teachers will be working to be equipped with sufficient and suitable resources, expertise and opportunities whereas employers find new graduates lack required skills and attitudes vital for an efficient learning environment (Seferoğlu, 2006; Coşkun & Daloğlu, 2010). Another issue can be identified as the lack of linkage between curriculum of undergrad programs and teaching skills and content knowledge required in work places (Ünal, 2010).

Lack of time for engagement and reflection is also a concern to be engaged in professional development. Teachers need time to obtain new skills, practices and knowledge, to transfer those to teaching practices, to experiment with the acquired skills and knowledge as well as reflecting on them. Workload has been identified as one of the most frequently reported reason of lack of initiation of teachers to be engaged in PD activities (Supovits & Turner, 2000; Guskey, 2003; Desimone, 2011).

Teachers should be intrinsically motivated to develop themselves professionally. Mandated PD practices are shown to result in less effective results regarding teachers, administrators, trainers and student outcomes. Additionally, considering the process, professional development should not be merely aimed to be achieved by “one-fits-all” kind of practices. Lack of flexibility, autonomy and variety in the way of conduct hinders the potential effectiveness of PD activities (Johnson & Marx 2009; Guskey, 2009).

Finally, there should be available and sufficient resources allocated only for teacher training and professional development as well as materials and aids necessary for this. Those include providing suitable infrastructure and adequate hardware and software. Besides, lack of fund allocated to teachers’ actual teaching time if they are expected to be engaged in a professional development activity during that time. More funding is a must if the priority is given to the comfort of teachers (Adamy & Heinecke, 2005). Above mentioned studies relevant to common factors considered as barriers to “effective” PD are presented in Figure 1.

2.6. Studies Relevant to Professional Development

Research provided by the relevant literature demonstrates that professional development is a need to improve the quality of education in many perspectives. As Day (1999) puts it, professional development is *the joint responsibility of teachers, schools and government* (p.2). Professional development in general is associated with (1) increasing teacher quality, (2) teacher empowerment, (3) better learner outcomes, (4) institutional advancement, (5) educational reforms and policies and (6) availability of professional communities in the relevant literature, which is further elaborated below;

Teachers' professional and personal improvement: At the very core of professional development activities, the underlying aim is to improve teachers' personal and professional selves as well as their teaching practices by supporting them through the pathway to review, renew and advance their skills, knowledge, perceptions and attitudes (Blandford, 2000; Bolam, 2000; Supovitz & Turner, 2000; Villegas-Reimers, 2003; Borko, 2004; Bransford, Darling-Hammond & LePage 2005; Cumming, 2011). There is a plethora of studies reporting the positive correlation between "efficient and long-run" professional development opportunities provided to teachers and increased teacher effectiveness in their classes by putting extra emphasis on the length of the PD process/activities (Holloway, 2000; Villegas-Reimers, 2003; Hunzicker, 2011; Jaquith, Mindich, Wei & Darling-Hammond, 2011; Wells, 2013). Supovits and Turner (2000) state that there is a positive correlation between the length and intensity of PD activities and efficiency of them. Considering teachers' professional, personal and contextual success, encouraging results seem to emerge if PD experience is deeper and more sustainable.

Teacher empowerment: Teacher empowerment is another key term provided in the relevant literature as a critical and an urgent factor for the effectiveness of teachers' professional development process. Wells (2014) states that one way to support teachers in their professional development path is to position them as practitioner researchers who are in the power of generating a positive change in their educational and social contexts (Tezgiden Cakcak, 2015). Louis, Marks and Kruse (1996)

highlights the significance of teacher empowerment as decision-makers in their educational context. Educational policies in many parts of the world are constructed to support teachers merely as “*the doer not the thinker, the manager not the scholar, the technician not the intellectual*” (Dutt, 2003, p. 2). In a sense, teachers are expected to participate “*competency-driven, school-based teacher training*”, which may result in ineffective professional development for teachers in terms of reluctance to be a part of PD process, higher defensive barriers, lacking a sense of ownership over their teaching and student learning, the feeling of disempowerment and resistance to change and development (Dutt, 2003; Wells, 2014). There are also some studies which points out the need for an “effective” and urgent professional development for wider social movements for public education and its transformation (Hargreaves, 2000; Caza & Creary, 2016).

Better learner outcomes: Apart from the link between professional development opportunities provided to teachers and increased teacher effectiveness and power, literature also provides promising evidence on better student outcomes resulting from improved instruction and subject matter of the teachers (Blandford, 2000; Camblin & Steger, 2000; Stronge & Tucker, 2000; Guskey, 2002; Fishman, Marx, Best & Tal, 2003; Borko, 2004; Jacob & Lefgren, 2004; Earley & Bubb, 2007; Vescio, Ross & Adams, 2008; Hirsh, 2009; Avalos, 2011; Özdemir, 2013; Tarhan, Karaman, Kemppinen & Aerila, 2019). Teacher expertise is one of the most important factors which affects student learning (UNESCO, 2014 p.9) and there are many ways through which it can be obtained such as formal academic education, teacher training courses, personal learning and development efforts. However, investing in and supporting the field of in-service professional development may lead to quicker and more positive student outcomes. Better student achievement can be a direct and natural outcome of a structured and well-planned professional development –especially if it focuses on the parts of curriculum at which students are academically weaker (Borko, 2004).

Institutional advancement: Professional development of teachers can also be directly or indirectly linked to the advancement and the effectiveness of the institution (Villegas-Reimers, 2003; Desimone, 2009). Educational institutions

which do not pay enough attention to the professional development of their teachers usually lose the best teachers (Earley & Bubb, 2007). In a sense, professional development is the best investment for an institution rather than a cost as it can be seen so on the very surface level (Robinson, 2013). By implementing professional development policies and organizing PD activities, educational institutions can improve their own quality by directly or indirectly encouraging recruitment and retention and in turn having better student performance and outcomes.

Educational reforms and policies: Educational policies developed to meet the need of teachers regarding their continuous professional development are also an area of interest in the relevant literature. Policymakers in the field of education generate educational policies regarding professional development so that instructional practice and outcomes achieved can be improved. Previous research and practices; on the other hand, highlights the fact that those policies may not necessarily be utilized as intended. Besides, professional development agenda planned is highly unlikely to suit diverse contexts. This situation brings about the importance of the working context of teachers as a core variable in planning which policies and how those policies get implemented (Hill, 2009).

The problem with the policy changes regarding professional development is that some policies – due to their top-down nature of implementation- may be not enough to bring about high-quality professional development outcomes. The reason for that is attributed to its limitation to ensure whether those predetermined professional development hours to be committed or practices required from teachers to fulfill for the sake of merit pay, license renewal or promotion are efficient or not (Jaquith, Mindich, Wei & Darling-Hammond, 2010). Policymakers should be responsible for and are expected to increase awareness and support among educational leaders, review policies and practice, set standards and priorities, strengthen teacher roles and consider altering the incentives affecting teachers' participation in professional activities (Corcoran, 1995).

The importance of professional communities: Another issue which is frequently referred to in the relevant literature is the belief that current professional

development efforts do not adequately contribute to teacher transformation regarding their instruction and –in turn –have a minimal effect on student achievement (Ingvarson, Meiers & Beavis, 2005). One approach suggested for a long-run and continuing professional development is to create strong professional learning communities (Beach, 2012). Louis, Marks and Kruse (1996) argues in their case study that there are some requirements so as to create well-performing professional communities. School environment including the design of it can contribute to creation of a strong professional community. School setting may include school size or teacher involvement in decision-making process. Professional communities also encompass human resources such as willingness for improvement, sufficient cognitive and personal skill base, openness for feedback and encouraging and assisting leadership. Professional learning communities include teachers and teacher educators who are autonomously engaged in a collective and collaborative working environment to support each other by shared planning, providing a chance for peer observation and peer feedback (Easton, 2011; Beach, 2012; Atas, 2018).

2.7. Current Approaches to Professional Development

Our contemporary and competitive world has increased expectations from students and -in turn- from teachers. With increasing expectations and rapidly-changing needs, teachers are expected to acquire and master new skills. For the acquisition of these new skills, teachers are expected to participate actively in the process of the curriculum studies, preparing authentic activities and assessments, integrating expected standards into daily educational practice, preparing students for standardized assessments and responding to relevant innovations in their fields. These changes require teachers to review their existing beliefs, values and practices regarding their profession. The climate for teacher professional development is subjected to constant change. *Changes in technology, economic trends and forecasts, leadership models, business philosophies, political climates, cultural and community mandates, and specific contextual concerns demand the attention of professional developers* (King & Lawler, 2003, p.8).

With the unprecedented improvement of technology in our age- to keep pace of the change- institutions, teachers and administrators within those institutions should build a professional identity which takes current approaches into consideration. Contemporary teachers are expected to utilize technology to develop and deepen their skills and to create tools and materials that will ensure the continuity of their own learning (Adamy & Heinecke, 2005). Professional development is approached with a constructivist lens, rather than focusing on transferring information. Besides, the fact that professional development is a continuing process and unlikely to be fully achieved with independent and irrelevant practices have been recognized by all the stakeholders in the field of education (Villegas-Reimers, 2003).

Most of the time, professional development is thought in the form of formal education activities including attending in workshops, seminars. Oftentimes, in-service teacher development efforts may consist of “experts” giving a speech on a hot-topic or several simultaneous talks given by “trainers”. These kind of sit-and-get kind of workshops are likely to provide teachers only with some handful advice on a specific situation or some beneficial materials unless there are no follow-ups to the experience (Hunzicker, 2011; Özbilgin, Erkmen & Karaman, 2016).

These common “one-size-fits-all workshops” do not require much intellectual struggle or active engagement in the professional development activities. Besides, they tend to ignore most of the contextual histories and conditions of teachers (Little, 1993). As Hill (2009) puts it “*participation does not mean results* (p.471). A predetermined content, practices and delivery of PD activities- which puts teachers into the position of “passive receivers of the information- may add to the reluctance of teachers to participate in such activities offered by “experts or trainers” who does not necessarily know much about individual and specific working contexts of teachers (Knowles, Holton III & Swanson, 2005). Thus, there is a disconnect between an expected PD which can boost teacher development and one-size-fits-all workshops. Still; however, despite much of these concerns are valid, if these events are well-designed and supported with follow-up activities, positive change in teachers’ beliefs and practices can be reached.

Failure in achieving expected results due to lack of “*focus, intensity, consistency, follow-up continuity and teacher engagement in the decision-making process*” (Corcoran, 1995, p.5) has created a universal need to change attitudes and beliefs to professional development. There has been a shift from behavioral to situational in the understanding of learning and teaching including the efforts for better professional development. This is a move from a more traditionally-centered in-service teacher training model in which a set of predetermined skills and content are transferred to teachers oftentimes in a sit-and-get kind of events to a more constructivist and situational approach which is grounded in real classroom practices and the actual needs of teachers (Borko, Jacobs & Koellner, 2010).

Despite not having a consensus on the best theory and practice regarding professional development, there has been relevant inquiries and reform efforts in the field. The current situation for professional development may offer some promising policy changes to achieve what is expected. Modern approaches to professional development can be associated with the shifts in the content of PD, knowledge, beliefs and approaches towards it as well as some procedural changes (Borko, Jacobs & Koellner, 2010; Tarhan, Karaman, Kemppinen & Aerila, 2019).

One of the emerging trends in teacher professional development is the call for a more comprehensive content and scope. Limited content which is delivered through single sit-and-get kind of format gives place to more emphasis on the process of PD by building capacity to understand subject matter, practices and underlying reasons. There is a move towards iterative co-construction of agenda by teachers and professional developer over time rather than predetermined conduct and content. Hence, any format and content relevant to context, perceived and actual needs of teachers may now be considered as professional development, without being necessarily linked to a formal setting (Pitsoe & Maila, 2012). Besides, in addition to short-term personal commitments and specific aims, a relatively new approach to longer duration in PD with more open-ended personal commitments and not necessarily with specific aims is adopted (Borko, Jacobs & Koellner, 2010).

Rather than being the passive receivers of what is presented, teachers are now expected to seek opportunities to explore new roles, keep up with emerging instructional techniques, evaluate their own practice and improve themselves both as teachers and life-long learners. Contemporary attitude towards professional development expects teachers to be active learners and researchers for themselves (Kumaravadivelu, 2001; King & Lawler, 2003; Komba & Nkumbi, 2008; Livingston, 2012).

Another emerging trend is adopting a more holistic approach to professional development in terms of the development of larger communities. Instead of being merely seen as a way of improving student performance, professional development is now approached as a means of providing well-being and self-esteem to teachers regarding their professions as well as improving them as individuals. Improving the instructional programs in which they serve and the community are added to teacher growth (Borko, Jacobs & Koellner, 2010).

There has been more emphasis on the need for collaborative and collegial learning environments to better professional development of teachers. For a better outcome, today teachers need more “free” time to collaborate with their colleagues, reflect on their own practices and to adopt new standards expected to be obtained (Kumaravadivelu, 2001; Korkmazgil, 2015). The understanding that more time should be created for teachers to be involved in any kind of professional development activities considering the time needed for “mentoring and reflection on action” has been adopted (Borko, Jacobs & Koellner, 2010). Additionally, the need for more autonomy for teachers regarding their own professional development path is another recent call (Johnson & Marx 2009; Hardy & Rönnerman, 2011), coming with the idea that professional development should be approached as adult learning and the theories on adult learning should be taken into consideration.

2.7.1. Adult Learning Theory

Today’s teachers -more than any time before- are facing many challenges which have implications and outcomes both for their own professional identities and the

institutions they are working for. Those challenges include fast-improving technology, increasing information consumerism, diverse needs of students, increasing demand for liability and productivity. Even though professional development efforts and initiatives are regarded as an effective tool to respond this demand, their significance and urgency has not yet been fully recognized. Changing this attitude and creating an effort to give priority to professional learning is fundamental today. Still; however, “sit-and-get” style activities offered with the intention of professional development are not enough alone to change this above-mentioned attitude (Diaz-Maggioli, 2004). This perception to professional development “*requires little in the way of intellectual struggle or emotional engagement and takes only superficial account of teachers’ histories or circumstances*” (Little, 1993, p.148). These practices turn teachers into passive receivers of information, which may result in or contribute to the reluctance of teachers to be engaged in professional development efforts (Knowles, Holton III & Swanson, 2014).

Adults; however, rather than merely being passive receivers and conveyers of information, are active participants of their own learning, unlike children. They have their own distinct needs when it comes to acquiring knowledge or a skill (Knowles et al., 2014). Hence, it is possible to regard teachers as adult learners and all kinds of professional development efforts as a form of adult education, which puts the emphasis of PD on the needs of teachers and unique contexts where they teach and learn (King & Lawler, 2003). This standpoint has become the theoretical framework of many professional development studies in the field (Terehoff, 2002; Beavers, 2009; Zepeda, Parylo & Bengtson, 2014).

Adult learning theory assumes that adult learners can identify the things that they are in need to learn or they are expected to learn due to their position or context. They have their own image of “self”, which controls and directs their personal and professional lives. The implication of this assumption is that policy makers and any of teacher training programs should consider this principle during planning and implementing PD activities. More specifically, teachers –rather than being passive receivers of information- should be active components of decision-making over the

content and the conduct of PD activities based on their beliefs about what they need to achieve over a period of time. A learning atmosphere where they are solely expected to learn what is being taught like young learners may offend teachers as adults who are self-directed and have a sense of adult autonomy (Knowles et al., 2014). They may be misled into the belief that outside experts' beliefs and experiences about teaching and learning overshadow theirs.

Another assumption of adult learning theory is based on teachers' readiness to learn so as to teach more effectively. That is, professional development efforts should be in line with personal, psychological and academic readiness of adult learners. With such a standpoint, it may not be wise to make novice teachers start PD activities in their first year since their minds are more occupied with learning the institutional concepts and their survival as beginners (Huberman, 1989, as cited in Levin, 2003).

Merriam (2001, p.4) provides a summary of Knowles's assumptions with regard to adult learning. For him, an adult learner is someone who;

- has an independent self-concept and can direct their own learning,
- has accumulated a reservoir of life experiences that is a rich resource for learning,
- has learning needs closely related to changing social roles,
- is problem-centered and interested in immediate application of knowledge,
- is motivated to learn by internal rather than external factors (Merriam, 2001, p.4).

Since adults are more goal-oriented, it is likely that they will be more motivated to be engaged in PD activities if they realize a practical and immediate end that they can utilize in their personal lives or work environments (Merriam, 2008). The usability and applicability of this knowledge may help teachers improve job satisfaction and professional self-esteem as factors for intrinsic motivation, which is one of the building blocks of adult learning process. Not outweighing internal motivation factors, such external factors as pay rise, academic credit and job titles are also essential to create a sense of achievement for teachers as adult learners. On

the top of that; the constraints regarding time and resources, lack of support from institutions and negative attitudes towards learning may hinder the intrinsic motivation of teachers to be engaged in PD activities (Knowles et al., 2014).

2.8. The Status of Teaching: *Profession or Occupation*

Professionalism is the process of a transformational change an occupation goes through to become a profession. Whether teaching qualifies as a profession, semi-profession or as an occupation is one of the debate topics in the field of education. The driving force behind its comparison to other occupations is rooted in deeper concerns regarding its effect on the professional status of teaching, which in turn has an impact on educational policies in a broader sense. There have been various standpoints of the stakeholders considering the status of teaching with different interpretations of the terms “*profession, professionalism, and professionalization*” of teaching (Talbert & McLaughlin, 1994; Stronach, Corbin, McNamara, Stark & Warne, 2002; Poulson, 2006).

One viewpoint regarding professionalism is that it must be based upon advanced training, meaning that the most efficient way to professionalize teaching is to enhance teachers’ subject matter and teaching skills through all kinds of professional development efforts and processes. Another stance is that the core of professionalism rests upon the roles teachers assume. Creating a sense of professionalism and having high standards among teachers itself can help to professionalize teaching in this viewpoint. To some others, the concept *professionalism* in teaching is directly linked to organizational factors. For the proponents of this view, the most effective path to professionalize teaching is enhancing the conditions under which teachers perform. Owing to the variety of views on the issue, what is meant by professionalism is oftentimes not clear regarding teaching (Ingersoll & Collins, 2018).

To differentiate between occupation and profession has long been an effort in the field of sociology. Within the field, a professional model- which embodies a series of organizational and occupational traits related to the concept of profession- has

been developed. Based on the model developed and based on lists compiled to exhibit which characteristics are needed to regard an occupation as a profession; professionalism can be associated with advanced training, certification requirements, performance evaluations, strong personal identity, suitable working conditions, a code of professional ethics evolved around public service, active professional development units and a high status attached to it (Talbert & McLaughlin, 1994; Ingersoll & Collins, 2018). Similarly, Ingersoll & Merrill (2011) identify several characteristics of professionalization process of an occupation. Firstly, a profession requires advanced education which ensures that professional development and training are given to those in a field. Secondly, disposition towards the profession must be ensured so that those in the field have the opportunity to develop a code of professional ethics. Lastly, suitable environmental conditions conducive to success and more productivity must be ensured (Ingersoll & Merrill, 2011, p.186).

Similarly, Runte (1995) builds professionalism on two early sociological theories: trait models and structural-functionalism. The trait model attempts to define characteristics or traits that distinguish the professions from other occupations. The most commonly cited traits are; (1) skill based on abstract knowledge, (2) provision for training and education, usually associated with a university, (3) certification based on competency testing (4) formal organization, (5) adherence to a code of conduct and (6) altruistic service. According to structural-functionalism theory, professions evolved to protect the public by ensuring that anyone undertaking these crucial jobs is first certified as knowledgeable and reliable. Thus, it is the monopoly over a body of theoretical knowledge which is the most fundamental characteristic of professionalism because it creates the need for the other elements (pp. 288-299).

Considering what is mentioned above, it is possible to assume that professionalism in teaching evolves around teaching-learning theories, institutionalized teacher training and increasing awareness both among teachers towards their own profession and in the society. Theory based part of this process is generally provided during undergraduate years of teacher education. Institutionalized, in-service

teacher training for professional development of teachers is of value when it comes to self-awakening and public recognition of the teaching as an occupation.

However; oftentimes there are more attributes which characterize an occupation as a profession, which are missing in today's teaching. Apart from the prerequisites like a depth of knowledge and necessary skills of the craft of a discipline, an occupation is also supposed to have control over the standards for employment, to have their practitioners have an independent voice in decision-making process on the working conditions, to evaluate the performances of practitioners, to remove the ones who are not successful to meet the expectations from the profession and to have practitioners go over a systematical professional development process. For professionalism of teaching, the following must be ensured;

- High standards and predetermined requirements for the entry into the discipline both in pre-service education and during recruitment.
- Constant support for the new teachers
- A systematical evaluation of teachers' knowledge and performance
- Active participation in the decision-making process of the educational domain including recruitment, budget, placement of students, assessment, instructional strategies to be assumed (Ingersoll & Collins, 2018, p.201).

Professionalization of teaching is not without challenges as there is no single path into teaching. Lack teacher authority over the content and implementation of their curricula is a factor hindering professionalization of teaching. Besides, teachers expected to teach for tests only in a predetermined way to which they do not contribute, and in which they do not get benefit from their expertise and professional judgement lead to discussions on if teaching can be regarded as a true profession (Milner IV, 2013, p.2). Therefore, whether teaching must be regarded as a profession or not has not been fully answered.

2.9. A Brief Historical Overview: Teaching English in Turkey

English language has the reputation of being the most successful global case of language spread. Becoming the most preferred language in international arena as the backbone of communication and business, and the lingua-franca of science and technology, it has lost its national identity. English language skills, especially communicative skills, are the keys to access information and insight required for improvement (Richards, 2008). Realizing the position and importance of English language throughout the world as the lingua-franca helps all nations to pursue their international goals and be updated about the recent developments in the international arena. Thus, a huge body of resources and money has been allocated for efficient English language teaching, with an increasing need to train more competent English language teachers who can meet the needs of the century.

Turkey has a geopolitically and strategically important location in the world. Changes in politics, social life and economic situation of the country through the history like World War II, the Cold War, NATO membership and the efforts for European Union integration process for the full membership had an impact on the country's English language policies (Kartal & Başol, 2019). This socio-political situation makes learning English even more important since it becomes a prerequisite for the Turkish citizens to meet higher standards needed. Kırkgöz (2009) asserts that Turkey is more inclined to English as a foreign language than any other country in the *expanding circle* (Kachru,1992) of English language. Having such an effect, English has been made mandatory at all levels of education.

English language teaching (ELT) policies and English Language Teacher Education (ELTE) programs are under the responsibility of the Ministry of National Education (MONE) and Higher Education Council (HEC) in Turkey. These two institutions responded to the global effect of English by undertaking some developmental stages in English language education, starting with the introduction of English-medium instruction at the higher education level. As an outcome, Middle East Technical University was established in 1956, which was followed by more and more state and foundation universities. With an increasing demand for English-medium instruction

at university level, HEC announced the requirement of one-year preparatory programs for English for Academic Purposes (EAP) for the students whose language proficiency fall below the required level to continue their education in their departments in 1996 (Kırkgöz, 2009).

More changes were applied especially after 1997. Richards and Rodgers (2001) claim that twentieth century was the time of frequent changes and innovations in the educational field, which were accompanied by “*competing language teaching ideologies*” (p.1). These changes were initiated by the cooperation between MONE and HEC to improve the quality of English language teaching (ELT) throughout the country, which was not given enough importance to before. Within the scope of the project –introduced as “the Ministry of Education Development Project”- English was added to the curriculum from grade 4 upwards. The driving motivation behind the decision was to provide more language input and more time for the students to acquire the language than before (MONE, 2001). This project paved the way for more developments regarding the status of language teaching in the country. Teacher training, which had long been neglected, was prioritized with the efforts to increase the number and the quality of methodology courses. Besides, the length of the practicum course was extended, providing students with more opportunities to be exposed to actual teaching-learning situations. That was a vital step to be taken for teacher education and –in turn – improving the quality of language education (Sarıçoban, 2012). Additionally, there have been many universities and programs offering undergraduate, postgraduate and professional development programs in the field.

2.10. Foreign Language Teacher Professional Development Efforts in Turkey

As Bamgbose (2003) puts it, “*no matter how desirable language policies may be, unless they are backed up by the will to implement them, they cannot be of any effect*” (p.428). Nationwide efforts to increase the implementation of policies regarding English language teaching was a challenging process for the country due to lack of qualified staff required to teach English at all levels. Having the pressure to meet the urgent need, Ministry of National Education employed all potential staff for

teaching English, who were provided with necessary professional development regarding the language and methodological aspects of it.

This- *Foreign Language Teaching Improvement Project*- was a noteworthy effort, through which general requirements and expected proficiencies was documented by MONE which was announced in March 2011. One of the articles covered under the project was providing professional development in the field of English within the scope of practices to help teachers to fulfill the requirements through personal and professional development, determining professional competencies and utilizing scientific research methods for professional development (MONE, 2008). Today, seminars and conferences are offered in all parts of the country for the language teachers to improve teacher qualification and competence in foreign language education within the scope of 2023 vision of MONE. (MONE, 2018). Another recent development is the cooperation plan signed 18 September 2019 between Ministry of National Education, General Directorate of Teacher Training and Development and British Council to support teachers' professional development and to help them improve themselves in four language skills within the scope of 2023 education vision. (MONE, 2019).

At higher education level, 1997 education reform was also aimed to restructure the vision and improve the opportunities of pre-service teacher education and in-service teacher training by enhancing the quality of courses offered and increasing opportunities for any kind of development. In the year 2000, Turkish Higher Education announced The Eighth Five-Year Report (HEC, 2000). The prioritized issues in the plan were based on the quality of teacher education in the country, including teacher training and the efficacy of teacher trainers. As actions to be taken, stricter teacher professional qualifications and assessment of those were covered (HEC, 2000). Those efforts are still in progress today. English Language departments in education faculties have been on the rise as well as the awareness of the importance of teacher education and training. More and more institutions at tertiary level have been providing their staff with in-service teacher education and training opportunities under their continuous professional development units since

they are given a dual responsibility both as a/the provider of CPD and a site for practitioners to develop themselves (Clegg, 2003).

2.11. Professional Development Research in Turkey

2.11.1. The Context of Primary-Secondary and High Schools

Teachers in Turkish education system are among those receiving the least amount of in-service teacher education among the OECD countries based on the Teaching and Learning International Study (TALIS) report (Büyüköztürk, Akbaba-Altun & Yıldırım, 2010). A considerable number of teachers retire without ever being engaged in an in-service teacher education program. Teachers in Turkish education system are found to suffer from workload, demanding working conditions and intensity of paperwork (Tezgiden Cakcak, 2015). In an attempt to better the conditions and improve the quality of instruction, many researchers in Turkey have focused on teachers' professional development approaches, practices, challenges experienced and suggestions. Most of those studies have been conducted in primary, secondary and high schools.

Özer (2004) by giving reference to his previous work (Özer, 2001), conducted a survey designed to explore the views and approaches of teachers towards professional development. He found that a big percentage of the participants (72.8%) noted a certain need for professional development. Participants also reported that they need professional development to enrich their understanding about education in general (35.4%), to revisit their existing knowledge in a specific field and improve it (29.3%), for self-satisfaction and professional prestige (16.2%). Despite these responses, the study found that only a very small number of the participants (31.3%) stated that they are eager to attend professional development activities. Özer (2004) linked these conflicting results to the challenges experienced before and during those professional development activities/processes.

Bümen (2009) investigates the effect of a professional program on teacher self-efficacy and in-class practice in a foundation school in Izmir. The data were

collected from 38 in-service teachers. Apart from questionnaires, focus group interviews and classroom observations were also conducted. Professional development evaluation forms of teachers were also visited. The results suggested that professional development program contributed to the efficiency of teachers and project-based learning such as seminars and workshops were reposted as the most valuable for teachers' professional development.

Özdemir (2013) examines the professional development activities of 507 elementary and secondary school teachers in Kırıkkale. The results of the survey indicated that the most preferred activity regarding professional development of teachers was to "searching online" to keep up with the latest developments in their field. Besides, the findings revealed participants felt the need to improve themselves most in the integration of new instructional technologies into instruction, working with students who have special needs, student psychology and the competence of dealing with unexpected/extreme situation in educational terrain.

Bayar (2014) conducts a qualitative research study in order to provide a list of characteristics which are expected to be found in any kind of professional development activity so that it can be effective. For aim, 16 elementary school teachers were interviewed on professional development activities they had participated in one-year period. The findings suggested that for a professional development activity/program to be effective, it should 1) be relevant to teachers' needs as well as the needs of the institution, 2) engage teachers in the design and planning of these activities, 3) encourage teachers for active participation and creates opportunities for this, 4) be consistent and long-term and 5) the trainings should be conducted by qualified instructors.

Yirci (2017) investigated the barriers to teachers' professional development and provide suggestions by adopting qualitative research method. 30 teachers from different levels of education were interviewed. The results showed that the biggest obstacle to professional development is the teachers themselves. To be able to better the situation, existing rigid bureaucratic structure along with external inadequacies

such as the practices of the ministry and economic hardships must be put emphasis on and the quality of in-service training and other PD activities must be improved.

Erođlu (2019) investigated whether there is relationship between teachers' attitudes and participation in self-directed PD activities and their perceptions about the support provided by their institution. The findings suggested that attitudes towards PD and the rate of participation in those activities show significant variances based on gender, marital status, experience in the field and the branch of the participants.

Can (2019) conducted a research study adopting both qualitative and quantitative research methodologies to identify PD needs of teachers and to suggest an individual professional development plan. Kulbak (2019) studied on motivational factors affecting the professional development process and decisions of teachers as well as the perceived obstacles by them. Although there was no difference between the motivations of female and male teachers contrasting to Yařar's study (2019), female participants expected failure more than the male participants.

2.11.2. Higher Education Context

Although there is research available on professional development in Turkey's higher education context, those studies are limited in number. Below are the most recent studies conducted in higher education context in Turkey.

Eriřen, Çelikgöz, Kapıcıođlu, Akyol and Atas (2009) conducted a qualitative study in Selçuk University. The main conclusion reached in the study was that staff working in the institution needed an urgent professional improvement in terms of globalization and adaptation to European Union. Most required fields to improve for the participants were stated as a more active international communication and cooperation, more and better-quality international publishing and projects, higher proficiency in language and in the use of technology. Some suggestions were also provided in the study to meet the above-mentioned needs of participants. Having the same mindset, Elçiçek and Yařar (2016) aimed to make an assessment comparing the professional development practices of some countries which are successful in

PISA reports and existing professional development activities in Turkey. As a result of the research, it was concluded that the issue of professional development should be put on the agenda urgently and school-based approaches to it should be adopted in many other countries. Additionally, for a more quality professional development, it was suggested that professional development activities should be diversified, teachers' needs and demands should be taken into consideration and all professional development activities should be planned based on data.

Çelik, Bayraktar-Çepni and İlyas (2013) indicated that despite the importance attached to professional development by all parties included, 42 EFL instructors questioned the applicability and effectiveness of those professional development activities in their teaching context.

Kulavuz-Onal and Tatar (2017) investigates whether English language instructors working in state universities and private universities differ from each other considering the sense of personal/professional accomplishment and the level of participation in professional development activities. In the study, quantitative research methodology was adopted and the data were collected from 224 Turkish EFL instructors. The results showed that instructors working in the private universities attended professional development activities more, and in turn they felt more accomplished. Study also suggests that there is a negative correlation between the feeling of burnout and regular and active participation in professional development activities/processes.

Due to the value attached to professional development, the issue has been the topic of several thesis studies in Turkey, as well. Quite recently, Yasar (2019) examined the attitudes of Turkish English language instructors towards self-initiated professional development and the predictors of these attitudes. She found noteworthy differences between male and female participants considering the degree of appreciation they showed.

In a quite recent MA study, Yoğun (2020) studied on teachers' perceptions towards continuous professional development and peer-coaching. The data was collected

from 16 instructors working at the English language preparatory program in a private university. The results of this qualitative research study showed that peer-coaching added “self-leadership” as a new concept to the previously categorized ones which were lifelong learning, staying up to date, skills development and team-building process.

2.12. The Evaluation of Professional Development

Even though professional development is attached importance to, evaluation of teachers’ professional development initiatives and experiences remain as an uphill struggle for the ones who commission the evaluations, for the ones who undertake the evaluation process and for the ones who use them for policy change for better professionalism in the field (Coldwell & Simkins, 2011). *“Regardless of its form, professional development should be a purposeful endeavor. Through evaluation, you can determine whether these activities are achieving their purposes”* (Guskey, 2002, p.46). A systematic valuation after any kind of learning experience is of value since it creates a possibility of receiving feedback on one’s performance or appropriate acquisition of knowledge which has been targeted, which creates a developmental cycle (Guskey, 2000; Bubb & Earley, 2007). Apart from the performance itself, evaluation may also serve the purpose of measuring the effectiveness of the process and the methods employed. The evaluation of professional development has been on the agenda and there has been recent studies on it even though there is no consensus on how the effectiveness of professional development must be measured (Guskey, 2006).

Evaluation has a significant place in professional development as a tool to;

- promote continuity of program improvement and in turn- accountability of the institution
- meet the need of staying updated –one of the requirements of the field and the nature of teaching as a profession- in adult education (Kutner, Sherman, Tibbetts & Condelli, 1997, p.2).

The initial step of professional development evaluations must be initial planning of the process including all aspects of PD. This initial step should be followed by evaluations regarding the impact of professional development on teachers, program services and learners.

Despite the disagreements on the way professional development should be evaluated, relevant literature has provided some models to evaluate it. Guskey (2000) states that there are three ways of evaluating professional development, which are *planning evaluation*, *formative evaluation* and *summative evaluation* (pp. 3-4).

Planning evaluation: This kind of evaluation starts prior to the actual developmental evaluation of development. Basically, it prepares a groundwork for the upcoming evaluations regarding the aims to be covered, methods to be employed and assessment measurement of the success. It is essential to identify potential problems which may occur during the other phases of evaluation and possible actions to be taken in order to meet the predetermined objectives on time efficiently (Guskey, 2000, p.3).

Formative evaluation: This type of evaluation takes place within the process of development program or a relevant activity with the purpose of providing continuous feedback to the ones responsible for the process about whether the expected results are being covered. During the process, feedback from participants is accumulated to enhance the quality of the professional development program (Goodall, Day, Lindsay, Lindsay & Harris, 2005). This evaluation helps program-developers identify potential weaknesses and flaws which may hinder professional development of the participants (Guskey, 2000, p.3).

Summative evaluation: This kind of evaluation is employed at the end of an activity or program. The aim of summative evaluation is to judge overall merit or worth of the program. Participants' test scores can be taken as an example of a summative evaluation. Typically, teacher educators and program-developers associate the success of a program with the results of summative evaluation only. Essential bit of

information like the views of teacher participants is oftentimes neglected, despite the leading role of those in the overall success (Guskey, 2000, p.4). Therefore, the results of summative evaluation of professional development activities do not necessarily translate into success since better scores cannot directly demonstrate changes in one's teaching as a result of professional development activity/program (Boyle, Lamprianou & Boyle, 2005).

Guskey (2000) presents five critical stages of information to be considered for the evaluation of professional development programs, which displays a hierarchical order from simpler to more complex. This means that success at one stage is a prerequisite for the following stage. A brief explanation of each stage is provided in the table below,

Table 1
The Stages of Evaluation for PD Programs (Guskey, 2000, p.6)

Stages	The things measured are	The information is used to
1. Participants' reactions	Initial satisfaction of participants considering their own experience	Enhance the quality of program design and process
2. Participants' learning	Acquired knowledge and skills of participants as a result of a program	Improve the format, content and organization of the developmental program
3. Organizational support and change	The advocacy, support, management, resources available, recognition and sustainability of the program in an organization	Make informed decision on future efforts and therefore to promote sustainability To keep a record of organizational support as well as improving it
4. Learners' use of new knowledge and skills	The degree and quality of application of newly acquired knowledge and skills after a professional development activity/program	To record the improvement and make informed decision for any possible change
5. Student learning outcomes	The impact of the professional development program/activity on students' learning outcomes in any way possible	To evaluate the overall merit and worth of the program/activity

At stage 1, participants' reactions to professional development experience are evaluated. At this stage, it is not difficult to get information as even simple questions addressed to participants about whether or not they liked it, the content was meaningful to them, physical atmosphere was suitable and comfortable can provide meaningful input to

professional developers as they know the value of basic human needs. At the second stage, the actual learning does also matter. The emphasis of this stage is to evaluate what is gained on the side of participants. At stage 3, the focus moves towards the organizational variables. As the outcome of professional development efforts depend on factors such as organizational culture and support, lack of emphasis on stage 3 may adversely affect the positive results in the previous stages. Whether the newly gained knowledge and skills has translated into actual practice is evaluated in the 4th stage. Gathering information and feedback is not as easy as it is in previous stages as implementation of knowledge is neither a sudden nor an even process. A comprehensive analysis of this stage can provide guidance for future professional development efforts. At the last stage of this evaluation process, the focus is on the impact of professional development on student performance anyway (Guskey, 2000).

CHAPTER 3

METHOD

3.0. Presentation

This section starts with a brief review of the aim of the study and afterwards provides the rationale behind choosing a case study approach within the qualitative inquiry method. Then, research context of the study, in-depth descriptions of the participants are respectively included in this chapter. Finally, data collection and data analysis procedure are explained in a detailed way.

3.1. Methodological Approach: Qualitative Inquiry

Prior to any kind of study, philosophical basis and the methodological design of the research including the research questions to be asked, the intentions behind the questions and the most suitable research approach should be clearly identified by the researchers (Creswell, 2013). There are two main methodological approaches in research, both of which seek to reach answers to social phenomena by employing different research methods. A researcher might choose to utilize either qualitative or quantitative paradigm as well as utilizing both at the same time to better understand this social phenomenon mentioned above (Smith, 1983).

Quantitative research methodology works on numeric data to understand relationships between variables with the help of statistical analysis methods. This type of inquiry studies on the things which are observable and a certain extent stable across different settings (Creswell, 2013).

On the flipside, the emphasis with the qualitative research methodology is on ongoing construction of meaning-making process of the participants. As Friedman (2011) puts it, *qualitative research tends to operate on a small scale with the goal of providing a detailed and nuanced picture of individual settings, participants, or instances of interaction. It does not aim to generate statistically significant findings (...) instead endeavors to bring out individual characteristics or differences and to explore these in depth.*" (p.183). Within this method, social reality is supposed to be subjective and is rooted in ideas and experiences continuously (co)constructed by the participants in their natural environments. In a qualitative inquiry, the data collected result in emerging theories rather than predetermined theories for the data to be collected as it is in the quantitative research method (Creswell, 2013). To put it in different words, themes and patterns are constructed by the researcher from the bottom up. Besides, unlike quantitative research, qualitative inquiries demonstrate an emergent design, through which researchers may revisit the research questions or the data collection methods during the data collection process (Gibbs, 2007). Creswell (2013) remarks that qualitative inquiry is a wise choice when there is a need to understand a concept or phenomenon either because it is brand new or it is new to a specific group or existing theories are not explanatory enough for the study group.

Friedman (2012, pp.182-183) summarizes the main characteristics of a qualitative research paradigm by adding the note that those are not necessarily absent from quantitative inquiries;

- ***Open inquiry:*** There is no predetermined coding schemes and hypotheses. Those emerge during and at the end of the study.
- ***Inductive:*** The aim of the inquiry is not to test a hypothesis or a theory. Patterns and themes are obtained from the bottom-up.
- ***Naturalistic:*** Researchers do not aim to create tasks to be performed by the participants to control data. To this end, the data collection procedure is natural.
- ***Descriptive and interpretive:*** Researchers generate in-depth and comprehensive descriptions of the context and the case being studied. That

descriptive data is then turned into interpretations through the lenses of the researchers.

- ***Multiple perspectives:*** Researchers may utilize both emic and etic perspectives, which creates an opportunity to reach multiple points of view and multiple voices, contributing more to the holistic picture of the case.
- ***Cyclical:*** Researchers may revisit the research questions during the study. In the same vein, the way data is collected may be reconstructed by the preliminary findings.
- ***Attention to context:*** One of the basic principles of qualitative inquiry is that a social phenomenon cannot be fully grasped unless the context it occurs is understood in all ways possible.
- ***Focus on the particular:*** Qualitative inquiries aim to gain a detailed and nuanced picture of the phenomenon studied on without the intention of achieving statistically significant results or generalizing it to other cases (Friedman, 2012, p.182-183).

As mentioned in the introduction, the purpose of the present study is to develop a better and in-depth understanding of the professional development challenges faced by English language instructors working at a preparatory program of a foundation university in central Turkey. The study aims to answer the following research questions;

1. How do instructors working at a foundation university view professional development?
2. How do instructors working at a foundation university experience professional development?
3. What suggestions do they propose regarding challenges associated with their own professional development and the opportunities provided in their institutions?

Having those questions in mind and considering the fact that the present study researches into human participants in their natural environment, with the intention of gaining a better understanding of their lived experiences, thoughts, feelings and

future expectations on the topic; a qualitative research methodology is considered to fit the aims of the research better since it entails the characteristics necessary to understand the answers given to the research questions. The results may have implications for policy development, professional practice and personal or institutional improvement.

3.2. Case Study Approach

Within the qualitative inquiries, there are five main approaches to guide researchers while they are creating the research design, which are phenomenological research, grounded theory, narrative research, ethnography and case study (Creswell, 2013). In the present study, case study design is chosen among five approaches.

Merriam (1998) defines a case as “*inherently bounded, with a finite amount of time for data collection or a limited number of people who could possibly be interviewed or observed*” (p.27). Cases are oftentimes associated with people; however, a program, an institution, an organization or an event can also be regarded as a case (Dörnyei, 2007).

Thomas (2011) states that “*a case study is about the particular rather than the general*” (p.3). The aim of a case study is never to generalize the findings to other populations. The primary purpose behind such studies is to gain an in-depth insight into the topic studied on, which may help the case – a person, an institution or organization- achieve a better quality on the issue at hand. The results of a case study, therefore, are meaningful only to the context in which the data is collected and to the participants participating in the study. Still; however, the results achieved at the end of a case study may provide a holistic understanding, which may create an opportunity for researchers to interpret other similar cases.

Creswell (2013) states that what makes a qualitative case study a matter of choice is its elaborate description and in-depth understanding of the case throughout the comprehensive process of data analysis. As Yin (2009) puts it, case studies enable researchers to develop a better understanding of a contemporary phenomenon which

shows itself in a natural environment. The world around us can be interrogated and given meaning to through qualitative case studies. While large scale statistical methods such as questionnaires may not be able to reveal unique and important characteristics or patterns of an issue, case studies are of great value to capture them (Duff, 2012). To this end, a qualitative case study approach is designated since it provides the right basis to answer the research questions at hand. The underlying motivation for me to conduct this research was intrinsic (Wellington, 2000). What is investigated in this dissertation should be regarded as unique or special. Instead, I –as a researcher and an insider- had a growing interest in a broader and a deeper understanding of professional development efforts and its results in the institution. Researching on those may help us find the root of the problems and challenges, which in turn can show us the way out.

3.3. Setting

The study is conducted at a foundation university in central Turkey, which is one of the most well-known universities based on the student placement statistics of the national university examination. Most of the students in the university come from families who can be regarded as financially privileged. Besides, the university provides different scholarship opportunities to the students in order for them to afford the education and other expenses in the university. The medium of instruction is English, and it has approximately 12.000 students and academic personnel from 37 different countries, which makes it a reputable education and research center throughout the world.

The study at hand has been conducted in the English Language Preparatory Program of the university. The program approximately lasts one year. Depending on the proficiency of the new students at the beginning of the academic year, the program may last shorter for the students at higher proficiency levels. In the same vein, if students are obliged to repeat a course as they could not meet the requirements to pass to a higher level, the program may last up to two years. Unless the students can finish the program in four semesters at most or they can pass the language

proficiency exam on their own as a student with external preparation status during their third year, their studentship is terminated.

There are five proficiency levels in the program, which are elementary, pre-intermediate, intermediate, upper intermediate and pre-faculty. Students have twenty-five hours contact each week as well as two office hours devoted to them. The content of each course includes grammar, vocabulary, reading, listening, writing and speaking.

There are approximately 150 local and international instructors working in the program. They are hired based on institution's own evaluations as well as the requirements of Higher Education Council. Each teacher is responsible for generally twenty to twenty-five hours of teaching and two office hours a week. This teaching load may change depending on the number of students and remaining teaching load of instructors. Apart from teaching, teachers are expected to take part in invigilation process, marking exams and class assignments, substitution for other instructors when needed and professional development activities. Each class in the program has at least two teachers; one –as the main class teacher- is responsible for all class related responsibilities including preparing and keeping the class portfolio, designing and conducting class tasks and exams, keeping the attendance, meeting the students during office hours and keeping track of their improvement, planning the weekly schedule of the objectives to be covered and informing the support teacher. The support teacher(s) are mainly responsible for covering the target language objective assigned for their teaching hour. This working atmosphere requires all teachers to be in constant contact with others and ready for changes in the daily/weekly schedule.

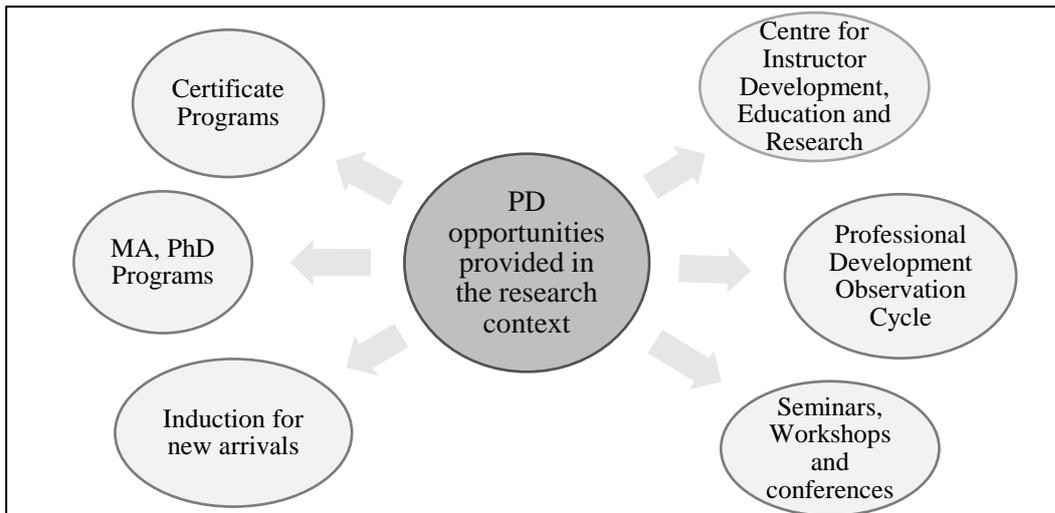


Figure 2. PD opportunities provided in the research context

Just like many others, the institution offers an induction program for the new recruits before the semester starts. During the induction, new teachers are given information about the buildings, facilities, teaching values and expectations and information about general student profile and the program. As professional development is something expected from the instructors in any way possible, the institution offers some opportunities in this regard, as well.

Since 1990, the institution has been offering formal training courses including ICELT, CELTA and DELTA. With the belief that professional development is the building block of institutional success as well as teacher development and with the increasing staff interest in educational research, CIDER (The Centre for Instructor Development, Education and Research) was founded in 2009 in the institution with the aim of becoming a center of excellence in teacher education. The founding purpose of CIDER is to promote research for personal and institutional improvement, foster community-based learning to achieve individual and institutional excellence in teaching by actively encouraging and supporting teacher development and research within the scope of institutional mission. The center also provides certificate programs to the teachers in the institution. The best-known ones are listed below.

One of the certificate programs currently offered in the institution is the In-Service Certificate in English Language Teaching (ICELT), which is an English teaching qualification of Cambridge University. This certificate program is mainly based on practice and designed both for native and non-native instructors. The program contributes to those who do not have an ELT background. The program consists of two modules; “Language for Teachers” and “Teaching and Methodology”. New recruits in the preparatory program are obliged to take the course after passing the probation period successfully.

Apart from ICELT certificate, the institution also offers DELTA (Diploma in Teaching English Language to Speakers of Other Languages). This program covers three modules and is offered to instructors of English as a foreign language with more than two years of experience.

EAP Teaching Certificate – CTEAP stands for *The Certificate in Teaching English for Academic Purposes*. This program that offers professional development opportunities for the instructors aims to improve teachers’ subject matter and expertise in coping with the requirements and the challenges of teaching English for Academic Purposes (EAP) in an adult environment. Even though the main of the course is to help those working in the Faculty of Academic English, instructors in the language preparatory program can also attend this professional development program. The certificate program covers three different modules. The first module is about course design including the demands of academic English context, base knowledge necessary to act upon and designing an English course for freshman. The second module is on action research. It helps participants to advance their professional selves by designing and conducting an action research in an area of interest relevant to EAP. The last module of the certificate program is an extensive version of all stages. This phase is designed to assist participants to reflect on their practice and expertise during the implementation of their course and guides them to identify the areas which need adaptation and/or improvement.

Table 2

The Content of the Modules Provided in the Certificate Programs

ICELT	DELTA	CTEAP
Module 1- Language for Teachers	Module 1 – Understanding language, methodology and resources for teaching	Module 1 –Course Design
Module 2- Teaching and Methodology	Module 2 – Developing Professional Practice	Module 2 – Action Research
	Module 3 – Extending Practice and ELT Specialism	Module 3 – Extended Paper

Apart from the certificate programs, the institution also organizes annual ELT conferences. Local staff and international attendees are welcomed to present their papers or posters relevant to the predetermined topic of that year. The main purpose of these annual conferences is to keep up with the global practices and key issues in language teaching, create a platform to share experiences and create a global learning network to share ideas and effective practices in the field. Both local and international teachers in the institution are expected to participate in those events and encouraged to present their papers.

Symposiums are another way of sharing information, effective practices and inspiration in the institution. Every year, at the end of the academic year, in-house symposiums are organized by the institution with the participation of local and international instructors. Instructors are expected to present in the symposiums in any topic relevant to the field and their interests. So, the speakers are chosen among the staff. There are concurrent sessions among which all instructors are expected to choose the ones they want to attend. If teaching and symposium sessions overlap, then the instructors are expected to choose another session possible, swap their class time with another teacher who is available at that time or they have to cancel their class and arrange a make-up to be able to attend the sessions.

In addition to all these, to be able to follow professional development of the instructors, the institution requires all instructors to take part in an observational practice process. The professional development of the instructors is followed by

professional development observations (PDOs) and student evaluation through the teacher evaluation forms.

PDO cycle is designed in accordance with institutional teacher competency framework, which sets clear goals and acts as a basis for the understanding of the core competencies and principles for the instructors and line managers. Professional development cycle of each instructor regardless of their position consists of four meetings. The first meeting is a kind of revision for the instructor to revise his/her practices, the areas of strength and weaknesses. During this initial meeting, the instructors may revisit their previous goals to improve them even better or they may set brand new goals for themselves to be acted upon during the upcoming academic year. During this phase, an operational plan including some details about how the instructors will achieve their goals is prepared with the help of a line manager.

In the following meeting, instructors are expected to reflect upon their progress considering the aims set in the previous meeting and share any areas that additional support may be needed in. During this meeting, an observation date is also set based on the availability of the instructor and the line manager.

During the third phase of the observational cycle, line managers observe the instructor in one class hour at a predetermined time slot. The line manager is also given the lesson plan and background information about the class. S/he closely follows the execution of the lesson and lesson planning by taking notes to be revisited later on. If the goals set cannot be achieved or any other problem arises during the observed hour, another observation might be needed. The evaluation criteria may change based on the teaching experience and qualifications of the instructor observed.

The last phase of the observational cycle is the update and reflection meeting. In this phase, the instructor observed is provided with feedback by the line manager and is expected to reflect on the planning and execution of the lesson. Upon reflecting on the lesson, the instructor may be asked to be observed again. If the preset goals are

already achieved, the instructor is expected to identify new areas to be worked on in the next academic year and the cycle starts again.

In brief, various opportunities have been provided in the institution to support professional development of the teachers, encourage them to conduct research and take active part in professional development activities like workshops, conferences and symposiums.

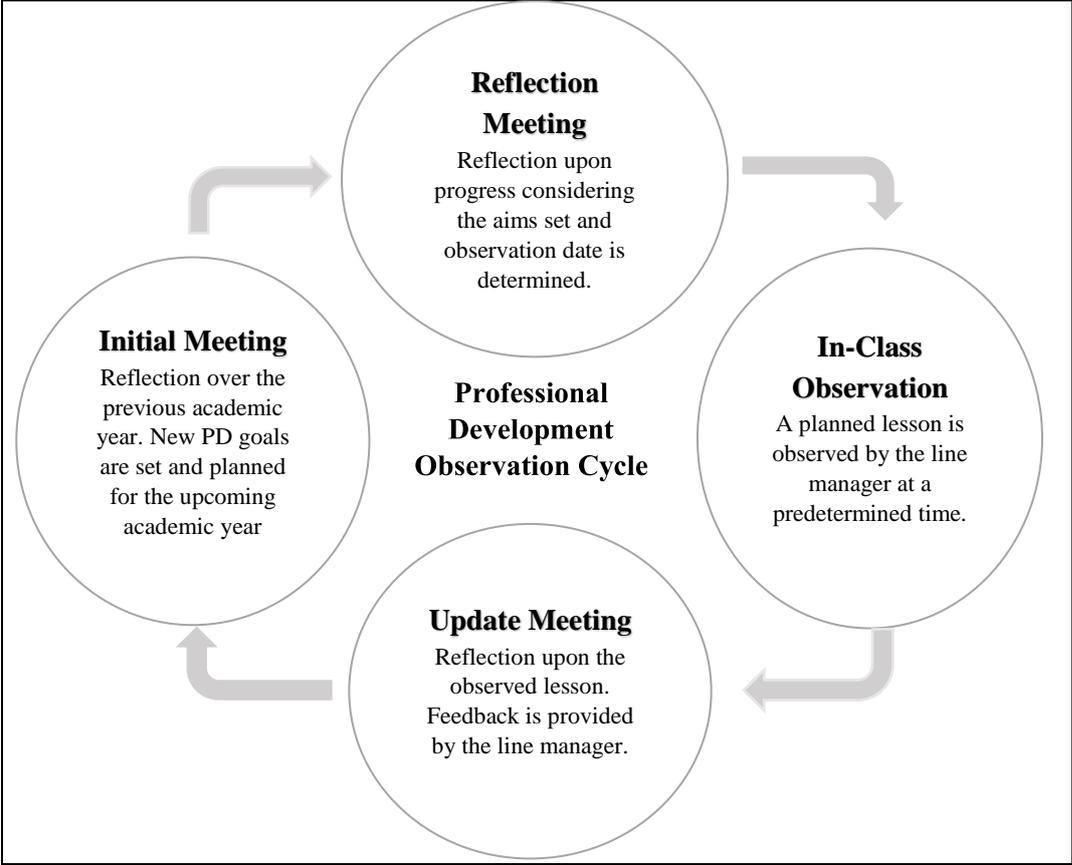


Figure 3. Professional development observational cycle (PDO) in the research context

3.4. The Role of the Researcher

Theoretically, the role of researcher in quantitative inquiries is not a matter of discussion since the data is obtained from the participants independently from the researcher. Likewise, in experimental studies, a double-blind research design ensures the objectivity of the inquiry for all parties involved. Considering the correlational studies, again the data is studied on without any reference to the

participants or the researcher. Thus, it is not wrong to state that for quantitative inquiries, the same conditions should ideally result in similar outcomes regardless of the role of the researcher. (Simon, 2011).

Unlike quantitative research, the role of the researcher becomes vital as the standpoint of the investigator influences the study. The data gathered is interpreted by the researcher by trying to give meaning to human experience (Orb, Eisenhauer & Wynaden, 2001). Therefore, as the main means of data collection, analysis and interpretation, the researchers have the crucial responsibility to position themselves so that the research study becomes transparent, credible and ethical (Creswell, 2013). What is vital here for the investigator is to be aware of their position as an insider or outsider, be reflective and conscious of their influence on the research setting, on the participants and keep track of their own biases and responses. Although bias in a research study is considered as a negative quality for many, some others support the belief that avoidance or exclusion of it from the research study is almost impossible. For instance, Savin-Baden and Howell Major (2013) states that subjectivity is ingrained in qualitative studies and this is what makes it so unique.

The roles of a researcher can change depending on his/her distance to the group being studied on. In her review about the roles of a researcher can assume, Ünlüer (2012) indicates that researchers should decide which position they are going to take in the study; an insider or an outsider. Being an insider can be defined as being a part of the group or the context being studied on while an outsider role refers to researcher's being a nonnative to the study group or the research context (Breen, 2007).

Being an insider provides some advantages for researchers. Initially, an insider-researcher can have a greater understanding of the context and the culture being studied on. The familiarity to the contextual culture also brings a more natural interaction. The commonalities between the participants and the researcher regarding the context, situation or environment may provide the researcher with more information about the context, which normally takes more time to obtain for an outsider-researcher. Having more information about the contextual environment,

knowing not just the formal hierarchy but also “how it really works” behind the screen may help the researcher to better understand the human experience (Smyth & Holian, 2008). Furthermore, having an established intimacy may help the participants accept the researcher more easily and be more open towards him/her (Dwyer & Buckle, 2009).

On the other hand, being an insider-researcher can also be associated with some concerns (DeLyser, 2001; Hewitt-Taylor, 2002; Smyth & Holian, 2008). One of the concerns of having an insider position, which provides deeper familiarity for the researcher, is the risk of losing objectivity. Still, human beings and their interaction with their environment is the core study field of educational research. Each of them brings their own perspectives and “truths” (p. 83) to the study, including the researcher’s own (Jones, cited in Porteli, 2008). This may even produce a less subjective outcome of “*gradual development and modification of truths*” (p.83). Therefore, May (cited in Porteli, 2008) indicates that emerging from the interplay between action and reflection; researchers' values and experiences cannot be excluded from a social research since they are the foundations of it.

Another concern with the insider-researcher position is role duality. Researchers may find it hard to balance their insider and researcher roles in the research setting, which may prevent them from seeing what is more important (DeLyser, 2001).

3.4.1. Researcher Positioning

Giving both the advantages and the disadvantages of being an insider, I must clarify my own position in this research study. I am a researcher and an instructor in the institution, which is the context of the study at hand. I majored in English Language Teaching department in a reputable state university and the started working in the institution under study. I have been a part of the institution as of 2015 and I share some commonalities with the participants. Hence, I was an insider-researcher to the study. Having spent five years teaching in the same institution, I had extensive prior knowledge about the everyday culture and how social interaction flows among the staff. As a researcher, I felt comfortable since I was quite familiar with almost

everything. At the same time, I was not considered as a threat and the participants did not hesitate to trust me, which was quite important for me since they may have felt that a negative response to the questions directly related to the institution might negatively affect them. Besides, as there was no power relationship between me and my participants, we were open and sincere in their responses. One of the risks that I—myself—was also very careful about was to keep the health balance between going native and keeping distance. My distance to the participants was about different professional development paths they were going through and different experiences and ideas that they shared even within the same professional development program. Although I was aware of the risks being an insider entail, I do not associate my familiarity to any kind of negligence. I was in every sense able to get involved in the whole research process thanks to my own experience as a novice researcher in the field, which helped me during the meaning-making process of the data obtained.

My interest in the topic “professional development” was not new. Seeing many people trying to delay their professional development was the first trigger for me. Having been provided with various personal and professional development opportunities, I was expecting to see a deeper willingness from the staff to participate, which was not the case. As an insider researcher, I went through all stages of professional development processes myself as well, especially for professional development observations, which made me become more interested in the question of why there is resistance to professional development among the staff. I also realized that what different parties understand and expect from professional development was different. Teaching and learning do not have to be what we already know and have. Therefore, this thesis study helped me see the phenomenon from different standpoints, which also enabled me to make a better understanding.

3.5. Sampling

For both qualitative and quantitative research methodologies, participant sampling is a core strategy to achieve maximum efficiency and validity. However, different aims and assumptions of each research methodology requires different sampling methods. For a qualitative researcher—principally— the intention is to get an in-depth

understanding of a phenomenon while the primary aim of a quantitative researcher is to provide generalizability to prove that the data obtained is representative enough for the population it is taken from (Palinkas, Horwitz, Green, Wisdom, Duan & Hoagwood, 2015).

Qualitative researchers are required to reach a certain amount of appropriate data for data saturation, which is the primary emphasis to put on. Unless the data is saturated, the complete picture of all aspects of the phenomenon under study cannot be achieved, which also negatively affects the credibility and certainty of the study. This cannot be achieved employing a random sampling (Morse, 2006).

This research study employed purposeful sampling. Due to the primary focus of qualitative research on achieving an in-depth understanding, relatively smaller samples are selected *purposefully* for the utilization of the limited resources (Patton, 2002). Purposeful sampling method enables the researchers to select information-rich participants whose responses can draw a bigger and more comprehensive picture of the phenomenon studied than any other random selection of participants (Patton, 2002). What is essential here is to achieve a rich and saturated data obtained from an appropriate number of participants who are well-informed and experienced about the phenomenon under study (Sargeant, 2012).

For Sandelowski (1995), all kind of sampling is purposeful in qualitative inquiries. Within purposeful sampling, there are also some variations for researchers to choose from. While Patton (1990) suggests 15 different strategies to researchers to purposefully select their information-rich participants, Sandelowski (1995) suggests only three of them as the core purposeful sampling strategies. Coyne (1997) provides a review on different strategies for purposeful sampling. Among all strategies provided, maximum variation is among the mostly preferred one. The *variation* mentioned here can be social class, ethnicity, gender or other individual-related characteristics, persons, sites or documents (Coyne, 1997, p.626).

The purpose of the study at hand is to investigate the challenges English language instructors experience considering their professional development in a foundation

university. Eight English language instructors working in the preparatory program with different responsibilities participated in this research study. Their experience, work-related responsibilities and professional development paths they are going through are investigated as the variations to maximize the opportunities to gain a deeper insight into the case by collecting information-rich data so that the researcher can comprehend what happens for each variation and when changes between those occur.

3.6. Participants

All the participants of the study at hand were the English language instructors working in language preparation program of a foundation university in central Turkey. All of the participants were selected among native-Turkish speakers. The rationale behind this choice was to exclude the risk of the interference of other potential challenges experienced by non-native staff such as language, environmental and cultural differences. Still, however, they were all from different backgrounds and coming from families with different socio-economic status, which results in diverse viewpoints and experiences about the phenomenon under study.

To maximize the variation considering the aims of the study, participants with different work experience, different educational responsibilities and with different professional development paths were chosen. The number of female and male participants could not be made equal since an overwhelming number of instructors in the institution is female. However, gender was not a variable for the study. Each participant is described more comprehensively below.

3.6.1. Participant 1

P1 is from a small town in Aegean part of Turkey. He is an ELT (English Language Teaching) graduate of a state university. He had one-year work experience in a language school. Later, he started working in the institution under study and has been a part of it for five years. He started his Master's Studies in linguistics, which is the main interest area of him. Having taken the required courses and passes all,

he left the program because of the procedural challenges he faced during the whole process. Upon his acceptance to the current institution, he was asked to start the ICELT course offered. At the time of the study, he was working with pre-faculty students (B2 level) and he had 20 hours of teaching load a week.

3.6.2. Participant 2

P2 is from a big city in Aegean part of Turkey. She is an ELL (English Language and Literature) graduate of a state university. She has pedagogical formation after graduation, which was a requirement for people who did not graduate from an ELT department. She has a 3-years working experience in TÖMER (The Center of Turkish Language Teaching). After 3-years of experience in TÖMER, she stated the institution under study. She has been working as an English instructor there for twenty-five years. She was working with upper-intermediate (B1+ CEFR level) and pre-faculty (B2 CEFR level) students. Apart from those, she was one of teachers responsible for admin classes, which were created to teach English to the local staff of the institution including all officers. Therefore, she was also working with adults in addition to the young adults in regular classes. She has graduate degree in Education and Administration in a state university and also COTE diploma. She has 20-25 hours of teaching load a week at the time of the study.

3.6.3. Participant 3

P3 is from a big city in Marmara Region of Turkey. She is an ELT graduate of a state university. Upon finishing the university, she directly started working in the institution under study. She has been a part of the institution for almost 13 years. She finished her master's studies in a foundation university. She also completed ICELT and DELTA courses required in the institution. She has ten hours of teaching load a week, working with intermediate (B1), upper-intermediate (B1+) and pre-faculty (B2) levels. She also has administrative responsibilities. She is the head of a teaching unit in the institution, making her responsible for 10-12 instructors each semester.

3.6.4. Participant 4

P4 is from a small city of the Mediterranean Region of Turkey. She is an ELT graduate of a state university. After graduation, she started working as a part time language teacher. Later, she had a full-time job in a maritime company and was trained as an executive there. Believing that she would be happier in a teaching context, she applied to the institution under study for being an English instructor. She has been working in the institution for 27 years. She has 10-15 hours of teaching load a week working with almost all proficiency levels. This load changes depending on the load of her teacher training responsibilities in the program. She has her master's degree in ELT, and she was about to finish her PhD in ELT at the time of the study at hand. She finished COTE and DELTA, which were the required courses to complete to be able to be an instructor in the institution. She is a teacher trainer with a teacher training diploma. She was offering ICELT sessions for novice instructors in the institution.

3.6.5. Participant 5

P5 is from a big city of central Turkey. She is a graduate of the American Culture and Literature Department of a private university. She started her work life in a construction company as an executive assistant. After one-year in the construction company, she started teaching at a binational language center. She worked there for a year and taught 8-10 and 12-14-year-old kids as well as preparing grown-ups for IELTS and TOEFL exams. Upon her strong wish to work in a university environment, she applied to the institution under study and she has been a part of the preparatory program for almost 8 years. She has 20-25 hours of teaching load each week. She got her master's degree in the department of English Translation and Interpretation in a state university. She also has ICELT and DELTA diplomas.

3.6.6. Participant 6

P6 is from a small city of the Eastern part of Turkey. He is a graduate of American Culture and Literature Department of a state university. He worked in a language

school for two years. Afterwards, he started working in a private university as an English language instructor and stayed there for a year. He has been a part of the institution under study for almost 5 years. He has worked with almost all proficiency levels and 20-25 hours of teaching load a week. He started his master's studies; however, he did not want to continue because of his workload and personal problems he faced during the process. He has ICELT diploma, which was a requirement of the institution.

3.6.7. Participant 7

P7 is from a big city of the Eastern part of Turkey. She is a graduate of ELT department of a state university. After her graduation, she directly started working in the institution being studied on. She has almost 6 years of experience in the same institution. She has mainly worked with pre-intermediate (A2+) and intermediate (B1) proficiency levels. She has 20-25 hours of teaching load a week. She finished ICELT course and got her diploma. After one year, she decided to start her master's studies in ELT in a state university. At the same time, she applied for DELTA program in the institution and got accepted. Despite the difficulties of the hectic schedules she had and the criticisms she got from her environment, she was following her MA studies and DELTA program concurrently at the time of the research study at hand.

3.6.8. Participant 8

P8 is from a big city of the Black Sea Region of Turkey. She is a graduate of ELT department of a state university. After graduation, she worked in a private primary school for two years. Later, she worked in a language school where she worked with young learners and young adults for like three years. She also had work experience in a military institution as a translator. At the time of the research, she was a part of the institution under study for almost five years. She finished ICELT course and she was working on her DELTA assignments at the time of the research. She had 20 hours teaching load a week and worked with almost all proficiency levels. She was also responsible for summer camps organized as a program of the institution during

which adolescents are being taught English by playing games and activities beyond the boundaries of physical classrooms. Apart from those, she was chosen as the IT (instructional technologies) person of a group of instructors.

3.7. Data Collection Tools

Gathering data from multiple sources is one of the core characteristics of a qualitative case study since it reinforces the reliability of the study (Wellington, 2000). Semi-structured interviews were employed as the main data collection tool in the study at hand. For the methodological triangulation, official documents were reviewed, and field notes of the researcher were revisited.

3.7.1. Interviews

Interview is the most preferred and invaluable data collection approach for a qualitative researcher (Dörnyei, 2007). Apart from being a means to collect data, it is basically a tool for social interaction which gives meaning to human experience and thoughts (Rapley, 2004), as Kvale (2008) also defines as *a literal inter-view, an inter-change of between two persons conversing on a common theme* (p.21). Past experiences and current thoughts of the participants are not the only gains of an interview. Interviews also provide the researchers with a deeper insight into participants' perceptions, understandings, experiences, expectations, fears and future-plans about a predetermined phenomenon, which is professional development in the study at hand.

Every single word uttered by the participant or an absence of a word which is left hidden in mimics or pauses while telling their life stories is a kind of microcosm of people' consciousness. In the same vein, Camp (2012) mentions that "*it is the telling that meaning is established. What is related is not the literal story, rather it's a story constructed in the light of the person's present awareness*" (p. 49). From this perspective, interview is of great importance for a qualitative researcher interested in others' stories. The purpose of an interview is not to test hypotheses, not to prove something and not to find answers to questions asked. Rather than these, researchers

should prefer interview since they are simply interested in life stories of others, which are of worth and worth to be listened by a larger audience (Seidman, 2006). Besides, conducting interviews as a method of data collection provides flexibility for the researcher, which provides more quality data and a better understanding of the phenomenon under study (Ryan, Coughlan & Cronin, 2009).

In this research study, semi-structured, one-to-one interview is used as the main data collection means. Open ended question format leads the participants to give a freer and more detailed response to the questions prepared. Besides, it provides participants more room to talk about any other issue they believe it is relevant to. Likewise, the semi-structured interview format allows the researcher to be more flexible during the interview by playing with the questions when needed. The flow of the questions asked in the interview enables the researcher to smoothly follow a thematic approach during the data collection process.

The data for the study was gathered from eight participants on an individual basis so that their individual stories and experiences could be further elaborated. Demographical data of each participant was also gathered at the beginning of the interviews. The interview questions were prepared with the guidance of a PhD holder expert in the field. The duration of the interviews was based on participants' willingness to answer the questions. If they did not prefer to answer any questions, they knew that they could do it without having to state a reason. The information related to the time and the duration of the interviews can be seen below;

Table 3
The Date and Length of the Interviews

Participant	Date	Length
P1	25 February 2020	21 minutes 38 seconds
P2	28 February 2020	17 minutes 4 seconds
P3	2 March 2020	18 minutes 38 seconds
P4	3 March 2020	37 minutes 7 seconds
P5	8 March 2020	20 minutes 8 seconds
P6	12 March 2020	48 minutes 1seconds
P7	31 March 2020	44 minutes 25 seconds
P8	5 April	34 minutes 59 seconds

3.7.2. Field Notes

Taking field notes is an invaluable tool for a rigorous qualitative researcher as it strengthens data and allows the researcher to study on a more elaborate and richer context for the data analysis (Creswell, 2013). as Dornyei (2007) puts it, *in qualitative research, almost anything can be perceived as potential data, and there is no reason why the researcher's field notes, real-time comments, memos and annotations would be exceptions* (p.160). Hence, when combined with the other research data, field notes allow researchers to fill in the blanks in the descriptions of the research context, interviews, focus-group discussions and any other contextual data. Phillippi and Lauderdale (2018) in their review on field notes provides various functions field notes may serve in qualitative inquiries in table 4 below;

Table 4

Common functions of field Notes in qualitative research (Phillippi & Lauderdale, 2018, pp.381-383)

1.	Encourage researchers to pay closer attention to the research setting and the participants and the interaction between this two.
2.	Strengthen language-based data with non-textual details such as smell, sounds of the environment, the tension in the air, the sights of the interview place and non-linguistic behaviors of participants
3.	Help researchers identify bias and reflect upon the elimination of it
4.	Provides researchers with preliminary data coding and an iterative manner to it
5.	Enhance the credibility of the research study

Descriptive and extensive field notes were taken for the study at hand, as well. The researcher took field notes during the interviews mostly. During face-to-face interviews, field notes were used to document noteworthy pauses, tension changes, nonverbals and pertinent behaviors which could not possibly be recorded. Further to that, changes in the flow of the interview or different questions asked along with the reasons were also noted down, as the relevant literature suggests (Phillippi & Lauderdale, 2018).

Apart from the interviews, unplanned meetings with the participants in the institution also provided some handful insight for the researcher and they were also documented informally on a research notebook, especially just after the professional

development observations or follow-up meetings of the participants (also mentioned under the Research Setting Section). These kinds of notes are of great value considering the non-textual data, which contributes to in-depth understanding of the phenomenon under study. Additionally, on the occasions that the researcher and a participant had an informal conversation with respect to their professional development process and the activities they attend, this kind of details were also added to the field notes. These notes were not approached as the main source of data. Still; however, they contributed to the data analysis and interpretation processes. As the focus of the study at hand was not to investigate anything relevant to participants' language proficiency, non-textual data like pauses or salient behaviors during the interviews were recorded in the field notes of the researcher rather than interview transcriptions.

Apart from the field notes taken, the researcher also kept a research diary to be able to lead herself in a more organized way, to reflect her way of researching and to contribute to her own professional development growth. Borg (2011) argues that keeping a research journal contributes the professional growth of a researchers giving them a chance to reflect over the whole process including *complexities, ambiguities, unanticipated difficulties, personal struggles and conflicts* (p. 173), which are not openly shared in the documents available for the novice researchers.

In short, descriptive and reflective notes taken during the whole research process was utilized to get a better and deeper understanding of the data gathered and the phenomenon studied.

3.8. Data Collection

For qualitative inquiries the main data collection instrument is the researcher and the analysis of the data gathered reflects his/her values, perspective, intuition, consciousness and conception of the world. (Merriam, 2009). Trying to discover the phenomenon under study with all possible depths of it during a specific time period is critical (Savin-Baden & Howell Major, 2013).

Therefore, a qualitative research study is the direct result of a meaning-making process of researcher's own understanding. Although not being objective is regarded as a concern for many, the subjectivity of the researcher combined with the subjectivity each participant brings to the study understandably results in a subjective outcome, which is indeed what contributes to the uniqueness of the study (Merriam, 2009; Savin-Baden & Howell Major, 2013).

After the required applications were granted for the research study, the data was obtained from eight participants working in the program with different responsibilities. One-to-one semi-structured interviews were carried out. Having taken expert opinion, the researcher prepared the interview questions in open-ended question format. Before actual interviews, the process was piloted with two instructors working in the same institution, whose data was not utilized in the actual study.

Piloting a certain data collection instrument is of great value since it enables the researchers to identify any potential problem that may result from the sequence or wording of the questions as well as other details regarding the conduct of it such as the place and timing (Van Teijlingen & Hundley, 2010). Kvale (2008) also noted that interview protocols can be enhanced through piloting with a chance to detect any flaws or design-related limitations. Based on the results of the piloting process, necessary amendments could be made for the final version of the questions to be asked.

To be able to provide a more comfortable and daily-like conversation, I asked the language preferences of the participants since the mother tongue of all participants was Turkish. Most of the participants preferred English, therefore, the interviews were carried out in English, except for one participant who wanted to use Turkish. The interview conducted in Turkish was translated into English by the researcher. A member-check procedure as was applied in this phase in order not to negatively affect the intended meaning, accuracy, reliability and the validity of the data obtained during translation. The place of the interviews showed variety based on the

availability and preferences of the participants. Most of them were conducted in predetermined places which could provide a silent and appropriate environment.

Two of the interviews were conducted through the Zoom Application. Zoom is a web-based video-conferencing software and smart phone/desktop application through which people can meet with others by video and audio. The software also enables the users to record the meeting sessions including the written information on the chat box to be viewed later. The reason for the online interview was the 2019 Corona Virus Outbreak, which was verified to have spread all over Turkey by April the first (WHO, 2020). This situation has affected the study to some extent since the data collection process took more time than planned, which extended the overall timing to finish the study.

Not being able to meet face to face due to the strict measures taken through the country to prevent the spread of the virus, the researcher and the participants met through Zoom application. The interview protocol was the same as the face-to-face interviews. An available time for the online meeting was determined. The researcher – as the host of the virtual meeting room- sent an invitation link to the participant. Upon acceptance, the participant was granted his/her rights and informed about the study and interview was conducted as planned. The meeting was saved to be viewed later for full transcription and archiving purposes upon consent from the participants.

All interviews were audio-recorded. Audio recordings were in a password-protected computer. The same procedure was applied for the transcriptions, as well. After the data collection process was over, the interviews were transcribed verbatim. These word-by-word transcriptions of the data helped detect indicators of the views of the participants as each word chosen to be uttered by a participant is a microcosm of his/her consciousness (Seidman, 2006). All the transcriptions were also duplicated and saved under relevant folders to eliminate any potential risk of data loss. The only written data for this research study was the informed consent forms the participants signed and the field notes the researcher took. All the written data was also kept safe in a suitable place which could only be accessed by the researcher.

3.9. Data Analysis

“Analysis begins with the first interview, the first observation, the first document read (Merriam, 2009, p.151). Collecting data and analyzing it are two consecutive processes completing one another (Merriam, 2009). For the present study, the data collection and analysis processes went hand in hand, as well. After each interview held, I listened to the recordings and read the transcriptions roughly so that I could take notes to add my field notes and have an initial idea prior to further data collection. This enabled me to find out certain repeated patterns even while the data collection process was still going on. A more systematic analysis procedure is also suggested in the literature. For Braun and Clarke (2006), researchers choosing qualitative research methodology should be prepared to manage the complex data gathered and they suggest researchers to use a thematic analysis method.

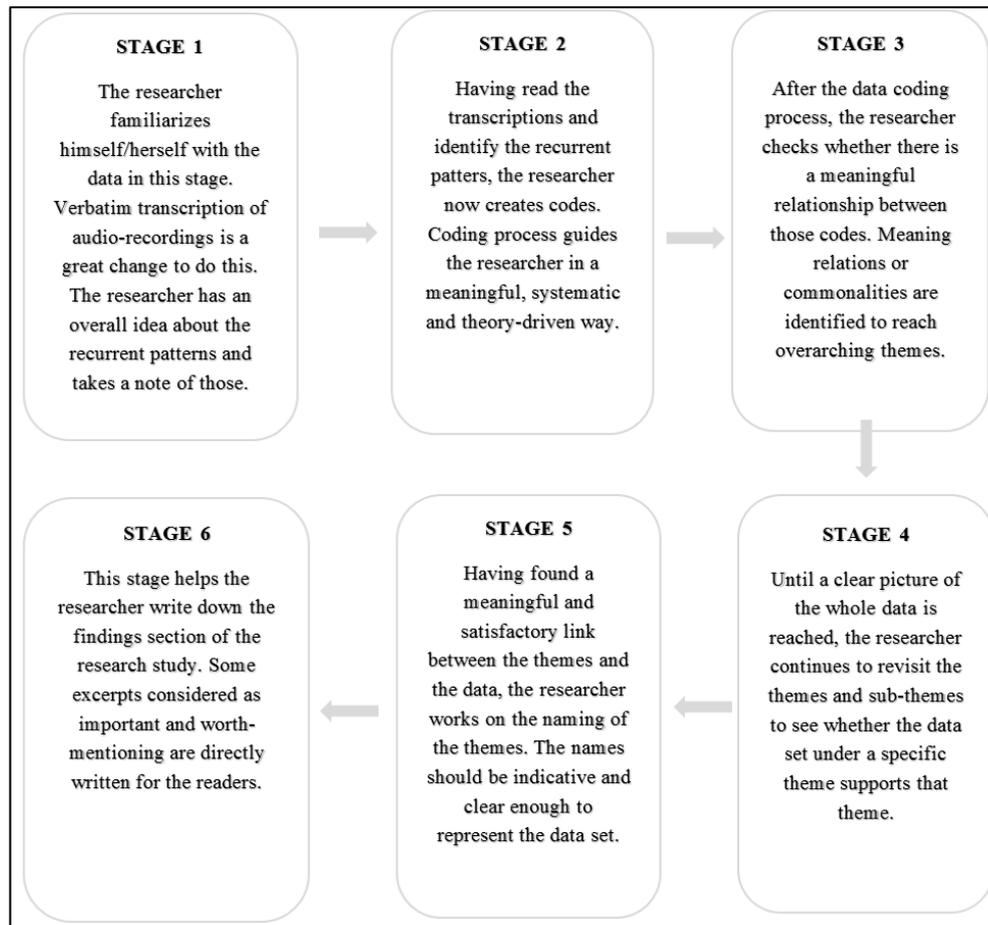


Figure 4. Six stages of data analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006, pp.16-23)

In a similar vein, Wellington (2006) states that data analysis process for a qualitative researcher can become messy and complex (pp.134-135). Therefore; just like the thematic analysis suggested by Braun and Clarke (2006), a cyclical data analysis model is suggested by Wellington (2000).

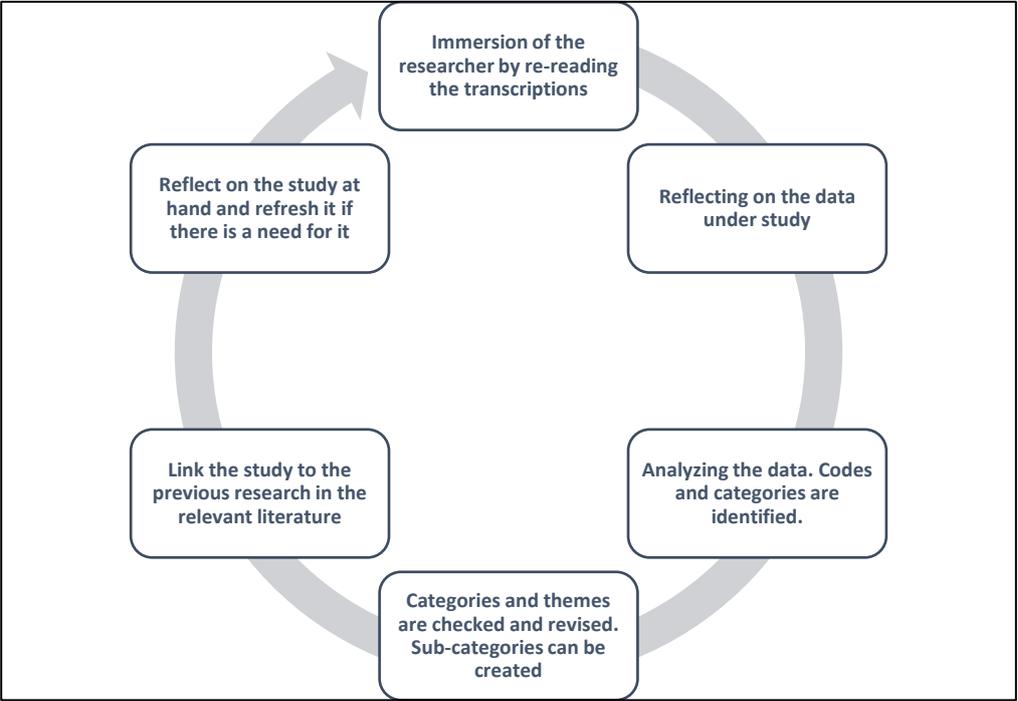


Figure 5. The steps of Wellington’s data analysis

In the first stage of Wellington’s approach to analyze data is immersion in which the researcher reads the data several times and takes notes when necessary. In the second stage, the researcher reflects on the data before the actual analysis starts. Having reflected on the data holistically, researcher then starts analyzing the data by putting it into meaningful chunks and categories emerge. In step four, synthesis, categories and themes are checked and revised. Sub-categories can be created or some larger categories can be divided into smaller meaning units. This continues until all data is revisited and put under a relevant category. The data organized is then checked against the relevant literature. This is a cyclical process since turning back and reflection on the data may be needed (Wellington, 2000).

As displayed above, the literature suggests a systematic procedure to manage the data and a professional analysis. Upon finishing the interviews, the researcher

visited the transcriptions in detail, underlined the recurrent patterns in order to simplify the data into codes. There are different methods of coding data. The codes can be derived from the data or the data can be checked against predetermined codes. Both emerging and predetermined codes can be used at the same time, too (Creswell, 2013). Descriptive coding was employed while naming the codes so that they can clearly indicate the main idea of the relevant data, which is a process guiding the researchers when different data collection instruments are used in a single study such as interview transcriptions and field notes (Saldana, 2011).

Having finished the initial coding, the data set was revisited again to check whether there was any part unnoticed. This part helped me create some categories based on the relationships between codes as noted by Saldana (2011). While reflecting upon the categories that emerged after the second inspection of the data sets, I continued to make changes by combining similar categories, refining some of them or adding more codes under them. Thereafter, the codes and categories were scrutinized to generate themes, which are larger meaning units of the data at hand. The themes were checked against the data set they included and named in a way to represent that data set.

In the last stage of the data analysis process, all the data from verbatim transcriptions and the field notes of the researcher merged and an overall picture of the phenomenon under study was achieved. Merriam (2009) highlights that the categories and themes do not enough to represent the data fully since they can only be regarded as the abstractions the investigator makes from the data. Some sample excerpts from participants' statements were provided in the results section of the study. Member check and data validation were applied both for the data and the findings.

3.10. Validity and Reliability

Just in other research methods, qualitative researchers are expected to be meticulous and to ensure the reliability of the study. Trustworthiness of a study can be ensured by providing auditable data. A rigorous researcher should provide credibility of the

findings by taking some measures (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). A quality check mechanism for qualitative researchers to ensure reliability of their research is developed by Lincoln and Guba (1985). This suggested model of trustworthiness entails credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability, each of which is explained below within the framework of the present research.

Credibility: Also referred as *validity*, credibility is about the trustworthiness of the results achieved. It is also associated with researcher's confidence in justifiability in the interpretations made (Cope, 2014). To be able to enhance credibility, researchers are expected to describe their own experiences throughout the research process. Credibility is ensured when the researcher is engaged with the research, use methods of data triangulation and audit trails (Korstjens & Moser, 2018). In the study at hand, the researcher was able to do justice to the research process by being involved in the program enough to provide in-depth descriptions of the context studied, building rapport with the participants to foster rich, detailed responses and triangulating the data by utilizing verbatim transcriptions of the interviews and comprehensive field notes taken (Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

Transferability: This criterion refers to applicability of the findings to other settings or different groups of participants (Houghton, Casey, Shaw & Murphy, 2013). Transferability can be regarded to have been achieved when the audience can make sense of the results. Even the main aim of the present research study is not to generalize regarding the subjects or the phenomenon, in-depth descriptions of the context and methodology provided may help the audience link the results of the study at hand to their own contexts to the degree they are relevant. However, as also noted by Thomas and Magilvy (2011), each setting is unique, which makes all researchers be obliged to comprehensively analyze what is provided in a research study since different contexts and participant groups may end up with quite different results.

Dependability: Also referred as *reliability*, refers to the condition that the same results can be obtained if the study is replicated by sticking to the same procedures. Still, what is actually intended here is not to get consistent results over time. As the

human nature is not stable, trying to have qualitative studies yielding the same results is not credible. What matters is being able to clearly state the step-by-step procedure of the research study including data collection, storage, data analysis as well as the decisions taken with the underlying intentions such as context and the participants chosen, the choice of data collection instruments and theoretical framework applied. A researcher should provide enough information to be able to guide other researchers who are interested in the phenomenon studied. To achieve this Thomas and Magilvy (2011) suggests an audit trail as below, all of which was followed in the study at hand.

- The aim of the study must be clearly stated.
- The intention behind choosing a particular participant group should be clarified.
- The time needed to collect data should be specified and how data is gathered should be provided.
- The process of data analysis must be explained in detail.
- For the results obtained, relevant discussions and interpretations must be available for the audience.
- Quality criteria chosen to have been followed must be shared with the audience. (Thomas & Magilvy, 2011, p.153).

Confirmability: This criterion refers to researcher's being objective and being aware of his/her own biases and personal dispositions. This enables researchers to be more data-driven and therefore *confirmable*. To achieve confirmability, researchers are required to plan the whole research process in detail and share this plan with the audience both for later investigations of the study and for the replication studies (Creswell, 2013). In the present study, the researcher positions herself to provide a ground for the readers regarding personal dispositions, beliefs, values and experiences of the researcher. Data triangulation also helps to improve this quality criterion by proving that the results were merely derived from the data collected (Miles & Huberman, 1994), as done in the study at hand. Reliability of the context was also tested through an intercoder reliability check.

3.11. Ethical Considerations

An application to conduct this study was sent to the Human Subjects Ethics Committee of Middle East Technical University and it was granted permission. Upon receiving the approval for the study, all parties were informed about the aims and the scope of the study and their rights as a participant together with the identity of the researcher. They were provided with the informed consent form to sign stating that they were willing to participate in the study. One of the main concerns when it comes to qualitative research is to protect the rights and identities of the participants while presenting their life stories to a larger audience. Any specific names of the participants were masked in order to protect the confidentiality and dignity of the people the data was obtained from.

In summary, this section explains methodological approach adopted as well as the rationale behind it. Detailed information about the participants of the study has also been provided under this chapter. The next chapter presents the findings of the study including the views and experiences of the participants as to professional development.

CHAPTER 4

RESULTS

4.0. Presentation

This chapter presents the findings of the data analysis process with respect to the research questions. A thematic approach has been adopted to analyze the data collected. As comprehensively mentioned in the methodology section, semi-structured interviews were the main data collection instruments used to answer the following research questions;

1. How do instructors working at the foundation university view professional development?
2. How do those instructors experience professional development?
3. What suggestions do they propose regarding challenges associated with their own professional development and the opportunities provided in their institutions?

In line with the research questions, the results are presented under four categories, which are (1) teachers' views on teaching profession, (2) their approach to professional development and professional development activities, (3) perceived barriers to professional development and (4) perceived needs and suggestions with regard to professional development. During the interpretation of the themes, some relevant excerpts from the transcripts of the participants are also provided.

4.1. Views on Teaching: A Profession or an Occupation?

4.1.1. Teaching

The approaches of teachers towards teaching have been analyzed to gain a deeper insight into their views on the professional practices they are engaged in. All teachers participated in the study viewed teaching as a profession rather than a job merely carried out for money. They commonly reported that an occupation can directly be associated with making one's living while a profession entails much more than that. In other words, most of the participants are found to believe that money is/ should be given less importance in a profession since the aim of a profession is/should be *touching on others' lives* (P3 &P7), *constant improvement for the sake of a better society* (P4) and *personal sacrifice for the benefit of others* (P6 &P7). On this issue, P5 reported that;

I don't know, what I feel is this, there some occupations, just to earn money. When I think about my own motives for being in this profession, I can surely say that it is not just about money. If the driving force for someone in this profession is money only, I can surely say that they are insane [laughing]. I mean I do not think that an officer cares about the wellbeing and psychology of his/her customers on that day and changes his/her own mood according to them. But we do care and literally we do change based on students' moods.

One a further note, one participant stated that she feels the responsibility to contribute to the students more than the language objectives to be covered in the class. She is found to believe that teaching as a profession is a broad concept, which does not merely cover what is going to be taught in the class as a language objective but everything a student may need in life from personal to professional qualities. In this sense, she seems to believe that as teachers they have more responsibility on their shoulders than solely teaching subject-matter in class;

When you are a teacher, and when you love your profession, you want to teach everything. I cannot just stop even if I know that the objective that I have to cover on that day has already been covered. For example, I want to practice how to think critical in my class, how to communicate efficiently, the ability to feel empathy, being respectful and thankful to the diversity around. This makes an occupation a profession. Feeling responsible for more things than the responsibilities you are given to. (P7)

Similar to the responsibility felt by the participants to teach more than the subject matter, one of the participants emphasized the effect of “working beyond context (f:2)” to be able to regard an occupation as a profession;

In most of the occupations, when you leave your work place, the building, you are done. But we are occupied 7/24 literally. Because you touch their [students'] lives. I guess it is like being a doctor, everywhere is your workplace, you need to touch on more things than your professional field. I guess these are what make teaching a profession. I mean it is not just money. Actually, the ones whose motivation is money only cannot sustain teaching profession. (P3)

I don't know.... for example, when I go home and do the things I love; watching YouTube videos, reading books ...etc. if I see something fun or something inspirational and if I believe that I can improve their mood, motivate them somehow, I just sent it to my class WhatsApp group. This is something out of my responsibility but I believe this is loving what you do, this is profession and this is nothing to do with my salary or work context. (P2)

Although the participants commonly shared the view that teaching is a profession rather than an occupation (f: 8), some participants seem to believe that teaching is even more than a profession as it is a quality becoming ingrained in one's life in time, as well. That seems to be the reason why they mention teaching as *a passion* (f: 4) and *a way of life/ a part of life* (f: 4).

It is satisfaction, passion, the joy you get from your life, I guess. It is not my profession only. No matter how hard the situations are in this country to teach, I still enjoy being on the stage. There is no difference for me from being literally on the stage. It is like acting. (P8)

Teaching is something I love doing. I love being in class. I love lecturing and conveying things to people. So, teaching is a passion for me. It really is. (P6)

4.1.2. Being a Professional ELT Teacher

Apart from participants' views on teaching, what professionalism in teaching means to them also provides a valuable insight into their motivations, assumptions and practices in their professional domain. Being asked about what kind of characteristics and skills professionalism in teaching may necessitate- although the importance of being competent in one's subject matter was highlighted (f: 2)- most of the participants tended to list certain characteristics regarding personality traits first (f: 6), which was quite unexpected none of the participants mentioned

professional development and life-long learning. Most frequent responses regarding personality traits a professional teacher should have are listed below in Table 5.

Table 5
Most frequent personality traits a professional teacher should have

Personality Traits	Frequency
Love and caring	4
Being patient	4
Self-sacrifice	3
Being open to criticism/feedback	6
Being flexible/adaptable	2
Being willing to learn new things	6
Strong interpersonal skills/communication	5
Work ethics	3
Doing your best for the society/students	5
Being well-organized	3
Knowing how to behave and what to wear	3
Knowing your learners	5
Understanding human psychology	4
Anger management	3
Being up-to-date	2

**Frequency given represents the number of participants mentioning the same personality trait*

Some participants highlighted the importance of *being patient* in teaching. They seem to believe that learners at all ages and with all proficiency levels need some time, constant practice and the understanding of their teacher during the learning process to reach success. In this sense, being patient is of great value for teaching English, which is a language regarded as difficult to learn in Turkey. Being patient was also associated with *anger management* as a professional characteristic to be found in a professional teacher;

You have to be patient with your students. We are teaching a language and you know after certain age it is really difficult to acquire a language. The difficulty of the process makes the students nervous sometimes. And, you know our students take a proficiency exam to pass to their departments. It is high-stake for them. All these unfortunately affect our job negatively. You are stressed, concerned. Sometimes you cannot control your feelings. Especially when you don't see positive results after all of your efforts, sacrifice from your time and energy. At this point, a professional teacher should be patient, understanding and be able to control his/her anger, disappointment.” (P3)

“Even if you are an expert on English language teaching and even if you are competent in the pedagogical part of teaching, unless you can communicate well, it does not mean anything to your students. If you- for example- cannot calm yourself down in the class, your subject-matter is nothing. You cannot pass it down to your students. You raise the filter, I mean -you know- the affective filter, they won't learn. You have to know

how to deal with your frustration in front of twenty-two students. This is a part of professionalism. (P6)

The data also reveals that participants attach considerable importance to *knowing the students*. They tend to believe that it is teachers' responsibility to know their students enough to adapt their teaching style, methods and means. Knowing about students is not limited to the information about their academic weaknesses and strengths. As commonly stated, it is about knowing their background, what they like/dislike, their priorities in life, their motivations and concerns.

We ... learn about their weaknesses and strengths, -and I'm not only talking about weaknesses and strengths in English, I am talking about weaknesses in life as well as a person like what they like, what they don't like, which gives me information about their culture and background. (P7)

Knowing the students as one of the primary codes under this theme is found to be linked to *understanding human psychology* and *having strong communication skills*. Some participants commonly noted that a professional teacher should be able to understand the underlying factors behind students' perceptions and attitudes as well as the outcomes of those during the learning process. In this sense, there seems to be a connection between understanding human psychology, having effective communication skills and knowing the students better. On this issue P1 shared a memory of him;

I had a student once. He was working part-time at nights. All other teachers were crazy with her since she was sleeping in class. She had warnings two times. When I asked why, she said she had to work since there was no family to support her. I know that yelling at this girl will make everything worse. She is just tired in the end. We met and talked about the situation. We found a solution. Case closed. We should listen to our students. This can make them learn better, more easily.

Additionally, as seen in Table 5, majority of the participants reflected that a professional teacher should be *open to criticisms and feedback* from all parties including students, colleagues and administrative staff as well as self-criticism. One of them supported this belief by stating that *the act of teaching cannot be taught, it can be learnt only by experience and constant feedback. If you don't welcome the feedback, you don't learn how to teach then* (P4). Another participant also emphasized the importance of feedback by adding *being flexible and adaptable*;

Any constructive feedback should be okay. I need to take them into consideration to improve, I guess. And I need to be adaptable. I need to be okay with any adaptation in the system, any adjustments should be okay to try while teaching. This is professionalism, we should try not to take those comments personal. (P8)

Another noteworthy issue the data reveals is *knowing how to behave and what to wear (f:3)*. Participants are found to believe that being a professional teacher necessitates knowing one's boundaries. One of those boundaries that a professional teacher should be aware of is trying to avoid wearing clothes that may distract students' attention and interrupts the work flow. Being aware of appropriate and inappropriate behaviors was also referred as knowing one's boundaries. A professional teacher is expected to know how to behave under certain conditions both in class and outside the class, among their colleagues. It was stated by P6 that *it is not professional to wear clothes that distract students' attention, it is not necessarily sexual. Professionalism is not just competence in the field; it is the way we behave, the way we dress, the way we speak in the institution with our colleagues and I think these things also fall into professionalism*. This issue is also reflected in another interview;

A teacher should have a certain distance with the students and colleagues. This means all parties should know where to stop and where to continue in terms of authority, speech, decision making...etc. (P5)

Participants also commonly shared the necessity of *"being ready and willing to learn new things"* (f:6). It was also agreed that even though this characteristic is essential in all professions, teaching English necessitates being updated at all times due to the unstable nature and universal status of the language;

An English teacher should be ready and eager to learn many things. These things may vary from knowing one's own subject-matter, pedagogical aspects of teaching to knowing the culture and background of the language. There is a lot to learn" (P4)

For example, in an intermediate syllabus, we need to talk to students about many issues such as environment, transportation, technology, nutrition, etc. That's why I think English lecturers should have general knowledge. This means we need to be knowledgeable about a broad range of things. You need to love learning; otherwise, is not possible. (P6)

"Being ready and willing to learn new things" is also associated with *"doing your best for the society/students"*. It was reported that being a professional means doing

your best for the benefit of a larger community (for the students and –in turn- for the society as mentioned in the interviews). To be able to contribute to a larger community, one first should be ready and eager to learn more herself/himself first. This –as referred in participants’ responses- is one of the core characteristics a professional teacher should have.

Lastly, it was surprising to find out that none of the participants used the term “professional development” as a requirement of being a professional ELT teacher. Only two of the participants make mention of the importance of *being up-to-date*, which can be directly associated with professional development. Still; however, when they were openly asked about their viewpoints regarding PD, all participants emphasized the necessity and value of it, which might lead us to the conclusion that there might be a gap between the perceived ideal and the reality regarding professional development.

4.2. Approaches to Professional Development

As mentioned in the previous section, when asked about their views on professional development, all participants stated that PD is an essential part of being a professional ELT teacher. When the participants were asked what professional development means to them, some of the answers were as the following;

It is something I need to be aware of about my own personal, professional and academic self. (P8)

Everything that we do or we avoid to become better. (P6)

Something which never ends. (P2 –with four others)

As reported in the interviews, professional development is of great importance especially when it comes to English language teaching due to constantly changing nature of the language and its global value as a lingua franca. As it keeps changing, along with the fast-improving technology, being up-to-date has become an obligation for EFL teachers as lifelong learners. This obligation may show itself in teachers’ daily practices as a form of *formal training* (P4) like a graduate program

or as a form of simple *out-of-class chat with a colleague* (P6) as reported in the interviews.

When the data is analyzed, it can be seen that participants view professional development as a way of (1) individual development, (2) institutional advancement and (3) as a way of improving the society.

(1) Individual development: Most of the participants views professional development as a way of improving themselves. When their responses are analyzed, it can be seen that this *individual development* can be further categorized as *academic* and *personal improvement*. With regard to academic improvement, participants referred to enhancing their knowledge on their subject-matter as well as improving their skills to have a better teaching practice, which is quoted below;

Professional development makes us better in terms of our subject-matter and our pedagogical knowledge, you know, what is done, how...kind of things. You become better in terms of your practice in class thank to the things you learn. For example, it can contribute to you in terms of the current changes in your field, it can improve in terms of technology. (P2)

Apart from academic improvement individuals expressed, their responses also reveal that professional development brings about personal improvement, as well. The most frequent terms which are found to be relevant to personal improvement are *gaining self-confidence*, *increasing motivation* and *becoming more aware of one's own weaknesses, strengths* and *priorities*. These are further reflected in the quotes below;

We need professional development for ourselves as well. What I mean is, the more we learn about our own field, the more confident we become in our profession. Gaining more self-confidence through professional development also motivates you to learn more, which is the fringe benefit. Professional development -I guess- is a perfect means to develop our self, as a person. It can help us improve our personality by helping us become more patient, open to criticism. (P7)

The MA courses I attended taught me a lot of things at some point regarding my field. However, this is not the only thing it contributes to me. During the thesis process for instance, I learnt my limitations, my weaknesses and strengths. I learnt how to manage my time, because you have to manage your time effectively, you have to learn it somehow during the process. I gained a better understanding of what my priorities are and I saw different perspectives in my field. (P5)

(2) Institutional advancement: It seems to be found out that professional development is also seen as a way to improve the institution as a whole, too. Both academic and personal improvement of individuals is positively associated with the improvement and the prestige of the institution as the quote below shows;

If I develop, the institution improves, too. It is kind of a chain effect. Besides the reputation of the institution is also linked to the quality of its staff. The better the instructors are in their fields, the better student outcomes we achieve. This in the long terms leads to an increasing success for the institution. So, professional development is an investment institutions can make to better themselves. (P1)

(3) Improving society: Another outcome of professional development of teachers is improving societies. The data gathered demonstrates that the participants assumed the role to improve the society beyond their in-class objectives determined in their syllabus. One of the participants shared the following on this issue;

We are language instructors; we need to improve ourselves all the time to be up-to-date and to provide the best instruction possible for our students. But what I feel is that this is just the tip of the iceberg. I mean I feel the need to do more beyond the classroom. I want to present different viewpoints, different possibilities to my students. I want to be a role model on critical issues, I want to affect them positively. Because I know that by doing so, I can also indirectly reach larger communities, my students' environments, their friends and families. (P7)

As the data collected shows, it seems that professional development is seen as a way to improve individuals, to improve institutions they work in and to contribute to larger communities for the sake of societal advancement. It is found that the participants linked those three to each other as *successive components of a never-ending continuum, following each other* as P1 also highlighted. On a further note, P3 shared the below quote;

It is a means to improve our selves. Improving teachers means better institutions and programs- you know they affect each other. And better teachers together with better institutions may lead us to a better society in the end as the ultimate goal that we share. Professional development is the driving force behind all these. (P3)

Apart from how the participants view professional development in general, the data also revealed some sub-categories concerning their common perceptions towards characteristics quality professional development should have, initiation of professional development and the length of it, which are further indicated below.

4.2.1. Characteristics of “Quality” Professional Development

After being asked their approaches to professional development, participants were also asked about the characteristics of a high-quality professional development program. Since the value attached to professional development is quite high among the participants, their perceptions regarding what makes a professional development activity/program effective is also quite valuable. Below is the list of characteristics participants shared in the interviews.

Table 6
Perceived characteristics of a quality PD program

Characteristics Attached to “Quality” PD	Frequency
Its content should be diverse	4
It should be optional	6
It should be ongoing	4
It should be personalized	2
It should be practice-driven	2
It should be given by competent trainers	2
It should provide quality feedback	6

One of the most frequent characteristics mentioned among participants is its being *optional*. Participants reported that they tended to avoid professional development program/activity when it is a requirement of the institution. It seems that the idea of obligation creates a negative psychological effect on most of the participants, as they also stated. On this issue P3 shared the following;

... right now, we have professional development observations..... People just do it because they have to do it. I think it should be more than this. If you want your staff to develop professionally, you shouldn't do it like a threat..... It shouldn't be an obligation. It should be on a voluntary basis since people want to escape from it or they do pay enough attention to it when it is an obligation.

One a further note, P5 shared a similar concern in the following quote;

You are expected to do this. This sentence negatively affects my motivation to do good things for myself. There are always things that I am expected to do. These are already framed and planned without me. This means “I have to do things” this is more than expectation. No one should start a Master program for instance just because he/she is expected to do so. This is how I feel.

Another noteworthy characteristic most participants believe that a high-quality professional development program should have is *quality feedback* it can provide during and at the end of a PD program or activity. It is commonly stated that quality and personalized feedback should be the core aim of a PD program or an activity.

... but what the teachers' need is helping them to put these into practice and get feedback on the performance. This should be the reason for a professional development program, which is most of the time absent. (P4)

Furthermore, a PD program is expected to be *ongoing*. It was noted that when the professional development is ongoing, it contributes more to one's development since it provides more input and in turn more feedback for the participants of a program or an activity.

The *content* of a PD program/activity is another issue on which participants made comments. There seems to be an agreement on the necessity of *diverse and practicality-based* content. The data gathered show that there is a dissatisfaction with the repetitive and theory-based content of the PD programs/activities, which deter teachers from attending them. On this issue, P1 states that;

...when in the conferences they talk about how important teaching is or when they talk about how not to teach, the basic ones like be consistent with your rules. What does that mean? Is there anyone who doesn't know that. In such conferences I want to kill myself and I disgust all kinds of them especially when we are obliged to go and listen, which is the case most of the time. For example, we don't have conferences about student psychology much. I would definitely attend those because we need such kind of knowledge as well. I already know how to or how not to teach present perfect tense. I don't want to listen to them once more. I would love to listen to some different things, philosophy... I don't know, theatre lessons would be great too.

On the same issue P6 also shared the following;

My time is important; I want to spend my time only for the things that I can benefit from. So I want to learn some practical things like what can be done in a specific circumstance. We have already taken a lot of theory-based courses. I don't see any use in attending some more.

Another point to mention here is the *competence of the trainers*. Two of the participants stated that the person conducting the PD program or an activity is as important as the content of the program/activity. Those participants (P1 & P4) commonly stated that they tend to believe that *PD program/activity is not high-*

quality when they feel that the person conducting it does not have enough qualifications in his/her field. On a further note, one of them indicated that even the age of the person conducting PD program/activity matters since *experience is mostly gained by age* (P1).

4.2.2. Initiation of Professional Development: Intrinsic vs Extrinsic Motivation

Another point which came out of the data is the question of who should initiate professional development. When the participants were asked about their approach towards the initiation of their professional development, most of them emphasized the importance of self-initiation and intrinsic motivation, as the following excerpts display;

I start PD by the initiation of someone else most of the time, and this is something I hate about PD activities. If someone else tells you that you have to do MA, PhD ..., it means you are forced, you feel forced and this is totally different. I don't know, you should want it. (P1)

I think it should be teacher interest first of all. Teachers should say I want to do this and I want to get help from my institution. And the institution should not say you have to do this but they should always guide and help you if you are interested in it. (P3)

Based on the data gathered, it seems that participants prefer intrinsic and self-initiated professional development since they associate these with their own *personal characteristics* and *readiness*. This association seems to create a dissatisfaction with someone else's control over personal domain. One of the participants stated that the decision to start and sustain PD is *directly related to one's personal approach towards constant learning, this is difficult to change* (P1). To further exemplify, the following vignettes also demonstrate that participants opt for self-initiation because of their own personalities;

I think PD should be initiated by the teacher. If a teacher feels the need to work on a specific area, s/he should. When PD is an obligatory element of the institution, I personally feel reluctant to take part in it. (P5)

The need must arise within teacher. Of course, different incentives can be applied to people who refuse this and say that I am competent enough. They can be encouraged in this regard, but in essence it should come from within teachers. The reason I think so is this; you cannot be so motivated by something someone else imposes. The desire to learn is so much related to one's own character. If there is anything I don't know, I want to learn. This is also the case with my teaching. (P6)

Apart from personality, two participants shared their concern regarding readiness and availability of individuals to start/continue professional development. They are found to believe that psychological readiness and physical availability of teachers are the factors affecting the success and sustainability of professional development program/activity; therefore, individuals should decide whether or not to start/sustain PD themselves. On this issue, P7 and P8 shared the following quotes;

PD should be the teacher himself/herself starting it. Because if the institution forces anybody to do that, the person may not be ready. When we first started here, we were trying to get used to the schools, students, teaching itself and at the same time we were forced to do ICELT, which was also a hectic program. It was overwhelming for all of us. It shouldn't be the case. (P7)

I guess it is something that I need to be aware of. I mean not my friends, colleagues or not my director. It is something that I need to be aware of, something I need to go after, I need to find some ways to improve myself... I need to be intrinsically motivated. (P8)

On the other hand; though, one of the participants (P4) stated that an institutional control over professional development of its staff is necessary to be able to create an institutional culture to achieve a better quality, as the following vignette displays,

You should have the desire. But sometimes to build an institutional culture, the administrative put them on the contract so that people can have a common understanding of things and speak to a similar language. Otherwise, if people have different qualifications, yes it brings variety, but then- you know- somebody who is doing a qualification in institution A versus the one doing the qualifications in institution B... the level might be different. But they are put in the same category. Is that fair. I think the administrators should make some things compulsory just to maintain the quality.

She continues with the following quotes;

I mean, it looks demanding and stressful- I agree - when the administrators change the regulation and put it (referring to professional development here) in the contract. But, in those years- when it was an obligation, the quality of teaching and the quality of interaction between teachers in the staffroom were different, better. Creating the opportunity, creating space for professional development and make it compulsory. Because although you don't like it at the beginning, maybe during the process or afterwards you will be happy. Someone should force you otherwise it is hard to get out of your comfort zone.

P2 shared some contradicting views about this issue. Even though she emphasized the importance and necessity of self-initiation along with teacher-led motivation several times during the interview, it seems that she wants to evidence her efficiency and commitment to the institution. An illustrative example of her viewpoint is as follows;

Some kind of encouragement is necessary and I can understand this policy. This is a reputable university and of course they have the right to ask for it. We need to show that we deserve being here.

Based on the data, most of the participants opt for self-initiation and intrinsic motivation when it comes to professional development. Still, when asked about their views on external motivation factors like pay-rise or a new title/position, five of them indicated that those are needed to encourage people, as well, which may lead us to the conclusion that there is a discrepancy between the ideal and the reality. On the issue of external factors, P3 shared the following;

We always say that people should be intrinsically motivated to do something but this is life and we know the reality. We should always have another reason to be motivated. Because it is a long process and people suffer a lot while doing their MA, PhD. So, at the end of it they should have a reward. It can be a pay rise or it could be a diploma. Because the diploma also will show us that that person did something, they put their effort, energy, time into something.

Besides P6 and P8 shares similar concerns with an explicit emphasis on a pay-rise and diploma/certificate to be provided after a professional development program;

I will not be able to get the diploma, I just feel sorry for this part because after so much effort, one wants to buy something, even if it is a piece of paper, and wants to get a mark. (P6)

Apart from being intrinsically motivated, people need some factors to motivate themselves externally as well like an increase in your salary, or an improvement in your title, your position. Because otherwise people may say what is the point of improving myself. OK, I got my MA PhD, DELTA let's say but I am still an instructor here in this institution earning the same, no more holidays, no new titles. Like you become a more, better qualified teacher but nothing changed outside. If you are not a kind of a person who can be satisfied only with the fact that s/he is a better teacher now, professional development is not that important. So yes, institutions have some responsibilities to motivate people in any way possible. (P8)

Another worth-mentioning finding which may be derived from the data gathered is indirect pressure put by the institution to start/continue PD. When the participants were asked whether their socio-economic status and their work environment create a professional development need or not, majority of the participants indicated that there is a link between PD processes one undergoes and the place s/he works in. Four out of these five participants preferred calling it as a “*pressure*”, which indicates that they approach this issue negatively.

As for the socio-economic status, I feel that the better it comes, the more things people expect you to do. Since I am working here and since my colleagues here loves professional development a lot, I sometimes feel the pressure. But, since PD is not the priority in my life, I do not want to give that much importance to it. I mean after work I want to spend time with my friends and family. But those PD lovers never stop. I remember some ladies working here, they used to come some professional development sessions provided here while they were in their last trimesters of their pregnancy. This is weird, I guess. (P5)

Yes, where you are affects your professional path too. Because where you work sometimes requires you to develop yourself even if you do not want it or you are not ready for it. I feel pressured sometimes. You are just required to do it, which basically means you have to. (P7)

While some of the participants feel pressured due to institutional expectations regarding professional development as also mentioned in the quotes above, other two seem to approach it more positively by putting more emphasis on the end result. As the following excerpt displays, they are found to believe that the professional development demands of the work place can be tolerated since it indirectly shows the quality of the work place and it contributes to being better anyhow. On this issue, P2 shared the following quote;

This institution asks for those. If I would work in another place, I might not need to develop that much yes, but it is disadvantageous, too. Maybe if nobody forced me at the beginning at least for some basic courses, maybe I would be too lazy to do them and I wouldn't develop myself. and I can understand this policy. This is a reputable university and of course they have the right to ask for it. We need to show that we deserve being here. (P2)

In addition, these participants reported that there is a positive link between the PD opportunities provided in an institution and the eagerness of the teachers to attend those. The participants seem to approach this issue as a pay back as the following vignette from P4 reveals;

Maybe this is one of the reasons why I always wanted to be effective because this institution invested in me, I might not have found these opportunities in another place and in return I wanted to do something for the institution.

4.2.3. The Length of Professional Development Program

Another noticeable issue raised by the participants was their approach towards the length of professional development program. Long-term professional development was framed as the ones requiring a longer time period and providing a diploma/certificate at the end such as MA/PhD/ICELT/DELTA. Likewise, short-

term PD was associated with sit-and-get kind of activities involving conferences, seminars and workshops. Having been asked about their preferences considering long-term and short-term professional development programs/activities, participants shared different viewpoints.

Some participants reported a strong emphasis on the virtue of long-term professional development. The following excerpt also supports this view by referring long-term PD as a more structured instruction;

I think long term professional development is more valuable if I am asked to compare them. You go through a process of learning in this kind of professional development. I mean, you have a lot more to learn and since you also have enough time for those, you can learn them in a structured way, step-by-step. You have a better chance to put things into practice, I guess. (P5)

Among these participants two of them indicated that long-term professional development is of more value as it can provide more personalized instruction. On a further note, it was also stated that this personalized instruction can directly be associated with quality and personalized feedback, which in turn contributes to the value of PD engaged in. The data from P4 also supports this view as shown in the following vignette;

Going to conferences and listening to different ideas are not enough and it is one of the problems of ministry of education. They are running exciting workshops and a lot of training out there. However, your role- if you are going to support professional development and if you want an improvement to take place, you have to work with the teachers individually...In that respect, courses like MA-DELTA are more valuable and contribute more to professional development because yes you are attending workshops, you are listening to the input but additionally you are also working one-on-one basis with the instructor.

None of the participants in the study at hand viewed short-term PD more valuable than the long-term one. Still; however, for three participants, trying to compare these two may be misleading since they are totally different from each other regarding the aim and scope of the activities presented. Additionally, it was also noted that the benefit aimed to be achieved depends on the individuals. The remarks of P6 and P7 below indicate the same approach;

So, I can't say one is more useful than the other, but I'd say something like this: after all, one is long-term and very broad in scope, and one is short-term and narrow in

scope. After all, the ultimate benefits are different. But if we look at it in terms of time spent and benefit gained, I think there is not much difference between them in terms of benefit. So, I think these two should not be compared. (P6)

I would not compare them actually, because they both have benefits and drawbacks. So, committing a year-long process is hard, yes but in the end, you improve yourself; but they have their own criteria in their mind and they want you to become that, they want you to teach in that way. Any difference to those may be a failure for them. And this is not something that everybody can get benefit from. For conferences, it also depends. For instance, here in some conferences I just sit there for hours and hours and there is nothing to learn. But the opposite may be the case too. So, it depends, I guess. (P7)

Another noteworthy comment made concerning this issue was about the length of time between two long-term professional development activities. Two participants seem to believe that there should be a time period between PD activities especially after a long-term PD program to *digest* all the input and to put it into practice as the following excerpt reveals;

The actual emphasis I guess should not be on whether short-term or long-term professional development is more important. It should be on whether the participant could really benefit from it and achieved his/her aims behind attending it. To be able to see this, there should be some time which is only used to see the outcomes of the activity or program. One needs to digest all the input and trial it to transform for a better self. That's the reason why I don't think that just after graduation, MA should be applied. MA requires some experience to reflect and build on. Likewise, for PhD we need some time to digest all the input gained through MA. I guess this is more important than talking about short-term vs long-term issue. (P8)

4.3. Perceived Barriers to Professional Development

Another theme that emerged from the data is the factors perceived as obstacles to professional development. Although it was commonly stated that professional development is both a prerequisite and privilege for a professional ELT teacher, there also seemed to be an agreement on some concerns and challenges that might conversely affect their professional development practices. Upon the analysis of the data, two thematic categories emerged, as can be seen in the table below;

Table 7

Emerging categories under the theme of perceived barriers to PD

Perceived Barriers to Professional Development	
Categories	Sub-categories
Individual Characteristics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Personal characteristics • Personal priorities/responsibilities • Lack of personal motivation • Feeling burnout • Diverse views on teaching profession
Contextual Factors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Intensity of workload • Lack of collaboration of the institution • Compulsory participation in PD practices • Lack of training unit • Dissatisfaction with the content of PD • Lack of Student Motivation

4.3.1. Individual Characteristics

The data revealed that individual characteristics of participants as well as their responsibilities/priorities in life may have an effect on their approach toward professional development, affecting their participation and engagement in PD practices. One of the commonly stated factors hindering professional development practices is about personal traits participants have, as revealed by the following excerpts;

I think it is a part of personality, my nature. I have always been looking for better ways. I didn't see it as an opportunity to increase my salary. You know it is just a notification maybe for the other people who are obsessed with titles and diplomas.... It could be teachers' personality. Somebody who is reluctant to professional development, you know- who lacks awareness that is a big hindrance. Teachers' personality is so important. Is this teacher open to feedback open to professional development? If this person is very negative, spreads negativity. You want to help that teacher, but in return you get criticism, negativity and gossip behind your back. (P4)

The desire to learn is also very related to one's own character. Otherwise, people fail to achieve success, we see such cases. If there is anything I don't know, I want to learn. This is also the case with my teaching. If I encounter something I do not know, I definitely check it. I never ignore such things. (P6)

Similar to personal characteristics, participants' choices in life may differ for individuals, affecting their readiness to start/sustain their professional development. The following excerpt reveals that even if the importance of PD has been agreed on by all participants, not all of them approaches to it as a priority;

Since I am working here and since my colleagues here loves professional development a lot, I sometimes feel the pressure. But, since PD is not the priority in my life, I do not want to give that much importance to it. I mean after work I want to spend time with my friends and family. (P5)

My plans changed and my aims changed in life. I do not want to be a really prestigious teacher. Because this does not change anything. PhD-MA all these things are necessary and never-ending. They never end. I am not ready for this kind of a career. (P1)

On the top of that it depends on the needs of the teacher or the choice of the teachers, whether she would like to develop herself or not. Because if a person doesn't want to develop, you cannot force him or her to develop himself. (P2)

Lack of personal motivation to start/sustain PD and feeling burnout are also found to be personal barriers in front of professional development of participants. P7 directs attention to this issue with the following quote;

I have some nouns actually like burnout is one of them (the participant was asked to use some adjectives describing her daily academic life) I don't know if I should say this. I mean I have only been working for five years as an instructor, but i have already felt like I have been working for fifteen years. It is really tiring; it is really difficult to keep up with everything. Especially now I am working on my MA thesis and DELTA at the same time, it is like a hell, like being in the hell. (P7)

I was thinking about having a master's degree, I don't anymore because I have realized that it is too demanding and I am not motivated, there is no reason for me to do it. (P6)

A variety of perspectives were marked by the participants under this theme with regard to their perceived or experienced challenges during PD. Some participants seem to think that teaching profession itself and the requirements it entails creates a challenge against being fully engaged in continuous professional development. There seems to be an agreement on the difference between the workload resulting from the high expectations of the institution which are analyzed comprehensively in *contextual factors* section and the workload due to the nature of teaching profession itself. Although both of them were simply referred as “workload” by the participants, explanations provided reveals that the teaching profession itself may be perceived as a factor hindering continuous professional development practices of teachers. This view was associated with the feeling of “*non-stop working, working 7/24, working beyond the walls of classroom, working at home*” as the following quotes illustrates;

Because after teaching, if I have lots of... let's say essays...when you go home, you have to read and mark lots of papers, it is tough. We are teaching 50 minutes and 50

minutes is really long sometimes. We make an effort. It is really tiring for the instructors. And when you go to home, think about the psychology, you continue to work. And it is also difficult to mark the papers. You are married. You have other responsibilities. Sometimes for Saturdays Sundays I have to work for planning, reading papers, marking, preparing tasks and for other stuff. I need time. More time to do non-teaching activities, so professional development cannot be on my to-do list even. (P1) Teaching itself is very tiring at the end of the day. You have still something to do when you leave the building. When am I supposed to improve myself then? (P2)

Workload (when asked about the challenges regarding professional development). Because we are teachers. We are teaching in classrooms. Sometimes we have meetings in break times. We have to do lots of things at home. We are also working at home. Teaching is different from many other professions in that sense. We need some free time. (P3)

4.3.2. Contextual Factors

Another thematic category that emerged from the data was the factors related to the institutional context the participants are working in. As shown in Table 7 above, these factors include intensity of the workload, obligations set by the institution, lack of collaboration of the institution, lack of competent trainers/resources and lack of institutional encouragement, dissatisfaction with the context of PD and lack of student motivation in the institution.

4.3.2.1. Workload

One of the most frequently mentioned factors deterring participants from being engaged in professional development practices is workload. As mentioned in the previous section, the word “workload” was uttered both when participants referred to teaching profession itself which requires working outside the teaching context and when the participants find the workplace too demanding. In this sense, workload is discussed in different parts of the study with reference to different viewpoints of the participants. This section provides findings concerning *intense workload* which results from *high expectations* and *increased working hours of the institution*. Most of the participants reported a strong emphasis on the negative effect of this issue as the following excerpts reveal;

My course load was actually 22 hours there (referring to another institution he worked for before). It was 22 hours, not 20. Still; however, I was running things easier there. Here, on the other hand, I have a lot of responsibilities over the 20-hour course load. I have a lot of things to do outside the class. This prevents me a lot. This results in a

program like this; after 20 hours of teaching in class, I have to do something for the school and my students outside the class and also do something for my master's degree, for my own professional development. There is no time for anything, it is too much. In this case, I put it on both sides of the scale; I will either tire myself too much, or I will continue doing the things I do now without exhausting myself, which is the case most of the time. And right now, this side of the scale is more dominant, I mean being lazy is more dominant because I do not think I will benefit from tiring myself even more. (P6)

The data showed that most of the concerns and challenges perceived regarding workload is associated with the paper work part of teaching rather than the physical teaching in classrooms. Most of the participants commonly shared their dissatisfaction with the intensity of the paper work they are held responsible for by the institution.

Sometimes, when I come in the morning, something that I do not see as urgent can be urgently requested - which happens so frequently. A big part of our work actually consists of this. Actually, the time I devote to lesson planning and lecturing do not bother me too much, but I feel so sorry for the time I spend for paperwork and I don't think it improves me. (P6)

Workload demotivates me as well. Because I want to do something nicer, something interesting in the class but because of unnecessary workload we have here, I cannot find proper time to do what I actually want to do. I mean I am filling some unnecessary forms, preparing some task design charts, which is not something necessary and those take a lot of time.... If my workload was not that much, I would definitely want to have some peer observations. Maybe once a week or twice a week, I would definitely love that. (P8)

P8 continues with her discontent with admin-related part of workload as the following vignette reveals;

I don't want to spend my time on silly stuff, asking students to write their phone numbers on the chart and so. Because time is important. It is 24 hours and we already use 8 of them for sleeping, for the rest I feel I spend more time for my teaching than my necessary things like eating, taking shower, socializing and so.... It is already 2 o'clock on Saturday and I know that the things I need to do will take me for four-five hours to finish. And during those hours there is nothing about planning lessons for the class. What would motivate me is preparing a vocabulary quiz right now but it is not in the to-do list even.

When asked about the factors which hinder professional development, another participant directs attention to constant change of the course books and other teaching-related materials in the institution by again referring to *workload*;

Workload because in other institutions and in MoNE, they have a course book and they teach the same course book for 20 years. But here, everything is changing most of the

time. I mean the course books, the materials so on. Even adapting yourself to those materials takes a lot of time. So, it doesn't give much room for professional development in that sense. (P2)

4.3.2.2. Lack of institutional help

Apart from workload, another perceived challenge to professional development practices is *lack of institutional help*. Participants reported that they expect support from the institution in terms of (1) reduction in teaching load, (2) re-organizing schedules if one wants to attend a PD activity/program, (3) providing more opportunities for PD practices and (4) providing motivational support.

Reduction in teaching load;

Participants shared the need for reduced teaching hours when they are engaged in a long-term professional practice. P4 compared past and present by emphasizing that institutional priorities have changed over the years.

In the past, they had a reduction in teaching hours and teachers were more committed to do it (referring to professional development practices). They appreciated the support but at the moment there is no support given to the teachers. (P4)

Institutional support like providing more time for that teacher who is trying to work on Delta or Master's. I mean the institution can provide reduction for the teaching hours that instructor is responsible for. For example, in the previous semester I asked for help from the management. ... They let me down basically ... They didn't make my job easier even though they could have done that. (P7)

Re-organizing schedules and other administrative help;

As the following excerpts reveal, most of the participants reported that organizational and admin-related help from the institution is of great importance when it comes to professional development of the staff. P8 referred all these planning as *burden on teachers' shoulders*, which may cause teachers to avoid PD. Other participants shared similar concerns as well;

Institution should organize that because I cannot plan my timetable, my off-days and so on. So, they should do that because it is about management. If they cannot help us about those, we avoid professional development. This is so obvious. (P2)

If you want to present somewhere or if you want to attend something, you are required to do all the planning, arrange make-up lessons, take official day-off from the

institution, they do everything to make your job difficult. After all these you lose your energy and motivation. (P7)

There are some tasks to be accomplished by someone participating in a certificate program or master's degree, there are many things that need to be fulfilled, such as observing colleagues, collecting data. While these are being done, of course, the institution can help in many ways. For example, for a person collecting data, the ethics committee can issue documents much faster for their own employees. (P6)

Providing more opportunities for PD practices;

Participants are found to be dissatisfied with the with the opportunities provided in the institution to improve their professional selves. While P7 shares her concern about attending institutional organizations only, P8 seems to believe that institution discourage trying new things;

We do not attend many conferences since our institution does not provide that time or opportunities for us. We always attend conferences and seminars which are held in our institution. (P7)

If I wanna ask for help to try some new things in class and if they just say no without seeing the reason or without listening, if they say “no”, I would be really demotivated. (P8).

On a further note, P8 mentions the lack of available positions in the institution as a factor hindering PD initiation;

Because in the school we have a unit system you know and that could be a title you can get, being a line manager, or being a testing member.... I remember, it was my second year I guess, I was so naïve and I asked: Hocam –I was talking to those tutors- hocam one day if you are asked to find somebody who can help you, somebody who can be in your position later after your retirement, can I come like in ten years. Because we don't know when they are going to retire. Without being paid, just a voluntary work with you. I can just come and visit you, just to help, just to learn the process, just to understand what it is like to be teacher trainer. They just smiled at me – I remember that day- they told me that if there is such a position one day, we would definitely inform people. I was like, all the positions were preoccupied in this institution and I feel like I will not have any different title as long as I work here in this institution. This is demotivating. (P8).

Providing motivational support;

Based on the data gathered, participants seem to feel the need of motivational support provided by the institution. P4 directly uttered “*we need more motivational support for professional development since in the end they also invest in themselves.*

In the same vein, P6 reported a strong emphasis on how demotivated he becomes due to institutional limitations over his PD process;

“Here I have learned how to do certain things over the years and now I feel like I’m stagnating. Exactly what I am doing is giving a pause, a period of stagnation because I realized what I was doing was working. The students are satisfied, the institution is happy... So, forget about creating a professional development need, on the contrary, this place reduces my desire for PD and my motivation for it. Besides, I expect the institution to do this to all teachers here; improve yourself, be better... For example, in my situation I feel like someone should say this; “You may not need it, you are sufficient here but you can do better.” ... But what happens at the institution where I work is just the opposite. When I tried to get a master's degree, for example, with certain commitments, certain rules and guidelines, they turn my own professional development desire into something I do by force. (P6)

At the moment, our concern is more like “are you fulfilling your teaching hours” and if you want to go to a conference or be involved in a project, there is no encouragement. (P4)

4.3.2.3. Compulsory participation in PD practices

Another highlight in the participants’ responses regarding the challenges associated with their professional development is compulsory participation in professional development practices in the institution. As mentioned in the methodology section as well, teachers are expected to continue their professional development by attending long-term certificate/diploma programs like ICELT, DELTA, MA and PhD. Additionally, they are also required to attend conferences/seminars/workshops organized by the institution. Participants are found to believe that compulsory participation in PD practices negatively affect the expected outcome and overall value of the practices.

When we first started here, we were trying to get used to the schools, students, teaching itself and at the same time we were forced to do ICELT, which was also a hectic program. It was overwhelming for all of us. It shouldn’t be the case if we want to benefit from it. (P7)

On a further note, P5 stated that compulsory participation in PD practices negatively affect the eagerness of the participants to be engaged in those practices, as the following excerpt displays;

When professional development is an obligatory element of the institution, I personally feel reluctant to take part in it. (P5)

The following excerpt demonstrates how P6 reflected on this issue:

The institution does not want me to improve, this is not the goal. If they wanted me to improve, they would say; We have these options at hand for the conference, you can attend whatever you think will benefit you. But what is required from us is “you will attend all of the sessions that take place during non-teaching hours. Whether it is useful or not, whether you know the subject very well or not, you will attend those sessions. But if something that you do not know much about, that you want to learn, that you are passionate about coincides with your class hours, the institution does not help you. What you are told is this; “please swap your lesson hours with your partner”. But the person who needs to do this, who needs to send tens of emails is me again, which is too much to listen to a 15-minute session. It does not worth it. In such situations, I think it's useless when people are forced to attend PD.

Another issue which was referred to by all participants was the dissatisfaction with the conduct of the professional development observation (PDO) cycle in the institution. As also explained in the methodology section of the study at hand, teachers are required to be engaged in PDO cycle (see figure 3 in the methodology section). The cycle starts with determining a professional development goal and researching on it for a period of time. Later, teachers are asked to prepare a lesson plan aiming at the PDO goal. This lesson is observed by a line manager and a post-observation meeting is scheduled to reflect on the lesson. This meeting provides a base for the PDO goal of the upcoming academic year. Having been asked about the reason for their dissatisfaction, participants commonly mentioned *compulsory participation* in it, which indirectly makes it *unnatural* and *superficial*. In the same vein, for P4 it is just *a show of lesson*. The following excerpts reveal similar concerns;

The atmosphere is artificial. Because, normally while they are observing, students behave differently or you have to behave differently. You cannot carry out your plan as you want. Because there is a document, there is a plan. You have to copy what is written there. (P1)

It is not natural. It is very superficial because you know that you will be observed and you will be prepared but actually you don't do you lessons like that everybody is aware of it. ...you create an ideal world. But the reality is never like that. So, you should trust your teachers in that sense. If you hire these teachers, there is always feedback from all parties so you can take action before teaching practice and for professional development, it shouldn't be compulsory. If somebody wants to develop himself, s/he can ask for help, please come and observe me, what are my weak points. Especially the long terms things. That is the most beneficial way, I guess. (P2)

Personally, when I am under pressure or when something is obligatory, I do not want to do anything ... We have to find a different goal every year. Sometimes I feel forced to come up with a different idea and the lesson does not feel natural at all. (P5)

The viewpoint of another participant concerning the compulsory and artificial nature of PDO cycle is as follows;

First of all, these stages never progress as they are supposed to. While I am sitting in the office one day, someone tells me that you have to find a goal that you need to improve yourself in, and I start looking for what I can do. First of all, I have to find something missing about myself. I can't find anything about that. Not because I do not have anything to improve, I just cannot see. Someone else should see this. So, I determine a random aim. While choosing it, I am checking myself; "Can I easily do this, do I have material?" So, I'm actually choosing something that I know well. The first problem starts here. In the second phase, I am asked to do some research within the already-hectic schedule I have.... For people like us, this situation turns into a chore and we don't do any research. As for the observation phase, As I am already prepared for this lesson beforehand, because I know it beforehand, because I have planned it - we choose the class, the time, etc.- of course, in those fifty minutes my lesson goes well, there is no result. Here we go back to the first stage; goal setting. In the post-observation meeting, your line manager says "The lesson was very good, no problem arose, please find another goal for next year. (P7)

As the excerpt above displays, all participants are found to believe that there is a discrepancy between the ideal tried to be created by the institution and the reality perceived and experienced by the participants. This also can be related to the dilemma of self-regulated professional development since people wishing for more autonomy may also feel being left alone when there is no guidance. On a further note, the same participant shares a different concern regarding goal-setting part for academic development. He is found to believe that an academic goal to be set does not necessarily have to be observable. To set an example for his comment, he shares the following quote;

For example, let's say I have an anger-management problem. I think this is one of the worst problems a teacher may experience.... This is not something observable in a fifty-minute lesson.... Anger control cannot be written as a teaching goal here. But as a matter of fact, helping this teacher solve this anger-management problem improves that teacher professionally to a great extent. This is also professional development. Because I know some people having experienced such problems, and even if the institution is aware of those problems, they tend to ignore.

Another highlight in the data as a discouraging factor within PDO cycle was the quality of the feedback provided at the end of in-class observations and the credentials of the feedback provider- the line managers in the context of the study. Participants complained about being deprived of quality feedback and guidance. They also tend to believe that feedback provider should have necessary credentials

and experience in teaching to make the feedback effective for the people being observed.

The observations are made by middle managers and there is neither an official nor an informal indication showing that these people are more competent than me in terms of teaching. In other words, these people do not have more diplomas or get more education than me. They do not have more teaching experience than me either. (P7)

In line with the remarks of P7, another participant also voiced his concern about being observed by less-experienced teachers, which has a negative impact on the potential effectiveness of the feedback to be taken;

It is important who observes you. They are also observing more experienced teachers like 25-30 years-experienced teachers. This is silly, I think. It is not necessary, if there is nothing to learn... Their experience (referring to the feedback providers here) is also important. (P1)

In addition to aforementioned perspectives, P6 also drew attention to the position of the feedback provider. He expressed that having reflected on his own experience, he witnessed that line managers view feedback-providing as a way to maintain their authority. He also expressed that he does not take the feedback into account when he feels this unnatural hierarchy, which should be left aside if the aim is to contribute to the staff.

4.3.2.4. Lack of training unit

In accord with the aforementioned views, participants also drew attention to the importance of the *availability* and *active support* of a training unit for their professional development. Some participants further stated that lack of “*effective*” teacher trainers and lack of materials are directly linked to absence or inadequacy of a professional development unit, which adversely affect the professional development practices and willingness to participate in those, as the following vignette displays;

The presence of a professional development unit makes a huge difference, I guess. Think about this; there is a group of people working systematically to enhance knowledge and excellence in teaching by guiding you with research methods in the field and providing you with necessary background and materials. PD unit is an investment but unfortunately many institutions cannot see this as necessity. Thus, I can say that it may act as a barrier in front of development. (P5)

Two other participants shared their views on “quality” feedback they associated with the availability and “effectiveness” of a professional development unit. The quotation taken from P6 given below may serve as an example of their standpoint on this issue;

We have been observed under the name of professional development for four years, but I used to benefit more from a single ICELT observation. Because there I get an input before and after; I get feedback from someone who I think is competent enough, who follows the lesson closely, who follows my progress closely, and more importantly whose qualifications are suitable and adequate to provide quality feedback to me. I mean this person is already trained to train teachers. So, the contribution of professional development units is twofold I believe. One, they provide quality feedback, two you believe in them because they are trained for this. This motivates you. But if you have someone whose job is not to train teachers give feedback, I mean if this feedback is provided to me by someone having the same level of competence as me, this feedback is not very efficient.

The institution under study has already had a center for instructor development, education and research, which aims to help teachers improve themselves in their profession in line with the mission of the institution as also mentioned in the methodology part of the study. It was stated by two participants that the presence of a professional development unit is not enough itself. They portrayed an ideal professional development unit as the one which can provide active and constant support as well as encouragement for teachers in institution. Reflecting on this issue, two participants shared their concerns regarding the change the institution has gone through over the years, as the following excerpts display;

But now it is not like that because they don't have enough resources for that. They don't have enough teacher trainers. And, they don't feel the need for that. I don't know what the reason is. So, but –it is very different from- 10 years ago. (P2)

I think that for the last couple of years, the administrators do not give any importance to professional development. I don't think that a professional development unit exist anymore because there is no investment in trainers and you know what are the trainers doing while they are investing in their own professional development. To me, it is a big question mark.... In the past, during preparation weeks for example you could have workshops, just to inspire. (P4)

4.3.2.5. Dissatisfaction with the content of PD

Based on the data at hand, there seems to be a consensus on the need for a diverse and more engaging content for professional development practices of teachers at

higher education level. All participants in the study voiced their concerns and discontent with the *repetitiveness* and *theory-driven nature* of the PD practices available to them. In the same vein, they reported a strong emphasis on the need for more practical ideas and teaching tips. It can be understood from the responses that this preference of the participants is valid both short and long-term PD practices.

I do not want to listen to any other conference on teaching methods. (P1)

To be honest. I don't get anything from those conferences because they are not new for me, what they present is not new for me. I don't know whether it is because of the nature of our department...I don't feel that I am developing myself seeing the last 10 years because there is too much theory in those conferences. But teachers need practice, we need practical ideas. Because we get bored really if we attend those conferences. They shouldn't be like that, they should attract our attention, something new should be provided. (P2)

Because the content right now is just theory and we fed up with hearing them. They are not practical. (P5)

Likewise, P7 directs attention to the fact that ELT graduates are already familiar with the theory-based nature of pre-service education. Therefore, she believes, for the ones graduated from an ELT department, which is already a prerequisite to work as a teacher in higher education, the content of professional development practices should move from theory to the needs of the new age;

Just focusing on how to teach a specific structure is killing us killing our professionalism and is killing our students. For instance, we should be able to teach our students how to think critically, which is extremely important today.... You should be able to teach the culture to the students.... Professional development comes to the point here. Teachers should be trained in such issues I guess. (P7)

She further highlighted the importance of the content of PD to improve teachers personally and professionally by sharing the following;

Some of the lessons I took during my MA program changed my views regarding teaching like critical pedagogy and so. Until that time the only thing for me was to teach grammar, reading and all that. I know that I changed personally and professionally.

P1 also emphasized the need and value of providing options for participants concerning the content of PD. He noted that teachers should be given the autonomy to choose the content they are interested in and they need for their profession. *“Being forced to take other courses than the ones I wanted to take; I lost all my motivation*

to continue” he stated. He further stressed that this lack of autonomy to choose the content of his MA program caused him to drop out.

In line with the aforementioned perspective, some other participants shared similar expectations concerning the diversity provided in the content of PD. Based on the responses, it can be said that this diversity is not necessarily in a direct relation to education. The following quotes may serve as examples of this standpoint;

Last week, we went to a conference about philosophy. It was really nice. I think the number of such conferences should be increased for the instructors too. Because teaching a language is not only about a theory. (P1)

4.3.2.6. Lack of Student Motivation

Ignorant student profile was another noteworthy issue raised by the participants. They seemed to believe that it indirectly affects teachers’ willingness to start and sustain professional development practices. When asked about the underlying reason behind this viewpoint, they highlighted the importance of goal-outcome relationship. Based on the answers they shared, it is possible to state that lack of student motivation adversely influences teacher motivation to develop themselves professionally as they believe that their PD efforts will not turn into positive learning outcomes for students. In such a scenario – they believe- *it does not worth that much of effort and sacrifice* (P5). Other illustrative examples from the interviews are given below;

Increasing student motivation would motivate teacher. When you go into your class and when you see demotivated students, you lose your motivation too and you say why should I learn more, who is it for, what for. So, you stop at a point. And student motivation....it is not about this institution, it is all around the world, this technology, the new generation affect our lives as well. (P2)

If I were working in a language course, if I had five adult students who just wanted to learn the language, allocate their time and money to be there, my performance would be very different from my performance at my current institution. I think I would probably enjoy teaching more there since the students there would know the value of it and they would be more motivated to learn. (P6)

4.4. Perceived PD Needs and Suggestions

The third research question aimed to find out the needs and suggestions proposed by the participants regarding the challenges associated with their own professional development and the opportunities provided in the institution. When the participants were asked about their ideal environment for professional development, it was found that a part of their responses overlapped with their answers when asked about the challenges they faced.

Teachers should have more autonomy for their own professional development;

Most of the participants drew attention to the importance of autonomy when it comes to professional development. They voiced their concerns about compulsory participation in PD practices and limitations brought with this obligation. One of the participants likened this situation to what teachers are expected to do in their teaching as follows;

Choice and autonomy. This is the most important thing. As teachers, we often talk about how important it is to offer our students a choice in the classroom. We keep telling them how important it is to maintain autonomy.... The teacher-student relationship we have mentioned here is no different from the institution-teacher relationship regarding professional development. The institution should also give some autonomy to its teachers. I think it is not necessarily an observation; they should say everyone will participate in a professional development activity. This can be anything. I mean, there are many areas where a person can improve himself. And it is necessary to get rid of the limitations such as certificate program, master, annual observations, performance evaluations, performance evaluation meetings, where success is perceived only on paper most of the time. (P6)

Workload should be decreased for those who are already engaged in PD practices;

All participants echoed the need for reduction in teaching hours as an institutional support and encouragement for the teachers who want to be actively engaged in PD practices. According to P5, apart from a chance to improve teachers' selves, professional development is way for institutions to invest in themselves, which requires them to make some sacrifices. Similarly, for P1 and P3, institutions should lessen the burden on teachers concerning the non-teaching activities like paperwork, which can be done by admin staff, as well.

The content of PD practices should change;

Another shared view among the participants was the need for a change in the content of PD practices. They associated low participation in PD activities with the repetitive and theory-based content on what to teach, how to and how not to teach. Being asked about what kind of content would be more engaging and fruitful, most of the participants shared their wish to have more on psychology and philosophy. P7 strongly suggested to have more PD opportunities to improve teachers in terms of critical thinking, as a requirement of the age we are in;

I feel the need to do more beyond the classroom. I want to present different viewpoints, different possibilities to my students. I want to be a role model on critical issues, I want to affect them positively. Because I know that by doing so, I can also indirectly reach larger communities, my students' environments, their friends and families. Language is just a medium sometimes. We need to train our teachers especially in the higher education part.

Based on their responses, even though participants valued *personalized* PD practices more, there were some common preferences for the content of PD practices. Below is the list of suggestions to provide variety in the content of PD, which is essential to increase teacher motivation and participation in those practices. The suggestions for the content of PD practices include; (1) Linguistics, (2) Critical Pedagogy, (3) Student Psychology, (4) Flipped Learning, (5) Curriculum and Course Design, (6) Communication, (7) Assessment, (8) Classroom Management, (9) Educational Philosophy, (10) Instructional Technology and (11) How to Conduct Action Research, (12) Generation Z and Changing Needs.

During the interviews, the participants were asked whether they have different PD needs as English language instructors from the instructors of different subjects in the departments. Believing that all teachers should improve themselves to some extent due to the requirements of teaching profession itself, almost all participants asserted that language instructors have additional PD needs due to the nature of the field. The underlying reason provided for this claim is that languages are alive and especially English language is subjected to constant and inevitable change, which necessitates teachers to keep pace with all those changes. The following excerpt by P6 may serve as an overview for this viewpoint;

A history teacher, for example, has already been teaching the history of revolution whose curriculum has not changed since 1980. As language teachers, we are in a different situation. Besides, as an English instructor; we teach at many different levels. I think we need to keep up with these. Besides, there is a special case specific to English. It is a constantly evolving thing, as it is a widely spoken language and spoken by many different people all over the world. And I think anyone who claims to teach English must be following a lot of things that happen in mainstream culture and popular culture, must be following the music, TV series, movies etc.... Moreover, our work is based on talking about a lot of different topics. For example, in an intermediate curriculum, we need to talk to students and convey something about many different issues such as environment, transportation, technology, nutrition. That's why I think the general knowledge of English lecturers should be high, which is not a must in other fields.... we need to be knowledgeable on these issues outside of English. This is a part of professional development, I think.

As can be seen in the excerpt above, being English language teacher is also linked to being a cultured person as well unlike teachers in other departments as the main focus of a language class is communication. Therefore, an English language teacher is expected to be knowledgeable not only about their own subject matter but also popular culture, recent technological advances and socio-culture changes in relevant societies.

There should be more peer observations;

All participants expressed their wish to have more room for peer observations when being asked about their ideal professional development environment. They voiced their discontent with predetermined and well-planned observations conducted by line managers every year since they could not benefit from them. Based on the data, there seems to be a consensus on the need for more opportunities for peer observations for several reason. The first reason mentioned was an *unplanned and more natural* conduct of these observations, since they do not require pre-planning and document filling.

I would also make my colleagues observe each other's lessons for peer feedback. The managers or my colleagues would come and observe daily lessons without any pre-planning for the teachers because this is our natural teaching and we should receive feedback on our normal teaching not a pre-planned lesson. Only then we will be aware of our true professional needs. (P5)

Another reason given for their preference for more peer observations was not having a hierarchy between those colleagues, which creates a more comfortable setting for

the observation and getting feedback among colleagues. Besides, as given in the quote below, it was stated that peer observation creates a change to observe students during a lesson as well.

I would definitely want to have some peer observations. Maybe once a week or twice a week, I would definitely love that.... I want to see how you are teaching, I want to see what kind of things other people do in their classes in a much more comfortable way. It is not like who is better than me? Maybe at the end I can say that there is nothing I can adapt from this lesson or I can see how not to teach something. Or I can say it is a very good idea, I want to try it myself too. Because I am not only observing the teacher, I am observing the students, as well. (P8)

Teachers should be involved in decision-making and planning process concerning PD;

Another common suggestion provided by the participants was the need for teacher involvement in the planning process of their own professional development. According to P4, teachers should have a right to be involved in the planning process of their own professional development rather than being forced to attend/sustain certain PD practices chosen by the institution. This involvement, she believes, does not mean being involved in all the details on the managerial part. Instead, what was suggested is giving choices to teachers and asking them about their needs and preferences for the content and conduct of those PD practices. She also states;

In the past, we could argue and discuss and come to a consensus. At the moment that is not possible. We just feel restricted, that frustrates me. (P4)

The need for communication between teachers and other parties responsible for planning and conducting PD was also echoed by another participant, as the quote below displays;

There is no place for me to state my needs like where I clearly ask for some trainings because I don't know if I asked for something extra, something different they would be ok with it. (P8)

A better organized and more active professional development unit is needed;

While portraying their ideal professional development atmosphere, participants also drew attention to the need for a well-organized and active professional development

unit. Two participants voiced their concerns about the burden on teachers' shoulders. P2 states that;

We should have a training unit of course. It is their job to train us. We do everything, we write tests, we go over the curriculum and so on and everything is our job and this is not good. Everybody has an area that they are good at. I am not good at testing for example I cannot write multiple choice questions. So, that kind of training should be given to the people who want to develop themselves in that area.

The data gathered revealed that participants seem to value a PD practice more when it is designed and conducted by experienced people whose responsibility is to train teachers. This mindset is reflected in the quote below to set an example;

I would have more experienced and well-trained people as the ones responsible for PD activities. The age of the person conducting PD program/activity matters I think since experience is mostly gained by age. (P1)

This view was also echoed by P6 as the following vignette shows;

Some of us are given some responsibilities that we are not trained for such as being an IT person, writing tests ...etc. Or we as colleagues are expected to conduct some workshops in the institution. I can understand to some extent however, it should be the responsibility of the training unit of the institution to train teachers for their needs and responsibilities.

Concerning the expectations from a training unit, P4 gives such examples as having mini swap shops, workshops in the staffroom meetings, inspire people with certain practices, inviting people from outside just to create a different environment and connections between teachers in other institutions, creating more opportunities for constructive feedback for the teachers and working systematically to provide a variety in the content of PD practices available. Without a professional training unit, as the data reveals, all those are put on the shoulders on teachers who are not trained for those, which decreases the quality of the work done.

A need for a training unit was also addressed by P6 for the induction for novice teachers and support for the last phases of the profession. He likened this situation to human life, as he worded in the quote below;

I think this is exactly like human life. People need more support in the first and last years of their life, I think this applies for PD, as well. In the early years, people need more information, help and guidance due to lack of experience and knowledge. This

can be psychological, instructional, or related to methods.... But as the years go by, after 15-20 years in teaching, people focus so much on what they do, the way they do things and this leads them to forget and ignore other ways of doing it. In addition to doing what they know, the world is changing so fast too. If a person who has been teaching for 20-25 years does not keep up with the changes in the world in his/her private life, this person should be kept up with the development of the world through professional development. In the last years of profession, emotional support is also needed. Some teachers may even become more sensitive and more fragile saying –for example- after all those years, how can I experience this...etc... So, since there have been such changes over the years, I think professional development is very important in the first and last years. And a professional development unit is really valuable to deal with all these constantly.

As the quote above displays, even though professional development is referred to as a constant need, it may be needed more as a way of support mechanism during the initial and the last years of service. Lack of experience and knowledge combined with the hardships of adapting a new institutional atmosphere may put novice teachers in a position that they can get more benefit from professional development efforts than the others. Likewise, in the last years of teaching, it may become more difficult to catch up with the emerging instructional technologies, which may cause those teachers feel offended. Additionally, as the quote above refers to, more time in service does not necessarily mean more experiences. Experienced teachers at some point in their profession are under the illusion that they have learned enough, which puts an end to their actual growth. To this end, even though professional development brings positive results when being constantly engaged in, teachers may get benefit from it more at some points in their profession.

In summary, this chapter presented the findings of the data analysis process with respect to the research questions. The findings have been presented within a thematic approach. The next chapter provides a comprehensive discussion and interpretations of the findings with reference to relevant literature.

CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSION, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.0. Presentation

This chapter initially presents a detailed discussion on the main findings of the study with respect to the research questions. Some interpretations and analysis of those are also presented with reference to the relevant literature. In the following part of the section, results are concluded with regard to the findings. In the last part, some implications are provided for practice. Limitations to the study and recommendations for further research are also provided in this chapter.

5.1. Discussion of the Results

5.1.1. Discussion on Teaching and Professionalism of Teachers

The first theme emerging from the data was linked to how teachers view teaching and what professionalism in teaching means to them. The responses for these questions were worth-investigating since they provide a window into teachers' approaches to professional development, which in turn may have an impact on educational policies in a broader sense. The results show that all teachers participated in the study view teaching as a profession rather than an occupation as teaching requires commitment to the occupation, teaching credentials, certificates and certain characteristics in addition to expert knowledge. This finding is in line with the arguments provided in the literature on what makes a profession profession, which are advanced training, certification requirements, performance evaluations, strong personal identity, suitable working conditions, a code of professional ethics evolved around public service, active professional development units and a high

status attached to it (Talbert & McLaughlin, 1994; Ingersoll & Collins, 2018). It is also found that some teachers attached more meaning to teaching profession by referring it to as a way of life and a passion in their life. While an occupation was associated with earning one's life only, a profession was considered as bearing more responsibilities outside the working context of an occupation. The *perceived* responsibility of the teachers for contributing to the improvement of larger communities also shows that teaching entails certain social and ethical responsibilities, which turns it into a profession for many (Tichenor & Tichenor, 2005; Sockett, 2008). This *servicing beyond the context* mindset contributes to teachers' commitment to their profession as well as professional norms of practice (Bransford & Darling-Hammond, 2005). This is also in line with what literature provides as one of the earliest arguments on profession. According to Inlow (1995), a profession must be dedicated to the function of service. If mankind is to be served well, the member of a profession must be grounded in the humanities and the social sciences (p. 256).

With regard to the characteristics and skills professionalism in teaching may necessitate, the findings revealed that the teachers referred to common qualities, characteristics, expectations and practices. This shows that professionalism is constructed both on attitudes and behaviors (Stronge, 2007). To elaborate, while some were found to believe that professionalism is a mindset to live by, others directly related it to observable behaviors of teachers such as appropriate appearance, punctuality and using proper language (Atas, 2018).

An interesting finding on the requirements of professionalism in teaching was the tendency among the teachers to refer to certain personality traits such as *patience, determination, ability to care for others* prior to other components of professionalism. This finding is in accord with the relevant literature (Tichenor & Tichenor, 2005; Korkmazgil, 2015; Atas, 2018). The strong and common emphasis on the *character* component of professionalism in teaching leads to a debate on the question of whether these traits can be taught or not.

Apart from the value attached to personal traits concerning professionalism in teaching, the teachers in the study counted subject matter, pedagogical knowledge, being up-to-date, work-ethics and dedication to the profession outside the classroom walls as other components of teacher professionalism. This finding is in line with Sockett's teacher professionalism typology, which encompasses (1) character, (2) commitment to change and continuous improvement, (3) subject knowledge, (4) pedagogical knowledge and (5) obligations and working relationships beyond the classroom (Sockett, 1993 cited in Tichenor & Tichenor, 2005). A similar finding was also reflected in Korkmazgil's study (2015), as well.

It was also surprising to find out that teachers in the current study did not make an explicit comment on ongoing professional development of teachers as a need for teacher professionalism. In other words, continuous improvement component of Sockett's teacher professionalism typology (1993) was not directly referred by the teachers even though all of them drew attention to it when being asked about their attitudes towards professional development directly. This shows that there is a discrepancy between the ideals they portray and the realities of their practice.

5.1.2. Discussion on Approaches to Professional Development

In accord with the research questions about how teachers view and experience professional development, another theme emerging from the data was linked to teachers' approaches towards professional development. Being asked about their views of professional development in general, all the participants of the study drew attention to its importance and necessity as an inseparable part of professionalism and success in teaching. The reason given for this standpoint was constantly changing nature of English language and its global value as a lingua franca. As it keeps changing, along with the fast-improving technology, being up-to-date has become a prerequisite and privilege for EFL teachers as lifelong learners (Craft, 2000; Celce-Murcia, 2001; Day & Sachs, 2005; OECD, 2011).

A comprehensive analysis of the data reveals that participants of the study view professional development as a means to (1) develop their personal and academic

selves, (2) contribute to the improvement of the institution they serve in and (3) transform the society in the long run, which was also reflected in Önkol's study (2011).

Improvement in one's personal and academic self: It is likely that teachers value professional development for themselves first. The data demonstrates that professional development is positively associated both with academic and personal growth of teachers (Blandford, 2000; Bolam, 2000; Supovitz & Turner, 2000; Villegas-Reimers, 2003; Borko, 2004; Bransford, Darling-Hammond & LePage 2005; Cumming, 2011). With regard to academic improvement, participants referred to enhancing their knowledge on their subject-matter as well as improving their skills to have better teaching practices. In addition to academic improvement professional development brings about, there seems to be an agreement on teachers' gaining self-confidence, increasing motivation and becoming more aware of their own weaknesses, strengths and priorities as secondary benefits. Wells (2014) states that teacher empowerment, which is vital for generating a positive change in their educational and social contexts can be achieved through professional development. Although it is not directly referred as *teacher-empowerment*, participants made mention of it in the current case study.

Contribution to the improvement of one's institution: This finding leads to the conclusion that both academic and personal improvement of teachers is directly or indirectly associated with the improvement and the prestige of the institutions they are working in (Villegas-Reimers, 2003; Desimone, 2009). This approach was also evident in their responses as they frequently used the word "investment" while referring to professional development (Robinson, 2013). Some participants even criticized the institution under study for their referral to professional development as a "cost". This may show that teachers expect their institutions bear some responsibility concerning professional development of the teachers as it will serve as a wise investment for institutional advancement as well.

Contribution to the improvement of the society: This finding may suggest that professional development is not merely seen as a way to better one's professional

self, but also as a responsibility to be taken for the improvement of larger communities beyond classrooms. This ultimate aim makes teachers' professional development practices more meaningful, as implied in the data gathered. This finding is in line with the relevant literature which points out the impact of professional development on wider social movements for public education and its transformation (Hargreaves, 2000; Caza & Creary, 2016).

Literature provides a plethora of studies suggesting that professional development of teachers leads to better learning outcomes for students (Borko, 2004; Jacob & Lefgren, 2004; Earley & Bubb, 2007; Vescio, Ross & Adams, 2008; Hirsh, 2009; Avalos, 2011; Özdemir, 2013). It is surprising to witness that the participants did not explicitly refer to better student outcomes achieved through professional development of teachers.

Within this theme, another category that emerged is related to characteristics of a "quality" professional development. It should be noted that it is impossible to design and conduct professional development practices which are inclusive of all needs and contexts. This is because all contexts are unique and have different needs, opportunities and priorities. Hence, identifying what is "effective" and what is not may not be reliable enough. Still; however, there is a consensus on the positive impact of some factors on teachers' professional development (Darling-Hammond, Wei, Andree, Richardson & Orphanos, 2009; Borko, Jacobs & Koellner, 2010; Hargreaves et al., 2013; Borg, 2015). In line with the literature, the data shows that high-quality PD practices were expected to be optional, ongoing, personalized, practice-driven and diverse in terms of the content. The "quality" of professional development was also linked to the competence of the trainers and feedback providers. This finding may have direct implications on the design and the conduct of professional development activities.

Another category to be discussed under this theme is about the initiation of professional development. Based on the data gathered, it seems that participants prefer intrinsic motivation and self-initiated professional development. The reason for this preference is the differences in teachers' psychological readiness, physical

availability and their personal characteristics to be engaged in PD. The literature proves that success in a professional development practice can be achieved when participants identify a need themselves as individual professionals (Hargreaves et al., 2013). Indeed, if a significant and positive change on practice is expected, autonomy should be experienced by those being developed. With a constructivist mindset, a superficial learning is inevitable if autonomy cannot be experienced by the learners, which cannot lead to a meaning-making process on the learner part (Morgado & Sousa, 2010). As well as increasing teachers' engagement in PD practices, autonomy to initiate/sustain PD may improve the wellbeing of teachers, as well (Ryan & Deci, 2000).

Even though most of the responsibility falls on individual teachers to better themselves professionally, institutions are also expected to bear the load as motivators, space creators or active/ passive participants in the learning process as much as possible (Heystek & Terhoven, 2015). The relevant literature suggests that institutions should create a collaborative learning environment by emphasizing the notion of "we are developing together" to motivate teachers to participate in professional development activities (Easton, 2011; Beach, 2012; White, 2013). According to White (2013), this kind of an environment where collegiality is supported is vital to build trust and sense of belonging, which are the key words directly associated with higher intrinsic motivation for teachers to be engaged in a sustained professional development.

There was a strong emphasis on self-initiation and intrinsic motivation with regard to professional development; however, when being asked about external motivation factors such as a pay-rise or promotion, the participants voiced their expectations to be appreciated as well. This shows that there may be a discrepancy between the "*perceived*" ideal of teachers and their experiences. They tend to believe that being intrinsically motivated is the ideal norm showing professionalism in one's profession. However, without a mark such as a pay rise or promotion especially at the end of long-term professional development practices, teachers are found to lose their intrinsic motivation. Once again, the role of institutions as incentive providers is of great value not to initiate PD maybe, but to sustain teacher involvement in

professional development practices. Additionally, this brings the discussion to the dilemma of self-regulated professional development and institutionally controlled one. Contradicting views shared on intrinsic motivation and self-regulated professional development show that even though participants expressed their wish for total autonomy over their professional development, they also stated that they were happy with the outcome of enforced professional development as well.

Under this theme, another interesting issue raised by the participants was the indirect effect of the institution on teachers to take part in PD. When the participants were asked whether their socio-economic status and their work environment create a professional development need, majority of them indicated that there is a link between PD processes one undergoes and the place s/he works in. Believing that the place they are working in and their socio-economic status itself create a need for professional development, the participants preferred calling it as a “*pressure*”, showing their discontent.

The last category of the theme is linked to the length of professional development. Relevant literature provides a plethora of studies suggesting superiority of long-term PD over short-term *sit-and-get* type of practices (Little, 1993; Diaz-Maggioli, 2004; Bayar, 2014; Wells, 2014; Özbilgin, Erkmen & Karaman, 2016). The reasons provided for this standpoint are teachers’ becoming passive receivers and conveyers of information during sit-and-get kind of activities; limited and oftentimes repetitive content; little or no room for active involvement of the participants, lack of quality feedback and follow-up guidance for the participants and lack of lecturer expertise (Kırkgöz, 2008; Bayrakçı, 2009; Uysal, 2012). The current study concluded that it would be unwise to compare short-term and long-term professional development since their aim and scope are totally different from each other. Both can contribute to professional growth of teachers, institutional improvement and as a natural outcome of these, to student learning with an effective design and implementation (Lauer et al., 2014). Still; however, within the context of this study, it is seen that long-term and continuous PD is valued slightly more than short-term PD practices not because the hours allocated but because it is designed to cover a more comprehensive content (Garet et al., 2001). Some other studies also reported that

there is little or no link between the length of teachers' PD practices and student achievement. (Desimone et al., 2002; Hill, 2007). What matters more than the length of PD is the content and the way of implementation of PD (Lauer et al., 2014).

5.1.3. Discussion on Perceived Barriers to Professional Development

The participants of the current study attached great value to professional development and stated that it is a never-ending necessity for teachers. Although they had a consensus on the need and value of it, they found their practices regarding PD were inadequate. Within the content of the current study, it is essential to explore the factors hindering teachers' engagement in professional development to better inform policy-makers and other parties in English language teaching in higher education to achieve better outcomes for all parties. In this regard, *perceived* and *experienced* challenges of the teachers are categorized under two categories, which individual characteristics and context-bound factors.

In the light of the findings of the study, participants are found to give credit to their personal traits, their motivation, priorities and responsibilities in life and their approaches to teaching profession considering the factors hindering their professional development practices. All of these factors are grouped under the subheading "individual characteristics". Some teachers participated in the study stated that *they are not motivated and ready* to be genuinely involved in PD practices, PD is *not a priority* in their lives, they have already reached the point of *burnout*. All these views were also associated with the perceived feeling that it does not worth that much of effort, time and sacrifice for PD. Therefore, professional development practices they are engaged in cannot be linked to increased teacher professionalism for them since they believed that the system cannot differentiate good and bad teachers anyways, which was also reflected in Korkmazgil's study (2015). Instead, intense workload of teaching profession, lack of autonomy and a top-down approach to PD limit them and therefore, do not result in teacher growth. On the contrary, this is regarded as deprofessionalization of teachers and teaching profession in general (Hargreaves, 1994; Arıkan, 2004; Tezgiden Cakcak, 2015).

Other category emerging from the data was contextual factors which may hinder professional development of teachers. These include intense workload of teachers, lack of institutional help, compulsory participation in PD practices, lack of training unit and lack of student motivation. Workload both due to the nature of teaching profession and higher expectations of institutions is considered to be the most frequently referred challenge to professional development. The intensity workload is associated with lack of time for professional development practices in terms of time for engagement, time for assignments and reflection as well as time for mental space. This finding is in line with the previous studies, as well (Supovits & Turner, 2000; Guskey, 2003; Drage, 2010; Desimone, 2011; Maria & García, 2016; Yaşar, 2019).

All participants seem to have a consensus on the responsibility of institutions to provide a variety of professional development opportunities teachers can choose from (Bush & Middlewood, 2013; Geldenhuys & Oosthuizen, 2015). All the participants of the study at hand strongly criticized compulsory attendance to professional development practices determined by the institution. This lack of autonomy for teachers to choose, initiate and sustain their own professional development seems to have resulted in lack of willingness for them to be engaged in those practices and lack of loyalty to their institution (Ryan & Deci, 2000). The teachers participated in the current study shared their concerns more specifically about the compulsory participation in professional development observation cycle (PDO), which is a cyclical process in which teachers are expected to be engaged each year. The process starts with choosing an aim for teachers to work on throughout an academic year. Teachers are expected to review the relevant literature and share their findings with the line managers in pre-observation meeting. In the third step, teachers are observed by their line managers at a predetermined time. In the last stage, another meeting is held after the observation to reflect on it and choose a new aim for the upcoming academic year. Even though the underlying aims of the cycle are valuable for teacher professional development, when it is compulsory, it fails to produce intended outcomes (Kumaravadivelu, 2001). In the same vein, Hargreaves (2010) noted that mandated activities tend to turn *genuine teacher inquiry into rituals* teachers feel that they have to attend just for the sake of doing it

(p. 290). The true professional should not be forced into belonging, instead, they join worth-while organizations because they are worthwhile. Involuntary servitude establishes a poor climate for growth (Inlow, 1956), which is mentioned as a *vulnerability of teaching as a profession* (p. 287).

Besides, lack of autonomy directs teachers to focus on the end results trying to catch up with performance measures (Yıldız et al., 2013) instead of acquiring ethics and values in the big picture (Ünal, 2005). This sense of top-down imposition of professional development leads teachers feel more restricted (Johnson & Marx, 2009; Guskey, 2009).

The teachers participated in the current study also stated that even if they are eager to be engaged in professional development activities regardless of the type and length of it, they oftentimes encounter lack of institutional help. What is meant by institutional help here is to get support regarding possible changes in teaching timetables of teachers so that they can attend professional development activities/programs as well as expected reduction in teaching load. When such kind a support is not provided for teachers who are already willing to participate in PD practices, this creates extra workload, which demotivates them. It was already highlighted that some motivational support is also be expected by the teachers (Johnson, 2006; Earley & Bubb, 2007; Johnson & Marx, 2009; Desimone, 2011).

When it comes to supporting teachers in their professional development process, the participants of the current study also referred to lack of a well-performing professional development unit which can provide immediate, constant and more systematic guidance for teachers, which can create a learning culture based on the institutional expectations. According to Blandford (2000), creating a learning culture which celebrates the individual and professional growth of teachers is pivotal for institutions' future success and reputation. The dissatisfaction of the teachers participated in the study about lack of expert knowledge of the presenters/trainers can be addressed with the presence of a well-performing professional development unit (Knowles, Holton III & Swanson, 2005). Feedback provided by a professional development unit was also trusted and welcomed more by the teachers. Besides, a

professional development unit was addressed with regard to teachers' discontent with the content of professional development activities, as well. Repetitive, theory-based and fragmented content of PD practices tend to result in less participation and therefore, less effectiveness (Diaz-Maggioli, 2004; Borg, 2015). When teachers' needs and the content of the PD provided for them are not in line with each other, PD is oftentimes considered as useless and time-consuming (Darling-Hammond, 2005; Broad & Evans, 2006; Özbilgin, Erkmen & Karaman, 2016).

Another perceived barrier to professional development was lack of student motivation. Participants noted that student motivation indirectly affects teachers' willingness to start and sustain professional development practices. They believed that *it does not worth that much of effort and sacrifice* with regard to professional development when students are unwilling to learn in language classes since the main aim of PD is to boost students' learning outcomes (Borko, 2004; Jacob & Lefgren, 2004; Earley & Bubb, 2007; Vescio, Ross & Adams, 2008; Hirsh, 2009; Avalos, 2011; Özdemir, 2013).

5.1.4. Discussion on Perceived Needs and Suggestions

The underlying assumption of professional development is to address the needs of teachers and have an intended change in their expert knowledge and teaching practices by providing a systematic and intentional learning atmosphere. To this end, it is essential to explore both perceived and actual needs of teachers to achieve intended outcomes both for individual teachers and institutions. In the light of the third research question, the teachers participated in the study displayed their "*ideal*" professional development environment and practices by providing some suggestions with refer to the challenges they face during their own PD practices. Therefore, there are some overlapping comments between the challenges and suggestions shared by the participants.

Villegas-Reimers (2003) remarks that teachers are given less autonomy than other professions such as medicine and law, which indisputably affects the autonomy granted for professional development practice of them as well. In the light of the

data of the study, autonomy has a pivotal role in the success of professional development for teachers, as also mentioned in the previous parts of the study. The relevant literature also suggests that professional development is more sustainable and effective when teachers are given autonomy to initiate and direct their own PD. Kumaravadivelu (2001) notes that a top-down approach to professional development of teachers fails to produce intended outcomes. It is because an individual-led professional development most of the time suits best to individual needs and preferences (Hargreaves et al., 2013). When teachers have autonomy over their own professional development, this contributes to loyalty to profession, sustained engagement and in turn the well-being of teachers (Ryan & Deci, 2000). Teachers' autonomy is meant to create a positive school atmosphere and improve their learning in the classroom climate.

Another suggestion given by the participants of the study was decrease in the workload as an incentive for those who are already engaged in professional development practices, which was also echoed in Yaşar' study (2019). It is discussed that the availability of enough time to be engaged in professional development, especially for the ones requiring a longer-term collaboration is of great value for a sustained PD for teachers. As teachers in the present study approached teaching as a demanding profession, requiring to work beyond teaching context, having time for PD becomes as a privilege for them (Maria & García, 2016). Together with the responsibilities they have outside the education context, teachers need more “free time” to meet the requirements of their PD practices as well as more “mental space” for their private lives (Drage, 2010). It is surprising to see that teachers in the current study suggested having more time for professional development rather than mentioning other incentives such as a pay rise or promotion. Even though they stated the necessity of those when directly being asked about their opinions about external motivators, they did not refer to those as a necessity while depicting their ideal professional development atmosphere. This shows that teachers are already willing to participate in PD when they are given chance without much effort to motivate them.

Another shared view among the participants was the need for a change in the content of PD practices. They associated low participation in PD activities with the repetitive and theory-based content on what to teach, how to and how not to teach. It seems that there is a common dissatisfaction with the overlap on the content of pre-service education and in-service professional development practices of teachers. Instead, what was valued more among the participants of the current study was emerging instructional technologies which may be difficult to keep pace with individually, flipped learning, critical pedagogy, psychology and philosophy, which are not included in the pre-service curriculum of English language teacher-candidates. Besides, it is noted that teachers feel the need for improvement in their pedagogical content knowledge (Van Driel & Berry, 2012). When there is a mismatch between teachers' needs and the content of the PD provided for them, they tend to find those activities useless and time-consuming. This finding is in line with the findings of other relevant studies (Darling-Hammond, 2005; Broad & Evans, 2006; Özbilgin, Erkmen & Karaman, 2016). If students' learning outcomes, teachers' professional selves and institutional success is aimed to be improved, teachers perceived and actual needs as well as their expectations in regard to content of their professional development should be taken into consideration (Guskey, 2000; Borg, 2015). As also emphasized by Canagarajah (2006) "*curriculum change cannot involve the top-down imposition of expertise from outside the community, but should be a ground-up construction taking into account indigenous resources and knowledge, with a sense of partnership between local and outside experts*" (p. 27). Kennedy (1998) concluded that the content of a professional development program of teachers has a much bigger impact on the intended outcomes than the length of the PD.

The dissatisfaction of the participants about the repetitive and theory-based content led them to suggest more active involvement of teachers into decision-making, planning and implementation of professional development practices. This may also help provide teachers with the chance to voice their expectations and needs regarding the content and conduct of PD. All practices aiming at teachers' professional growth must transform into an inquiry-oriented system for teachers rather than an information-based one since top-down approaches to teacher

professional development and adult learning tend to fail to produce self-leading teachers who can take the responsibility of their own learning (Kumaravadivelu, 2001). Involving teachers more in each process of professional development can diminish negative feelings, higher defensive barriers and resistance to change, which may lead to teacher empowerment in longer terms (Dutt, 2003; Wells, 2014).

A presence of a better organized and more active professional development unit was also suggested to promote teacher professional development at tertiary level. Effective professional development is expected to work efficiently around hectic schedules of teachers, to provide a sustainable teacher growth by actively involving them in the process, to provide efficient and constructive feedback and follow-ups, to foster collaboration, to assess the effect of PD practices of teachers on student outcomes and inform policymakers and institutional authorities to make necessary changes (Jaquith, Mindich, Wei & Darling- Hammond, 2010; Beach, 2012). As all these are not effective and easy to follow when only individual teachers or administrative staff is responsible for them. As the finding of the current study also revealed, fragmented PD practices which oftentimes cannot provide feedback and continuous support for teachers hinder the effectiveness of PD and decrease teacher participation. Therefore, a systematic, well-designed and a more active and engaging professional development unit with experienced teacher trainers serve for the intended outcomes is of great value for a sustained and better-functioning professional development, which is determined by the interplay between individual teachers and their institutions (Clement & Vandenberghe, 2000). When the institutions fail to provide good learning environment and support learning communities, according to Fullan (2014), they cannot be considered as good employers for the teachers wishing to make a difference.

Another noteworthy suggestion emerging from the findings of the current study was to have more peer observations, which can also be linked to the perceived need for learning communities and collegiality in teacher professional development. Professional learning communities include teachers who are engaged in a collective and collaborative working environment to support each other by shared planning, providing a chance for peer observation and peer feedback (DuFour, DuFour, Eaker

& Many, 2006; Ekşi, 2010; Easton, 2011; Beach, 2012). Universities are becoming more and more supportive of peer observations (Shortland, 2010). The study at hand, some participants stated that they learned more from a single peer observation than workshops and conferences they attended. It was also noted that it is not only a valuable tool to see how colleagues act and convey their messages in their classes but also a perfect opportunity to observe learner behaviors, which is not always possible while teaching at the same time, which is reflected in the literature as well (Shortland, 2010; Bozak, Yıldırım & Demirtaş, 201). In the light of what literature provides, peer observations may have constraints like lack of quality feedback for the ones being observed (Hammersley-Fletcher & Orsmond, 2005) and it may damage relationships between colleagues if the feedback is not constructive leading to an unhealthy competition between colleagues (Shortland, 2010). However, the restrictions of peer observation in professional development of teachers were not within the scope of this study. The participants of the current research put a strong emphasis on the need for more peer observations for their professional development by seeing peer observations as a tool to bridge the gap between experience and innovation (Dos Santos, 2017).

5.2. Conclusions

Professional development covers all formal and informal process of gathering knowledge, experience, skills and personal traits, which are required to carry out professional duties effectively (Gosha, Billionniere, Gilbert & Ramsey, 2010). Professional development is vital for the institutions of the higher education to improve individual teachers, to increase the effectiveness of teaching and in turn to enhance student learning (Guskey, 2000; Avalos, 2011; Özdemir, 2013)

This qualitative case study aimed to explore attitudes of English language teachers serving at the language preparation program of a foundation university in Turkey towards professional development. It was also aimed to investigate the developmental needs of teachers as well as the factors which may hinder teachers' involvement in PD practices.

In the consideration of the aims of the research study, three research questions were generated. The first research question was addressed to investigate how teachers working at a language preparation program at the tertiary level view professional development. The purpose of the second research question was to gain an understanding of how those teachers practice professional development in reality. The last question aimed to find out the barriers to teachers' participation in PD practices and their suggestions in regard to those challenges.

Semi-structured interviews and field notes were used as data collection instruments. English language preparation program of a foundation university was selected as the research setting. Eight English language instructors with different responsibilities in the institution were approached as participants. For the data analysis, a thematic approach was employed. A comprehensive analysis of the data unveiled the following conclusions.

Even though professional development was considered as a prerequisite for English language teachers due to ever-changing of the language as a lingua-franca and more and more globalized world, teachers participated in the current study did not count professional development as a must when asked about the requirements of professionalism in teaching. Instead, they tended to list more personality traits. Only when they were asked about their approaches towards professional development, they stated that it is viewed as a way to improve teachers as professionals, institutions and better society in the long run. This suggests that there is a discrepancy between the perceived "ideal" and practiced "reality".

Within the scope of the second research question, teachers shared their experiences with regard to their own professional development. It was common among the participants to share negative remarks first prior to the contributions of the PD practices they were engaged in. the most frequently referred barrier to PD was found to be lack of time, which was associated with intense workload both due to the nature of the teaching profession itself and high expectations of the institution under study. Besides, being engaged in sustained PD becomes an uphill struggle for teachers when combined with the lack of help from the institution concerning a decrease in

teachers' workload and support with regard to changes in their timetables in accordance with their PD programs. Lack of a training unit which can provide continuous, immediate and relevant support for teachers was considered as a factor hindering teachers' engagement in PD due to their belief that they will not be supported during this demanding process of improvement.

Although it was stated that professional improvement makes them feel more secure and satisfied, they did not want to initiate/ sustain PD as they were not given enough autonomy over PD, which is perceived as vital for adult learning. In addition to this, even though a participant stated that initiation of the institution is of great importance to create an institutional leaning community, most of the participants noted that compulsory participation in PD activities determined by institutions contributes to lack of willingness of teachers to be actively involved in PD. Individual characteristics were also referred to concerning the barriers to PD. Factors such as lack of motivation, feeling of burnout and having different priorities than PD may also be considered as barriers to effective PD. Teachers' being unwilling for PD was also associated with low student motivation. They noted that such effort, time and sacrifice do not worth it when there is no improvement in student learning outcomes.

Since adults are more goal-oriented, it is safe to say that they will be more motivated to be engaged in PD activities if they realize a practical and immediate end that they can utilize in their personal lives or work environments. The usability and applicability of this knowledge may help teachers improve job satisfaction and professional self-esteem as factors for intrinsic motivation, which is one of the building blocks of adult learning process. To this end, the participants of the current study was discontent with the repetitive, theory-based and fragmented content. They were more in favor of more up-to-date, practical and experience-driven content since they could relate those to their teaching contexts better.

Not outweighing internal motivation factors, such external factors as pay rise, academic credit and job titles are also essential to create a sense of achievement for teachers as adult learners. More important than those; the constraints regarding time

and resources, lack of support from institutions and negative attitudes towards learning may hinder the intrinsic motivation of teachers to be engaged in PD activities (Knowles et al., 2014).

Within the scope of this research study, based on the challenges experienced by the participants, they shared the following suggestions to better achieve the intended aims of teacher professional development;

- Teaching load and paper work may be decreased for those who are willing to initiate and sustain professional development to provide more time for them. Besides, institutional help should be provided as well for the changes in teachers timetables in accord with the times of PD activities they are going to attend.
- Teachers should have more autonomy over their own professional development. Institutions should bear the responsibility to provide options for the teachers.
- The conduct of professional development observation (PDO) cycle should change in a way that it can genuinely address the actual needs of teachers rather than being a compulsory and limited approach to teacher growth.
- The content of PD practices should change in compliance with teachers immediate and perceived needs in their profession.
- Teachers should be involved in decision-making and planning process of professional development.
- A better organized and more active professional development unit is needed to provide continuous and more systematic guidance for teachers.
- There should be more peer observations rather than compulsory and predetermined professional development observations done by line managers.

5.3. Implications for Practice

In the light of the results of the study at hand and the relevant literature on professional development of teachers, some practical implications are provided below in order to support teacher professionalism and their teaching practices.

1. The results of the study revealed that regardless of the professional development activities they are engaged in and their experience, all teachers emphasized the need and value of PD practices. This motivation should be directed towards suitable areas for each individual teacher not only to improve their teaching practices but also to boost their academic self-esteem and self-efficacy, creating a sense of fulfilment.
2. Teachers are not the only party who is responsible for their own professional development. When teachers are not supported and guided to initiate and sustain their PD practices, those practices are unlikely to succeed. Therefore, institutions are also expected to assume some responsibility to provide institutional help and support when needed. As the current study revealed institutional culture and priorities are of great value concerning teachers' approach towards PD practices. An encouraging institutional atmosphere can increase teachers' willingness to be engaged in certain PD practices since it will serve as a way to make teachers feel valued and welcomed. Likewise, institutions with unaccommodating factors may result in the emergence of dissatisfaction or indifference towards PD.
3. This institutional help can be provided in two ways. One of the ways institutions support teachers' PD practices is to reduce the excessive workload on teachers who are willing to be engaged in professional development. The teachers in the study at hand criticized the institution's tendency not to decrease the workload of those teachers who continue PD practices. This tendency was interpreted by the teachers as institution's indifference and unwillingness to support PD practices of teachers, and therefore to invest in the education provided in the institution. In this sense, institutional incentives may pave the way for engaging teachers in PD more actively. Institutions are also expected to help with the teaching schedules of the teachers. Being engaged in certain formal PD practices and processes requires time and space. As the time of those PD opportunities provided outside the institution teachers work in cannot be scheduled for each attendee, the institutions are expected to be flexible with the schedules and timetables of those teachers. Those responsible for curriculum design in institutions may adapt their syllabus in a

way to provide teachers enough time to carry out their professional development activities such as peer observations and action research.

4. As the relevant literature also suggests, there is no best way of professional development which fits for all the needs and preferences of individual teachers. As the data also suggests, anything which can possibly contribute to teacher improvement can be regarded as a mode of professional development and is of great value to keep teachers updated. Hence, to design the most appropriate professional development model, institutions and policy-makers should identify immediate needs of the teachers in accordance with the institutional aims and expectations.
5. Teachers' self-awareness about their actual needs in their profession should be the first step of improvement, meaning that they should be intrinsically motivated to better their professional selves. Both the relevant literature and the current study suggest, teachers should be the initiators and directors of their own PD practices as well as having more autonomy on the time and the mode of professional development they want to be engaged in. Teachers' feeling forced to be engaged in a professional development practice due to a top-down decision may result in disappointment for both parties, which also carries the risk of transforming teachers into passive technicians. To this end, teachers should be empowered more to voice their own needs and priorities, to become more responsible for and reflective on their own teaching and professional development. Therefore, institutions are expected to appreciate and support individual efforts of teachers by providing a range of optional activities.
6. Involving teachers in the decision-making process of professional development activities both in the phases of design and implementation is critical to the success of these activities. Thus, policy-makers and institutions should utilize teacher feedback while designing and implementing professional development activities. Besides, institutions should be able to create a safe space where teachers can communicate their needs and share their suggestions concerning their professional development. The sense of being heard and valued may create a sense of ownership among teachers, which may contribute to the success of the institution.

7. As also found out in the present study, the content of professional development activities is expected to cater for the immediate needs and priorities of teachers. PD activities with centralized, theory-based and repetitive content are more likely to fail to achieve their intended aim. It could be practical for institutions to get suggestions from teachers regarding their priorities and preferences about the content of PD activities in a systematical way.
8. English language teachers inherently have different professional development needs due to the world-wide status of English language. As the coursebooks cover a range of different topics from technology to nutrition, an English language teacher should also be knowledgeable to be able to talk about all of those, which makes being updated a prerequisite for them rather than a privilege. To this end, teacher education programs should revisit their context and make necessary changes to include changing elements of English language such as popular culture.
9. "One-size-fits-all" approach to professional development has become outdated, leaving the stage to an ongoing, systematic and bottom-up one both at individual and institutional levels. Diverse and constantly-changing needs of teachers necessitate the presence of a continuous professional development unit which can actively and continuously work to design PD activities that are tailored for the needs of the teachers and institutional expectations. This ongoing guidance and support should be provided preferably by those who are experienced in teacher-training, as the data at hand suggests.
10. Professional development is not only an individual effort but a collaborative one as well. The communication between colleagues and exchange of knowledge and experience play a pivotal role in professional growth of individual teachers. As also suggested by the participants of the current research study, peer coaching and peer observations are among the most valuable modes of professional development. The absence of hierarchy and competition between colleagues in an institution contributes to the validity and acceptance of feedback for teachers. This also may have some implications for professional development programs and educational institutions.
11. Teaching profession entails various responsibilities both in classrooms and beyond the limits of classrooms. By helping students adopt the philosophy of

lifelong learning; especially in higher education, which is regarded as the last stage of mainstream education for many, teachers have a pivotal role in shaping the future. To this end, improving teachers and their teaching practices through professional development in any way possible should be an unchanging agenda of our country and the world.

5.4. Limitations to the Study and Recommendations for Future Research

Even though the current study revealed valuable and interesting findings on the perceptions of teachers towards professional development and existing patterns in the study context, it was not without limitations. These limitations may help guide the future researchers in the field.

1. The current case study focused the professional development experiences of eight English language instructors. Although this research study provided in-depth narratives on the topic, increasing the number of participants and employing a multi-site study approach can generate a more comprehensive study to better map how individual and context-bound realities may influence professional development of language teachers.
2. Another limitation to the study at hand was the time constrained due to the global COVID-19 epidemic, which had implications on the time allocated for the data collection process. The current study only managed to investigate only a section of English language teachers' perceived and experienced realities on their professional development. Therefore, a more in-dept, longitudinal approach to the issue would be of great value.
3. For this research study, the data was collected through semi-structured interviews and strengthened by the field notes of the researcher. Future researchers can employ focus group meetings and classroom observations as well to enrich the data to better explore the participants' perceptions, experiences and suggestions with regard to their professional development. Experimental approaches to data collection can also be utilized.
4. The current study managed to listen to the voices of participants from different stakeholders including teachers, teacher trainers and administrators in the

research context. Future research might focus on each group of participants separately including the policy-makers to gain a deeper understanding of the perspectives and realities of different stakeholders. Such an inquiry may help to explore possible discrepancies among the expectations and experiences of different stakeholders, providing a holistic insight with regard to different aspects of teachers' professional growth.

5. This research study, all kinds of professional development practices including both attending sit-and-get kind of activities such as conferences, seminars and workshops and long-term practices which requires active engagement in DELTA, MA and PhD studies were addressed as professional development. Future research may focus on a specific PD practice to get a deeper understanding. Besides, a more comprehensive study with qualitative data collected both before and after a specific PD practice can contribute to the relevant literature by providing the interplay between teachers' expectations and their experiences at the end of the practice.
6. Two things strongly emphasized by the participants of the current research are the need for teacher autonomy with regard to their professional development practices and for peer observations. To this end, how teachers perceive teacher autonomy, to what degree teachers should be provided autonomy as well as different approaches and practices towards peer observations can be further investigated in future researches, which can suggest implications for better practices in professional growth of teachers.

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APPENDICES

A. APPROVAL OF METU HUMAN SUBJECTS ETHICS COMMITTEE

<p>UYGULAMALI ETİK ARAŞTIRMA MERKEZİ APPLIED ETHICS RESEARCH CENTER</p> <p>DUMLUPINAR BULVARI 06800 ÇANKAYA ANKARA/TURKEY T: +90 312 210 22 91 F: +90 312 210 79 99 www.ecam.metu.edu.tr</p> <p>Sayı: 28620816 / 513</p>	<p> ORTA DOĞU TEKNİK ÜNİVERSİTESİ MIDDLE EAST TECHNICAL UNIVERSITY</p> <p>02 Ocak 2020</p>
<p>Konu: Değerlendirme Sonucu</p>	
<p>Gönderen: ODTÜ İnsan Araştırmaları Etik Kurulu (İAEK)</p>	
<p>İlgi: İnsan Araştırmaları Etik Kurulu Başvurusu</p>	
<p>Sayın Doç.Dr.A.Cendel KARAMAN ve Burcu YÜKSEL</p> <p>"Professional Develoment Challenges Experienced By Language Instructors At a Foundation University: A Case Study" başlıklı araştırması İnsan Araştırmaları Etik Kurulu tarafından uygun görülmüş ve 520 ODTU 2019 protokol numarası ile onaylanmıştır.</p> <p>Saygılarımızla bilgilerinize sunarız</p>	
	<p> Doç.Dr. Mine MISIRLISOY Başkan</p>
<p>Prof. Dr. Tolga CAN Üye</p>	<p>Doç.Dr. Pınar KAYGAN Üye</p>
<p>Dr. Öğr. Üyesi Ali Emre TURGUT Üye</p> <p></p>	<p>Dr. Öğr. Üyesi Şerife SEVİNÇ Üye</p> <p></p>
<p>Dr. Öğr. Üyesi Müge GÜNDÜZ Üye</p> <p></p>	<p>Dr. Öğr. Üyesi Süreyya Özcan KABASAKAL Üye</p> <p></p>

B: INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

Interview Guide

For the Instructors

1. Participants' Background

- When and where did you graduate from?
- How long have you been teaching English?
- Which institutions have you worked for?
- How long have you been working here?
- Which proficiency level have you been teaching?
- How many hours do you teach a week?
- How many students do you have in your classes?
- Do you have a graduate degree?
- Could you tell me as much as possible about the details of your experience at work as a language instructor?

2. Conception of Teaching and Professional Development (PD)

- How would you define teaching? Is it an occupation or profession?
- What is Professional development? How would you define it?
- To be able to talk about professionalism, what kind of traits a teacher should have?

3. Participants PD Experiences and Needs

- As an English instructor, what kind of PD needs do you think you have? (Considering the planning, classroom implementations, classroom management, assessment...etc, in which areas do think you need to improve yourself?)
- Do you think that the institution you have been working in and your socio-economic status create different professional development needs?
- Do you think that PD needs of the English language instructors differ from the other instructors?
- What kind of PD activities you have been engaged in? What do they mean to you?
(Seminars, conferences, reading the literature, conducting action research, reflective thinking, all kind of INSET activities ...etc.)
- Do you think that PD activities you have been engaged in are helpful to you? If yes, how? In what areas?
- How/why did you start these PD activities?
- By whom do you think PD should be initiated?

- Is there any PD opportunities/activities provided by your institution that you cannot participate/ benefit from?
- Do your colleagues contribute to your professional development? If yes, in what ways?

4. Challenges and Suggestions Associated with PD Processes

- Do you think your professional development needs are met?
- What kind of challenges that hinder your professional development do you experience?

(What are the causes of those challenges; personal reasons, institutional reasons, educational policies, working conditions, curriculum, working partners...etc)

- What kind of a systematic change can you suggest regarding your work life or new opportunities to allow you to develop yourself more professionally?
- What kind of support do you expect from your institution to be further engaged in PD?
- Let's assume that you have the authority and sources to develop the INSET training you have dreamt of. What would be the content and the approaches of this training? Where and by whom would it be delivered?

For the instructors who also have responsibilities in PD unit as ICELT-DELTA¹ trainers

1. Participants' Background

- When and where did you graduate from?
- How long have you been teaching English?
- Which institutions have you worked for?
- How long have you been working here?
- Which proficiency level have you been teaching?
- How many hours do you teach a week?
- How many students do you have in your classes?
- Do you have a graduate degree?
- Could you tell me as much as possible about the details of your experience at work as an instructor and a trainer?
- How long have you been working as a trainer in PD Unit?
- Why do you want to work in the professional development unit in this institution?
- How did you decide your principles as professional development unit?

2. Conception of Teaching and Professional Development (PD)

- How would you define teaching? Is it an occupation or profession?
- What is Professional development? How would you define it?
- To be able to talk about professionalism, what kind of traits a teacher should have?

3. Participants PD Experiences and Needs

- As an English instructor and trainer, what kind of PD needs do you think you/ your colleagues have?

(Considering the planning, classroom implementations, classroom management, assessment...etc, in which areas do think you need to improve yourself?)

- Do you think that the institution you have been working in and your socio-economic status create different professional development needs?
- Do you think that PD needs of the English language instructors differ from the other instructors?
- What kind of PD activities you have been engaged in? What do they mean to you?

(seminars, conferences, reading the literature, conducting action research, reflective thinking, all kind of INSET activities ...etc.)

- Do you think that PD activities you have been engaged in are helpful to you? If yes, how? In what areas?
- Do you think that PD activities through which you provide trainings to your colleagues are helpful for them? If yes, how? In what areas?
- How/why did you start these PD activities?
- By whom do you think PD should be initiated?
- Are there any PD opportunities/activities provided by your institution that you cannot participate/ benefit from?
- Do your colleagues contribute to your professional development? If yes, in what ways?
- What strengths and weaknesses do you realize as professional development unit about activities provided?

4. Challenges and Suggestions Associated with PD Processes

- Do you think your professional development needs of instructors are met?
- What kind of challenges that hinder your professional development do you experience?

(What are the causes of those challenges; personal reasons, institutional reasons, educational policies, working conditions, curriculum, working partners...etc)

- What kind of a systematic change can you suggest regarding your work life or new opportunities to allow you to develop yourself more professionally?
- What kind of support do you expect from your institution to be further engaged in PD?
- Let's assume that you have the authority and sources to develop the INSET training you have dreamt of. What would be the content and the approaches of this training? Where and by whom would it be delivered?

C. INFORMED CONSENT FORM

Middle East Technical University Human Subjects Ethics Committee Informed Consent Form

The following research “Professional Development Challenges Experienced by Language Instructors at a Foundation University: A Case Study” is carried out by Burcu Yüksel as a Master’s thesis and supervised by Prof. Dr. A. Cendel KARAMAN at the department of Foreign Language Education, Middle East Technical University, Ankara /Turkey. This form has been prepared to give potential participants detailed information on the study.

The research aims to gain an in-depth understanding of the participants’ views and experiences about their own professional development including the challenges they experience and their suggestions. In order to gain an understanding of the aforementioned views and experiences, you are invited to take part in individual interviews. If you consent to participate in the study, you will be asked to participate in up-to 3 interviews. The time and the place of the interviews will be decided on the basis of availability and convenience for both the researcher and the participant. The interviews may take approximately 40 minutes.

Participation in the study is solely based on a voluntary basis. No personal identification information will be present in the study. The raw data collected will be kept strictly confidential and will only be available for the access/interpretation of the researcher and the research advisor. The results of the study may be used for other scientific/academic studies and publications with complete anonymity of the participants.

The participant should be aware that this study presents no harm to any of the parties involved. During participation, for any reason, if you wish to withdraw from the study, you are free to do so at any time you want. In such a case, informing the researcher of the decision will be enough to leave the study.

After the interviews are completed, all of the questions of the participants related to the study will be answered.

I would like to thank you in advance for being a part of this study. For further information about the study or to learn more about the results of the study, please contact me, as the researcher or the Thesis advisor Prof. Dr. A. Cendel KARAMAN.

Burcu YÜKSEL
burcu.arasan@bilkent.edu.tr
Address: Bilkent University,
The East Campus Preparatory Program,
N building, NA 204

Prof. Dr. A. Cendel Karaman
cendel@metu.edu.tr

I have read the information above. I am participating in this study totally on my own will and am aware that I can quit participating at any time I want. I agree to be audio-recorded and I give my consent for the use of the information I provide for scientific purposes.

Name Surname:

Date ____/____/____

Signature:

D. DEBRIEFING FORM

As stated earlier, the current study “Professional Development Challenges Experienced by Language Instructors at a Foundation University: A Case Study” is conducted by Burcu Yüksel as a Master’s thesis and supervised by Prof. Dr. A. Cendel KARAMAN at the department of Foreign Language Education, Middle East Technical University, Ankara /Turkey. The study is conducted as a case study at a foundation university in central Turkey. The aim of the study is to understand how the instructors working in the institution view and experience professional development in their profession. This inquiry also aims to gain an understanding of the challenges experienced by the instructors.

High-quality professional development is at the center of almost all discussions and proposals to have well-performing educational systems. Educational institutions and policy-makers recognize the value of professional development of their teachers. Although the content and format of professional development programs may vary regarding the context they are situated in, there is a common aim grounded for almost all programs, which is to improve student outcome. In our ever-developing world, the changing needs of the students require teachers to be updated about the most recent improvements in the field and to be adaptive to those changes in order for them to equip their students with the skills and competencies required to perform well (OECD, 2011)¹. Due to the value attributed to professional development, research on it has gained widespread attention, as well. Though there are studies available in the literature, due to the fast-changing nature of education and changing needs of students, continuous research is of great value.

In the current research, 25 participants working at a foundation university in central Turkey are asked to voluntarily participate in an interview to share their views and experiences regarding their professional development path. It is aimed that data collection will be finalized at the end of January, 2020. The audio recordings or any other raw data will merely be accessed/ interpreted by the researcher and the research advisor. The data obtained will be utilized only for research purposes without any personal identification information of the participants.

To ask further questions or to find out about the results of the study please contact Burcu Yüksel, the researcher at;
Email: burcu.arasan@bilkent.edu.tr
Address: Bilkent University, East Campus Preparatory Program, N Building, NA204, Çankaya/ ANKARA

As a participant in the study, if you would like to learn more about your rights as a participant or the ethical policy, please contact the Middle East Technical University Human Subjects Ethics Committee at ueam@metu.edu.tr.

E. LIST OF EXAMPLE INITIAL CODES

Adaptability of teachers	Colleague contribution to one's teaching
Adaptability of teachers as a requirement for the profession	Colleague support
Adult learning	Colleague support for the novice
Age of the person conducting PD program/activity matters	Conferences not engaging
Attitudes towards the "ideal" teacher	Confidence gained at the end of PD
Balancing traditional and modern approaches	Continuation of PD to keep information fresh in mind
Being hesitant to ask things in school	Continuous feeling of responsibility for more
Being involved in a long-term PD is challenging	Different motivations for people
Being obliged to go and listen conferences	Different needs for English language teachers
Being open to feedback as a professional quality	Different PD needs for ELT
Being patient, the ability to care for others	Different PD needs for the context of ELT
Being unprepared for observations for actual gains	Discontent with the content of conferences
Benefitting more from hearing from others	Discrimination against non-native teachers
Call for critical pedagogy as content	Dissatisfaction with compulsory ways of doing things
Call for more action research	Dissatisfaction with constant reading and searching
Catching up new trends is challenging	Dissatisfaction with people negatively approaching PD practices of others
Changing priorities in life	Dissatisfaction with short term PD

Dissatisfaction with the compulsory way of doing things	Emphasis on PD to keep up with the changes of the work
Dissatisfaction with the conduct of long-term PD	Emphasis on personal characteristics in teaching.
Dissatisfaction with the conduct of PD activity	Emphasis on quality feedback
Dissatisfaction with the conduct of PDO	Emphasis on self-initiation
Dissatisfaction with the expert knowledge of trainers	Emphasis on self-motivation
Dissatisfaction with the institutional approach to PD	Emphasis on the process novice undergo
Dissatisfaction with the lack of improvement	Emphasis on trainers' competence
Dissatisfaction with the predetermined observations (PDO)	Expected institutional support
Dissatisfaction with the procedure of PDO (unnatural)	Experience and knowledge sharing among teachers
Dissatisfaction with theory-based PD	Experience of others is valuable as a learning tool
Diverse contexts teachers serve in	Experience of the feedback provider is important
Diversity in PD content as a need	Experience sharing among teachers
Effects of student motivation on PD of teachers	Extrinsic motivating for the PD program (for a different career path, it is a must)
Emphasis is on the process an instructor undertakes	Extrinsic motivational factors such as pay rise, improving title or position
Emphasis on constructive feedback	Feeling of burnout
Emphasis on educational background	Feeling of restriction/lack of communication
Emphasis on institutional control over PD	Feeling pressured
Emphasis on intrinsic motivation	Feeling responsible for students
Emphasis on PD for motivational support	Financial concerns to be involved in PD
Emphasis on PD in the first and last years of profession	Financial concerns to get stationary
	Following what other teachers are doing

Having a constant to-do list for teachers	Knowing ones' boundaries at work as a requirement
Having more resources create a need for PD	Knowing the language itself well
He quality of feedback provider	Knowing your boundaries at work as a requirement
Hierarchical position of feedback providers as a problem	Lack of a common ground to talk about PD needs of teachers
Importance attached to teaching profession	Lack of a suitable and less crowded place to work
In time we become more similar	Lack of active participation in conferences
Incomparable (short-long term PD)	Lack of autonomy while choosing MA lessons
Increasing student motivation	Lack of available positions to have more responsibilities
Indirect pressure put by the workplace (where you work matters)	Lack of collaboration
Indirect pressure put by the workplace to continue PD	Lack of enough time to get prepared
Individual way of experiencing	Lack of free time to rest
Institutional help for organizing schedules	Lack of institutional encouragement
Institutional incentives for PD (certificate of pay rise for the unwilling)	Lack of institutional help
Institutional priorities	Lack of institutional help for organizing schedules
Institutional support for less workload	Lack of institutional help to organize things
Institutional support is needed	Lack of institutional support for PD activities
Intensity of paper work in the institution	Lack of motivation to initiate and sustain PD
Intensity of the workload	lack of motivation when PD is obligatory
Intrinsic motivation to be supported	Lack of motivational support from the institution
It feels like double workload when you are nonnative	Lack of opportunities provided
Keeping up with the day as a challenge	Lack of organizational support from the institution

Lack of student motivation	Need for quality feedback
Lack of support for novice teachers	Need for reduction on teaching hours
Lack of support from institution	Need for self-initiation for PD
Lack of teaching related feedback	Need for the guidance of institution/trainers
Lack of training unit	Needs and choices of teachers in private life
Less time for actual lesson planning	Needs of the instructors are misunderstood
Limited opportunities to improve in institution	Negative approach to PD in the institution
Limiting ones' self not to be different	Negative beliefs regarding institutional expectation
Link between feedback and PD activity	Negative feelings towards PDO (not contributing enough)
Long term and short-term PD are incomparable	Negative institutional change over the years
Long term PD is expansive and time consuming	Neutral approach towards long term and short-term PD activities.
Longer time can cover more	Never ending nature of PD as a burden
More autonomy for teachers	Never-ending learning as a positive outcome
More observations needed	Never-ending learning for English language teachers
More personal research is needed	Not being ready for PD
More responsibilities in personal lives as a challenge	Not having enough resources for PD
More time to be socialized is needed	Not the results but the process of PD is valuable
Motivational requirements offered by the institution	Observation atmosphere is not natural
Need for a training unit	Occupation associated with finance
Need for better communication skills for teachers	Ongoing PD is needed
Need for curriculum design for PD	Open-door policy is unnatural
Need for intrinsic motivation	
Need for more emphasis on the language itself	
Need for more peer feedback	

Organizational help for schedule is needed	Perceived need for institutional support
Other responsibilities (e.g. marital status) in private life	Perceived need for more critical subjects
Out-of-class responsibilities teacher require	Perceived need for more quality feedback
Overall satisfaction with conferences without much expectations	Perceived need for PD
Overlapping content for preservice and in-service PD content	Perceived need for Peer-observation
PD as a requirement rather than a choice	Perceived need for quality feedback
PD as a way of life	Perceived needs for more autonomy for teachers
PD as an investment for institutions	Personal reasons/characteristics/priorities
PD as an option	Positive approach to being observed
PD as an option	Positive approach to both short and long terms PD
PD as an option rather than an imposition	Positive approach to encouragement of institution
PD as personal sacrifice	Positive approach to external motivation factors
PD as the choice of teachers	Positive approach towards the content of the MA program.
PD depending on the context	Positive attitude towards ICELT and DELTA
PD includes more than the individual teachers	Positive attitudes towards ICELT
PD is more valuable when you have a different educational background	Positive personal approach towards constant learning
PD is not about the level we teach	Preference for long term PD
PD of teachers as institutional growth	Preference for long-term PD
PD of teachers for a better society	Pressure of others as a barrier
PD should be an option	Reaching some materials is difficult
Peer observations to learn more	Readiness and availability of the participants
Perceived barriers to PD (contextual reasons-demanding atmosphere)	
Perceived barriers to PD (intense workload)	

Reading more articles relevant to teaching	Teaching as a caring occupation
Repetitive content for PD	Teaching as a passion.
Requirements of professionalism/teaching (how to teach)	Teaching as a profession
Satisfaction with short term PD for immediate needs	Teaching as a satisfaction and joy
Satisfaction with the job and environment	Teaching as a semi-profession
Self-awareness about professional self	Teaching as a tiring experience
Self-awareness about the need of PD	Teaching as a way of life
Self-initiated PD	Teaching as being on the stage
Sense of guilt experienced by teachers when they ask for more help	Teaching as both a profession and occupation
Sense of success upon finishing a PD program	Teaching as influencing and guiding others
Sharing ideas and experiences	Teaching beyond context.
Sharing my experiences is a pleasure to me	Teaching is a way of life
Short-term and long-term PD is incomparable	Teaching requires love and caring
Some sacrifices from your time and energy	The effect of workplace on the initiation of PD
Speakers not competent enough	The feeling of paying back to the institution
Superficial observation cycle of the institution	The feeling that there is no improvement
Teacher motivation as a priority	The importance of subject matter
Teachers as good listeners	The importance of subject matter (as English language)
Teachers' reservation about asking for more institutional help	The need for autonomy for teachers
Teachers' self-initiation	The need for constant improvement
Teachers' suggestions are ignored	The need for different approaches
	The need for institutional encouragement
	The need for intrinsic motivation
	The need for intrinsic motivation

The need for long-term and personalized PD

The need for more autonomy for teachers

the need for more ICT integration

The need for more peer observation

The need for more practical implications of PD practices

The need for more practice in class

The need for more teacher autonomy

The need for more teacher involvement in decision making

The need for open-mindedness

The need for practice-driven PD

The need for quality feedback

The need for quality feedback

The need for self-criticism

The need for teacher involvement in PD planning

The new responsibility attributed to teacher trainers

The quality of PD over time

The value of colleague support

The value of peer coaching

The workload of PD activities.

The workplace does not affect PD need

Time and availability of teachers matter

Tiring and demanding process of PD

Unnatural PDO cycle

Unpreparedness for CPD

Unwillingness to CPD

Voluntary based PDO

Where you work matters

Who observes you is important

Wish for being a better teacher for the students

Work place matters

Work place negatively affecting PD initiation

Workload and paper work

Workload beyond the classroom

F. TURKISH SUMMARY / TÜRKCÖ ÖZET

BİR VAKIF ÜNİVERSİTESİNDEKİ DİL OKUTMANLARININ PROFESYONEL GELİŞİMLERİNDE KARŞILAŞTIKLARI ZORLUKLAR: BİR DURUM ÇALIŞMASI

GİRİŞ

İngilizce öğrenmek, uluslararası bir iletişim aracı işlevi görmesi nedeniyle birçok eğitim kurumu ve rekabetçi iş piyasası için bir ön koşul ve ayrıcalık haline gelmiştir (Doğançay-Aktuna, 1998; Guskey, 2000). Bu durum, tüm dünyada olduğu gibi Türkiye’de de İngiliz dili öğretimini ve İngilizce öğretmenlerinin mesleki gelişimini yakından ilgilendirmektedir. Türkiye bağlamında, ilköğretimden başlayarak yüksek öğretime kadar, İngilizce öğretimi zorunlu olarak hem devlet hem de özel kurumlarda sunulmaktadır. Ancak; yine de beklenen kalite ve sonuca ulaşamamış, bu da gerekli öğretmen niteliklerinin ve mevcut öğretmen eğitiminin sorgulanmasına yol açmıştır (Seferoğlu, 2006; Coşkun ve Daloğlu, 2010).

Türkiye’de öğretmen eğitimi hizmet öncesi eğitim ve hizmet içi eğitim olmak üzere iki aşamada sürdürülür. Özellikle, yabancı dil öğretmeni yetiştiren eğitim programları ve bölümleri, eğitimlerini öğretmen adaylarının bilmesi gerekenlere (hizmet öncesi eğitimde temel beceri dersleri), sınıf içi öğretim uygulamalarına (pedagojik dersler) ve öğretme sürecine nasıl uyum sağlanılacağına (hizmet öncesi öğretmenlik uygulamaları) dayandırmaktadır (Doğan, 2016). Benzer içeriğe sahip olan bu hizmet öncesi ders ve uygulamalar çoğunlukla öğretmen adaylarına öğretmenlik statüsü kazandıracak teorik yeterliliği sağlamaya yöneliktir. Lisans düzeyinde edinilen bilgiler; bu nedenle dil sınıflarındaki potansiyel kullanımından belirgin şekilde farklıdır (Ünal, 2010). Öğretmen adaylarının bölümlerindeki derslerinin çoğunluk olarak teorik içeriğe sahip olması nedeniyle çoğu öğretmen, *öğretmeyi öğrenmenin* özellikle öğretmek için kendi sınıflarına adım

attıklarında başladığını belirtmiştir (Doğan, 2016). Hizmet içi öğretmen eğitimi ise literatürde profesyonel gelişim adı altında ele alınmaktadır (Villegas-Reimers, 2003 s. 12). Öğretmenlerden verdikleri eğitimin kalitesini artırmak için belirli konularda seminer, konferans ve çalıştay gibi etkinliklere katılmaları istenir (Dikilitaş, 2013). Ancak literatürde, bu tür tek seferlik eğitimlerin ne öğretmenlerin sınıf içi uygulamalarını iyileştirmede ne de daha iyi öğrenci performansı ile sonuçlanmasında istenen sonuçları göstermediğine dair çalışmalar mevcuttur (Hunzicker, 2011 s.177; Villegas-Reimers, 2003). Bredeson (2003, s.14) mesleki gelişimin verimli bir şekilde işlemesi için “sürekliliğe” sahip olması gerektiğini savunur. Çalıştaylar, konferanslar, misafir konuşmacılar ve çeşitli hizmet içi toplantılar, günümüz öğrencilerinin eğitim sorunlarının çözülmesi ve çeşitli ihtiyaçlarının karşılanabilmesi için öğretmenlere gerekli uzman bilgi ve becerilerin sağlaması açısından büyük önem taşımaktadır. Ancak, yine de öğretmenler için “sürekli” rehberlik sağlamada yetersiz oldukları için eleştirilmişlerdir. Öğretimin karmaşık doğası gereği mesleki gelişimin sürekli hale getirilmesi büyük önem arz etmektedir çünkü birbiri üzerine inşa edilmeyen, birbirinden bağımsız ve planlanmamış gelişim faaliyetleri hem öğretmen gelişimi hem de öğrencilerin performansı ile ilgili beklenen sonuçlara ulaşmada yeterli değildir (Lessing ve De Witt, 2007). Bu durum, sürekli ve hayat-boyu mesleki gelişim ideolojisini benimsemiş öğretmenlere olan ihtiyacı artırmaktadır (Alan, 2015).

Öğretmenlerin mesleki gelişimi, daha kapsamlı bir kavram olarak, öğrenci başarısını artırmak ve hem sınıf içinde hem de dışında öğretmenlerin inanç ve uygulamalarını iyileştirmek için tasarlanmış her türlü faaliyet, strateji veya programı bünyesinde barındırır (Guskey, 2002). Mesleki gelişim, ancak son zamanlarda, meslekte büyümeyi ve gelişmeyi teşvik etmek için *sistemik* olarak planlanan düzenli faaliyetler ve deneyimleri içeren uzun vadeli bir süreç olarak görülmeye başlanmıştır (Wells, 2014 s.1; Bransford, Darling-Hammond ve LePage 2005; Cumming, 2011).

Sürekli mesleki gelişim anlayışı her meslek için belli bir önem arz etse de İngilizce öğretmenleri için çok daha belirgin ve öncelikli bir ihtiyaçtır. Küreselleşmenin her geçen gün artan etkisi, gelişen teknoloji ve eğitim alanındaki yeni eğitim

yaklaşımlarıyla birlikte İngiliz dili eğitimi günümüzün politik, kültürel ve ekonomik etkileşimlerinin bir ortak dili haline geldiğinden, özellikle İngilizce öğretmenleri için kariyer boyu sürecek bir gelişim için önemli ve anlaşılır bir ihtiyaç yaratmıştır (Celce-Murcia, 2001; Korkmazgil, 2015). Bu değişiklikler, alandaki birçok araştırmacıyı, öğretmen eğitim ve gelişimini "yeni bir mesleki gelişim modeli" olarak tekrar ele almaya (Walling ve Lewis, 2000) ve eğitim kurumlarını, öğretmenlerin sürekli mesleki gelişimlerini destekleyecek sistematik planlar geliştirmeye yönlendirmiştir.

Bu nitel durum çalışması Türkiye’de bir vakıf üniversitesinin İngilizce hazırlık programında çalışmakta olan okutmanların profesyonel gelişim süreçlerine yönelik yaşadıkları zorlukları ve kendi mesleki gelişimlerine ilişkin algılarını ve deneyimlerini incelemeyi amaçlamaktadır. Buna ek olarak, mesleki gelişim faaliyetlerinin başarısının artırılması için, öğretmenler tarafından algılanan zorlukların giderilmesi konusunda paylaşılan önerilerin incelenmesi hedeflenmektedir. Belirtilen amaçlar doğrultusunda mevcut çalışma, aşağıdaki araştırma sorularına yanıt bulmayı amaçlamaktadır;

1. Vakıf üniversitesinde çalışan öğretim üyeleri mesleki gelişime nasıl yaklaşmaktadır?
2. Vakıf üniversitesinde görev yapan öğretim üyeleri mesleki gelişimi nasıl deneyimlemektedir?
3. Kendi mesleki gelişimleri ve kurumlarında sağlanan mesleki gelişim fırsatları ile ilgili ne tür zorluklar yaşamaktadır ve bunlara yönelik ne tür öneriler sunmaktadırlar?

YÖNTEM

Katılımcıların profesyonel gelişim deneyimlerinin, mesleki gelişimleri esnasında yaşadıkları sorunların ve bu sorunlara ilişkin sunulan önerilerin incelendiği bu çalışma, nitel bir durum çalışmasıdır. Bu çalışma Türkiye’de özel bir vakıf üniversitesinin İngiliz Dili hazırlık programında gerçekleştirilmiştir. Mevcut çalışmanın yapıldığı bu üniversite 1980’li yılların başından beri etkin olarak faaliyet

gösteren bir eğitim kurumudur. Eğitim dili İngilizcedir ve üniversitenin güncel web sitesinde paylaşılan istatistiklere göre 37 farklı ülkeden akademik personel ve 12.000'den fazla öğrenciye sahiptir, bu da onu dünya çapında saygın bir eğitim ve araştırma merkezi haline getirmiştir.

Söz konusu çalışma üniversitenin Yabancı Diller Yüksek Okulu'nda gerçekleştirilmiştir. Program yaklaşık bir yıl sürmektedir. Öğrenciler programı en fazla dört yarıyıda bitiremezlerse veya üçüncü sınıfta dış hazırlık statüsünde öğrenci olarak kendi başlarına dil yeterlilik sınavını geçemezlerse öğrencilikleri sona erer. Programda çalışan yaklaşık 150 yerli ve yabancı öğretmen bulunmaktadır. Kurumda çalışan akademik personel kurumun kendi değerlendirmesi ve Yüksek Öğretim Kurulu gerekliliklerine göre işe alınır. Her öğretmen, genellikle haftada yirmi / yirmi beş ders saati ve iki ofis saatinden sorumludur. Bu ders yükü öğrenci sayısına ve öğretim elemanlarının diğer kurum içi sorumluluklarına göre değişebilir. Ders içi sorumlulukların yanı sıra, öğretmenlerden belirli mesleki gelişim faaliyetlerine katılmaları beklenir. Bunlar belirli konferans ve seminerlere katılım ile daha uzun vadeli yüksek lisans, doktora ve kurum içi sunulan sertifika programlarını (DELTA) içerebilmektedir. Bunlara ek olarak, öğretmenler, profesyonel gelişim döngüsü adı altında her yıl gözlemlenmekte ve gözlemlenen derslerle ilişkili olarak belirli çalışmalara katılmak durumundadır. Bu beklentilerle paralel olarak, kurumda Öğretmen Geliştirme, Eğitim ve Araştırma Merkezi kurulmuştur ve bu merkez 2009 yılından beri kurum içi ve kurum dışı faaliyetlerde bulunmaktadır.

Mevcut çalışmaya, Yabancı Diller Yüksek Okulu'nda çalışan sekiz öğretim görevlisi gönüllülük esasıyla katılmıştır. Katılımcılar arasında yabancı uyruklu bir öğretim görevlisi bulunmamaktadır. Katılımcıların seçim sürecinde amaçlı örneklem türlerinden biri olan maksimum çeşitlilik örneklem yöntemi kullanılmıştır. Maksimum veri zenginliğine ulaşabilmek için; kurum içi sorumlulukları, iş deneyimleri ve geçtikleri mesleki gelişim yolları farklılık gösteren adaylar arasından çalışmaya katılmaya gönüllü olanlar seçilmiştir.

Birden fazla kaynaktan veri toplamak, çalışmanın güvenilirliğini pekiştirdiği için nitel bir durum çalışmasının temel özelliklerinden biridir ve bu kaynaklar gözlemler,

arşiv kayıtları, röportajlar, araştırmacının alan notları ve fiziksel eserler olabilir (Yin, 2014, s. 106). Mevcut çalışmada, veri toplama aracı olarak yarı yapılandırılmış görüşmeler ve araştırmacının alan notları kullanılmıştır. Yarı yapılandırılmış görüşmeler, yaygın bir veri toplama aracı olmanın yanı sıra, temelde insan deneyimine ve düşüncelerine anlam veren bir sosyal etkileşim aracıdır (Rapley, 2004). Çalışma süresince araştırmacı tarafından tutulan alan notları da yazılı veri olarak, araştırmada kullanılmak üzere belgelenmiştir.

Katılımcılardan en uygun ve zengin yanıtların alınabilmesi amacıyla, görüşme sorularının hazırlanması sırasında da uzman görüşüne başvurulmuştur. Sorular açık uçlu soru formatında hazırlanmıştır. Gerçek görüşmelerden önce, aynı kurumda çalışan ve verileri mevcut çalışmada kullanılmayan iki öğretmen ile pilot çalışma yapılmıştır. Uzman görüşü ve pilot çalışmanın sonucunda, sorulardaki bazı ifadeler değiştirilmiş ve mülakat süreci hakkında bazı öneriler alınmıştır.

Ses kaydı alınarak elde edilen veriler (yarı yapılandırılmış görüşmeler) ilk olarak kelimesi kelimesine yazılı veriye dönüştürülüp, alan notları ile birlikte bilgisayar sistemine elektronik olarak aktarılmış ve düzenlenmiştir. Verinin gruplandırılması ve yorumlanması için Braun ve Clarke (2006) tarafından önerilen altı aşamalı tematik analiz yöntemi kullanılmıştır. Verilerin tekrar tekrar okunması sonrasında, anlamsal benzerlikler baz alınarak ilk kodlar ve sonrasında da anlamsal temalar oluşturulmuştur. Araştırma soruları da temaların oluşturulma sürecine ışık tutmuştur. Oluşturulan temalar, ilgili literatür ve araştırma sorularından yola çıkılarak yorumlanmış ve rapor edilmiştir.

BULGULAR, TARTIŞMA VE SONUÇ

Bu nitel durum çalışması katılımcıların mesleki gelişime yönelik algılarını ve tutumlarını araştırmayı ve bunun yanı sıra yaşadıkları zorlukları ve mesleki gelişimin kalitesini iyileştirmek için sundukları önerileri daha iyi anlayabilmeyi amaçlamaktadır. Araştırma soruları ışığında elde edilen veriden dört tema oluşturulmuştur. Bunlar sırasıyla; (1) öğretmenlerin öğretmenlik mesleğine ilişkin görüşleri, (2) mesleki gelişim ve mesleki gelişim faaliyetlerine yaklaşımları, (3)

mesleki gelişim sürecinde algılanan engeller ve (4) mesleki gelişime ilişkin algılanan ihtiyaçlar ve öneriler.

Araştırma sonucu elde edilen veriden ortaya çıkan ilk tema, öğretmenlerin, öğretmenlik mesleğini nasıl gördükleri ve mesleklerinde profesyonelliğin onlar için ne anlama geldiğiyle bağlantılıydı. Bu sorulara verilen yanıtlar, öğretmenlerin mesleki gelişime yönelik tutumlarını anlamlandırabilmek için önemli bir adımdı ve daha geniş bir çerçevede, eğitim politikalarını değiştirebilecek bir adımdı. Sonuçlar, çalışmaya katılan tüm öğretmenlerin; mesleğe bağlılık, uzmanlık bilgisine ek olarak eğitim sertifikaları ve bazı diğer yeterlilikleri gerektirdiği için öğretmenliği bir işten ziyade profesyonel bir meslek olarak gördüklerini göstermektedir. Araştırmaya katılan tüm öğretmenler, öğretmenlik mesleğinin yalnızca para için yapılan bir iş olamayacağını, dolayısıyla da profesyonel bir meslek kategorisinde bulunması gerektiğini belirtmişlerdir. Ayrıca bazı öğretmenlerin, öğretmenlik mesleğinden *bir yaşam biçimi* ve *tutku* olarak bahsederek, mesleklerine daha fazla anlam yükledikleri görülmüştür. Buna ek olarak, öğretmenlerin daha geniş kitlelerin gelişimine katkıda bulunma konusunda kendilerine yükledikleri sorumluluğun da belirli sosyal ve etik sorumlulukları gerektirmesi, öğretmenliğin birçok kişi için profesyonel bir mesleğe dönüştüğünü göstermiştir.

Öğretmenlik mesleğinde profesyonelliğin gerektirebileceği özellikler ve becerilerle ilgili olarak da bulgular öğretmenlerin ortak niteliklere, özelliklere, beklentilere ve uygulamalara atıfta bulunduğunu ortaya koymuştur. Bu, profesyonelliğin hem tutumlar hem de davranışlar üzerine inşa edildiğini göstermektedir (Stronge, 2007). Detaylandırmak gerekirse, bazılarının profesyonelliğin yaşanacak bir zihniyet olduğuna inandıkları tespit edilirken, diğerleri bunu doğrudan doğruya öğretmenlerin uygun görünüm, dakiklik ve uygun dil kullanma gibi gözlemlenebilir davranışlarıyla ilişkilendirmiştir. Öğretmenlik mesleğinin gerektirdiği özellikler sorulduğunda, mevcut araştırmadaki katılımcıların hiçbiri sürekli profesyonel gelişim ihtiyacından bahsetmemiştir. Ancak profesyonel gelişim ile ilgili fikirleri direkt olarak sorulduğunda, bunun meslekteki en önemli şeylerden biri olduğunu belirtmişlerdir. Bu sonuç, literatürde de desteklendiği gibi (Korkmazgil, 2015),

öğretmenlerin tasvir ettikleri idealler ile kendi uygulamaları arasında bir tutarsızlık olduğunu göstermektedir.

Öğretmenlerin mesleki gelişimi nasıl gördükleri ve deneyimledikleriyle ilgili araştırma sorularına uygun olarak, veriden ortaya çıkan ikinci tema, öğretmenlerin mesleki gelişime yönelik yaklaşımlarıyla ilişkilendirildi. Genel olarak mesleki gelişim hakkındaki görüşleri sorulduğunda, araştırmanın tüm katılımcıları, profesyonelliğin ve öğretimdeki başarının ayrılmaz bir parçası olarak önemine ve gerekliliğine dikkat çektiler. Bu bakış açısının nedeni, İngiliz dilinin sürekli değişen doğası ve ortak bir dil olması açısından küresel değeri olarak açıklanmıştır. Hızla gelişen teknolojinin eğitim alanını da büyük ölçüde etkilemesiyle birlikte; güncel kalmak ve sürekli gelişim halinde olmak, İngilizce öğretmenleri için bir ön koşul ve ayrıcalık haline gelmiştir (Craft, 2000; Celce-Murcia, 2001; Day ve Sachs, 2005; OECD, 2011). Verilerin kapsamlı bir analizi, araştırmaya katılanların mesleki gelişimi (1) kişisel ve akademik benliklerini geliştirmenin, (2) hizmet verdikleri kurumun gelişimine katkıda bulunmanın ve (3) toplumu daha iyiye dönüştürmenin bir aracı olarak gördüklerini ortaya koymaktadır (Önkol, 2011).

Bu tema içerisinde ortaya çıkan bir başka kategori ise, “kaliteli” bir mesleki gelişime atfedilen özelliklerle ilişkilendirilmiştir. Tüm ihtiyaçları ve bağlamları kapsayan mesleki gelişim uygulamaları tasarlanmasının ve yürütmenin imkânsız olduğu unutulmamalıdır. Bunun nedeni, tüm bağlamların benzersiz olması ve bunların farklı ihtiyaç, fırsat ve önceliklere sahip olmalarıdır. Yine de bazı faktörlerin öğretmenlerin mesleki gelişimine olumlu etkisi olduğu konusunda bir fikir birliği vardır (Darling-Hammond, Wei, Andrée, Richardson ve Orphanos, 2009; Borko, Jacobs ve Koellner, 2010; Hargreaves vd., 2013; Borg, 2015). İlgili literatürdeki araştırmalarla paralel olarak, mevcut araştırma, yüksek kaliteli profesyonel gelişim uygulamalarının *isteğe bağlı, sürekli, kişiselleştirilmiş, uygulama odaklı, içerik açısından çeşitli ve ihtiyaçlara yönelik* olmasının beklendiğini göstermektedir. Mesleki gelişimin “kalitesi”, eğitimcilerin ve geri bildirim sağlayıcıların yetkinliğiyle de ilişkilendirilmiştir. Bu bulgunun mesleki gelişim faaliyetlerinin tasarımı ve yürütülmesi üzerinde doğrudan etkileri olabilir.

Bu tema altında ortaya çıkan bir diğer bulgu, kurumun, kurumda çalışan öğretmenlerin profesyonel gelişim faaliyetlerine katılmaları üzerindeki dolaylı etkisidir. Katılımcılara sosyo-ekonomik durumlarının ve çalışma ortamlarının mesleki gelişim ihtiyacı yaratıp yaratmadığı sorulduğunda, katılımcıların büyük çoğunluğu çalışılan kurumun, gelişim faaliyetlerine katılmada büyük rol oynadığını belirtmişlerdir. Katılımcılar bu durumdan hoşnutsuzluklarını belirterek bunu “*baskı ve yük*” olarak adlandırmışlardır. İlgili literatürde bu bulguyu destekleyecek hiçbir çalışma bulunamamıştır.

Üçüncü araştırma sorusuyla ilgili olarak ortaya çıkan üçüncü tema ise katılımcıların mesleki gelişimleriyle alakalı yaşadıkları sorunlardır. Bu çerçevede, öğretmenlerin algıladıkları ve yaşadıkları zorluklar; kişisel özellikler ve bağlama bağlı faktörler olmak üzere iki kategori altında gruplandırılmıştır. Araştırmanın bulguları ışığında, katılımcıların mesleki gelişim uygulamalarını engelleyen faktörler öncelikle onların kişisel özellikleri, motivasyonları hayatlarındaki öncelik ve sorumlulukları ile öğretmenlik mesleğine olan yaklaşımlarıyla ilişkilendirilmiştir. Bu tema altındaki diğer kategori ise, öğretmenlerin mesleki gelişimini engelleyebilecek bağlamsal faktörlerdir. Bunlar arasında öğretmenlerin yoğun iş yükü, çalıştıkları kurumdan destek görememeleri, profesyonel gelişim uygulamalarına zorunlu katılım, profesyonel gelişim merkezinin aktif çalışmaması ve öğrenci motivasyon eksikliği yer almaktadır. Hem öğretmenlik mesleğinin doğası gereği hem de kurumun her geçen gün artan beklentileri nedeniyle ortaya çıkan iş yükü, mesleki gelişimde en sık atıfta bulunulan zorluk olarak görülmüştür. Bu bulgu, önceki çalışmalarla da paralellik göstermektedir. (Drage, 2010; Desimone, 2011; Maria ve García, 2016; Yaşar, 2019).

Üçüncü araştırma sorusu ışığında ortaya çıkan bir başka tema ise katılımcıların betimlediği “ideal” mesleki gelişim ortam ve uygulamalarıyla ilişkilendirilmiştir. Villegas-Reimers (2003) öğretmenlere, tıp ve hukuk gibi diğer alanlarda olduğundan daha az özerklik verildiğini ve bunun da öğretmenlere mesleki gelişim uygulamalarına katılım için tanınan özerkliği de tartışmasız bir şekilde etkilediğini belirtmektedir. Araştırmanın bulguları ışığında, özerkliğin öğretmenler için mesleki gelişimin başarısında çok önemli bir rolü vardır. Öğretmenler kendi

mesleki gelişimleri üzerinde özerkliğe sahip olduklarında, bu onların mesleğe bağlılığına, sürekli gelişim isteğine ve dolayısıyla öğretmenlerin refahına katkıda bulunmaktadır (Ryan ve Deci, 2000). Araştırmaya katılanların öne sürdükleri bir diğer öneri ise mesleki gelişim faaliyetlerinde bulunanlar için bir teşvik olarak iş yükünün azaltılmasıdır.

Diğer bir öneri ise profesyonel gelişim uygulamalarının içeriğinde değişiklik yapılması gerektiği olarak belirtilmiştir. Katılımcılar, profesyonel gelişim etkinliklerine düşük katılımı; neyin öğretileceği, nasıl öğretileceği ve nasıl öğretilmeyeceği ile ilgili tekrar eden ve teoriye dayalı içerikle ilişkilendirmişlerdir. Hizmet öncesi eğitim içeriği ile hizmet içi mesleki gelişim uygulamalarının büyük ölçüde örtüşmesi öğretmenler arasında içerik konusunda yaygın bir memnuniyetsizlik oluşturmaktadır. Bunun yerine, araştırma bulgularına göre katılımcılar, hizmet öncesi müfredatında yer almayan, tersine öğrenme modeli (flipped learning), eleştirel pedagoji, psikoloji ve felsefeye ile ayak uydurması zor olan yeni gelişen eğitim teknolojilerinin profesyonel gelişimin içeriğine dahil edilmesini önermişlerdir. Bu bulgu da öğretmenlerin mesleki gelişim uygulamalarının karar verilme, planlanma ve uygulanma süreçlerine daha aktif katılımının sağlanması ihtiyacını doğurmaktadır. Mesleki gelişim süreçlerine öğretmenlerin daha fazla dahil edilmesi; mesleki gelişime katılımın artırılmasını sağlarken daha uzun vadede öğretmenlik mesleğinin güçlendirilmesine katkıda bulunabilir (Dutt, 2003; Wells, 2014). Mevcut çalışmanın bulgularından ortaya çıkan bir diğer öneri ise meslek içi ders gözlemlerinin artırılması olmuştur. Bu bulgu, öğretmenlik mesleğinde meslektaş dayanışması ve öğrenme toplulukların önemini vurgulamaktadır.

Mevcut çalışmadan şu sonuçlar çıkarılabilir. Öncelikle öğretmenler profesyonel gelişimin meslekleri açısından büyük bir önem arz ettiğini belirtse de profesyonel gelişim faaliyetlerine katılma konusunda daha çekimser davranmaktadır. Bu da algılanan ideal ile gerçekte deneyimlenen arasında bir fark olduğunu göstermektedir. Katılımcılar meslekte profesyonelliği öncelikli olarak kişisel özelliklerle ilişkilendirmiştir. Bu da öğretmenlik mesleğinin öğretilip öğretilmeyeceği tartışmasını bir kez daha gündeme getirmektedir. Ayrıca

profesyonel gelişimin etkili olabilmesi için bu tür uygulama ve süreçlerin kişiselleştirilmiş, isteğe bağlı, sürekli ve ihtiyaçlar doğrultusunda olması gerektiği öngörülmüştür. Zaman ve kaynaklarla ilgili kısıtlamalar, çalışılan kurumdan yeterince destek görülememesi ve sürekli profesyonel gelişime yönelik olumsuz tutumlar, öğretmenlerin profesyonel gelişim etkinliklerine katılma motivasyonunu düşürebilmektedir (Knowles vd., 2014). Dolayısıyla, profesyonel gelişimin daha çok teşvik edilebilmesi, sürekli katılımın sağlanması ve hedeflenen sonuçlara ulaşılabilmesi için mevcut öğretmenlere düşen iş yükünün azaltılması ve öğretmenlere sürekli, anında ve ilgili destek sağlayabilecek bir eğitim-destek biriminin oluşturulması gerekmektedir. Öğretmenler kendi mesleki gelişimleri üzerinde daha fazla özerkliğe sahip olmalı ve kurumlar, öğretmenlere seçenek sağlama sorumluluğunu üstlenmelidir. Ayrıca, içsel motivasyon faktörlerinden daha önemli olarak algılanmasalar da akademik unvan iyileştirmeleri ve maaş artışı gibi dışsal motivasyon faktörleri, profesyonel gelişim faaliyetlerine katılımı ve bunların sonucunda elde edilen başarıyı olumlu yönde etkilemektedir.

Mevcut çalışmanın sonuçlarının ve öğretmenlerin mesleki gelişimine ilişkin ilgili literatürün ışığında, öğretmen profesyonelliğini ve öğretmenlik uygulamalarını desteklemek için, gelecek uygulamalara yönelik şu çıkarımlar sunulmaktadır. Çalışmanın sonuçları, yaptıkları mesleki gelişim faaliyetleri ve deneyimleri ne olursa olsun, tüm öğretmenlerin profesyonel gelişim uygulamalarının gerekliliğini ve değerini vurguladığını ortaya koymuştur. Bu motivasyon, öğretmenler için sadece öğretim uygulamalarını geliştirmek için değil, aynı zamanda onların akademik özsaygılarını ve öz-yeterliliklerini artırmak ve mesleklerinde tatmin duygusu yaratmak için önemlidir.

Öğretmenler, kendi mesleki gelişimlerinden sorumlu olan tek taraf değildir. Profesyonel gelişim faaliyetlerini başlatmaları ve sürdürmeleri için desteklenmediklerinde ve yönlendirilmediklerinde, bu uygulamaların başarılı olma olasılığı düşüktür. Bu nedenle, kurumların gerektiğinde kurumsal yardım ve destek sağlama konusunda da birtakım sorumluluklar alması beklenmektedir. Mevcut çalışmanın ortaya koyduğu gibi, kurumsal kültür ve öncelikler, öğretmenlerin profesyonel gelişim uygulamalarına yaklaşımıyla ilgili olarak büyük değer

taşımaktadır. Teşvik edici bir atmosfer, mevcut çalışmada belirtildiği gibi öğretmenlere kendilerini daha değerli hissettiren bir etken haline geldiğinden, öğretmenlerin belirli profesyonel gelişim uygulamalarına katılma istekliliğini artırabilir. Benzer şekilde, uygun olmayan faktörlere sahip kurumlar, profesyonel gelişime karşı memnuniyetsizliğin veya ilgisizliğin ortaya çıkmasına neden olabilir.

Öğretmenlerin tüm ihtiyaç ve tercihlerine uyan tek bir mesleki gelişim yolu yoktur. Verilerin de gösterdiği gibi, öğretmen gelişimine katkıda bulunabilecek her şey bir mesleki gelişim metodu olarak kabul edilebilir ve öğretmenleri güncel tutmak için çok değerlidir. Bu nedenle, en uygun mesleki gelişim modelini tasarlamak için, kurumlar ve karar mercileri, kurumsal amaç ve beklentilere uygun olarak öğretmenlerin ihtiyaçlarını belirlemelidir.

Öğretmenlerin mesleklerindeki gerçek ihtiyaçları hakkındaki öz farkındalıkları, gelişimin ilk adımı olmalıdır, bu da mesleki benliklerini daha iyi hale getirmek için içsel olarak motive edilmeleri gerektiği anlamına gelir. Öğretmenler, kendi ihtiyaçlarını ve önceliklerini dile getirme, kendi eğitim ve mesleki gelişimlerini takip etme ve üzerinde düşünme konusunda daha fazla yetkilendirilmelidir. Bu nedenle, kurumların bir dizi isteğe bağlı faaliyet seçeneği sunarak öğretmenlerin bireysel çabalarını takdir etmesi ve desteklemesi beklenmektedir.

Mesleki gelişim sadece bireysel değil, aynı zamanda iş birliğine dayalı bir çabadır. Meslektaşlar arasındaki iletişim, bilgi ve deneyim alışverişi, bireysel öğretmenlerin mesleki gelişiminde çok önemli bir rol oynar. Bir kurumdaki meslektaşlar arasında hiyerarşi ve rekabetin olmaması, öğretmenler için geribildirim geçerliliğine ve kabulüne katkıda bulunur. Bunun mesleki gelişim programları ve eğitim kurumları üzerinde bazı etkileri olabilir.

Bu çalışma, öğretmenlerin mesleki gelişime yönelik algılarına ve çalışma bağlamındaki mevcut örüntülere ilişkin değerli ve ilginç bulgular ortaya koysa da bazı sınırlılıklar çerçevesinde ele alınmıştır. Bu sınırlamalar, gelecekteki ilgili araştırmacılara rehberlik edebilir. Mevcut vaka çalışması, sekiz İngilizce öğretmeniyle bir vakıf üniversitesinin hazırlık programında gerçekleştirilmiştir. Konuyla ilgili derinlemesine anlatımlar

sunsalar da sonuçlar Türkiye'de yüksek öğretimde görev yapan tüm İngilizce öğretmenlerine genellenemez. Bu nedenle, katılımcı sayısının artırılması ve araştırma evreninin genişletilmesi daha kapsamlı bir çalışma ortaya çıkarabilir. Mevcut çalışmadaki bir başka sınırlama, veri toplama süreci için ayrılan süre üzerinde olumsuz etkisi olan küresel COVID-19 salgınıydı. Mevcut çalışma, İngilizce öğretmenlerinin mesleki gelişimleri hakkındaki algı ve deneyimlerinin yalnızca bir bölümünü incelemiştir. Bu nedenle, konuya daha derinlemesine ve uzun vadeli bir yaklaşım çok değerli olacaktır. Bu araştırma çalışması için veriler yarı yapılandırılmış görüşmelerle toplanmış ve araştırmacının alan notlarıyla güçlendirilmiştir. Gelecek araştırmacılar, katılımcıların mesleki gelişimlerine ilişkin algılarını, deneyimlerini ve önerilerini daha iyi anlamak ve verileri zenginleştirmek için odak grup görüşmeleri ve sınıf gözlemlerini kullanabilir. Veri toplamaya yönelik deneysel yaklaşımlar da kullanılabilir. Mevcut çalışmaya, araştırma bağlamında öğretmenler, öğretmen eğitimcileri ve yöneticiler gibi farklı paydaşlardan katılımcılar dahil olmuştur. Gelecekteki araştırmalar, farklı paydaşların konu ile ilgili perspektiflerini ve deneyimlerini daha derin bir şekilde anlamak için her bir katılımcı grubuna ayrı ayrı odaklanabilir. Böyle bir araştırma, farklı paydaşların beklentileri ve deneyimleri arasındaki olası tutarsızlıkları keşfetmeye yardımcı olabilir ve öğretmenlerin mesleki gelişiminin farklı yönlerine ilişkin bütünsel bir bakış açısı sağlayabilir. Bu çalışmada; hem konferans, seminer, atölye gibi tek seferlik profesyonel gelişim faaliyetleri hem de DELTA, yüksek lisans ve doktora programları gibi uzun vadeli aktif katılım gerektiren uygulamalar dahil olmak üzere her türlü süreç, faaliyet ve uygulama mesleki gelişim olarak ele alınmıştır. Gelecekteki araştırmalar, daha derin bir anlayış elde etmek için belirli bir profesyonel gelişim uygulamasına odaklanabilir. Ayrıca, belirli bir profesyonel gelişim uygulamasından önce ve sonra toplanan nitel verilerle daha kapsamlı bir çalışma, uygulama sonunda öğretmenlerin beklentileri ile deneyimleri arasındaki etkileşimi sağlayarak ilgili literatüre katkıda bulunabilir. Son olarak, mevcut araştırmanın katılımcıları tarafından önemle vurgulanan iki şey, mesleki gelişim uygulamaları için öğretmen özerkliği ve meslektaş gözlemlere duyulan ihtiyaçtır. Bu amaçla, öğretmenlerin, kendi profesyonel gelişimleri ile ilgili olarak öğretmen özerkliğini nasıl algıladıkları, öğretmenlere ne ölçüde özerklik verilmesi gerektiği ile meslektaş gözlemlerine yönelik farklı yaklaşım ve uygulamalar gelecekteki araştırmalarda daha ayrıntılı olarak incelenebilir.

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YAZARIN / AUTHOR

Soyadı / Surname : YÜKSEL
Adı / Name : Burcu
Bölümü / Department : İngiliz Dili Öğretimi

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