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**AN INVESTIGATION INTO PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT
PERCEPTIONS OF TURKISH TEACHERS OF ENGLISH AS A FOREIGN
LANGUAGE**

**THESIS BY
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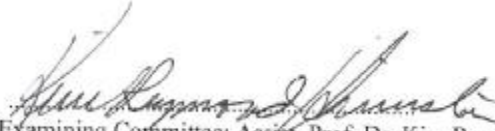
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DEDICATION



*To my beloved parents,
Hatice and Kadir Yılmaz*

ETHICS DECLARATION**Student's**

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Thesis Title: An Investigation Into Professional Development Perceptions Of Turkish Teachers Of English As A Foreign Language

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22/09/2017

Arzu YILMAZ

ÖZET

İNGİLİZCE EĞİTİMİ VEREN TÜRK ÖĞRETMENLERİN MESLEKİ GELİŞİM ALGILARI ÜZERİNE BİR İNCELEME

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Bu nitel betimsel çalışmanın ana amacı İngilizce eğitimi veren Türk öğretmenlerin mesleki gelişim algılarını incelemektir. Bu bağlamda, bu öğretmenlerin mesleki gelişim aktiviteleri, etkili bir öğretmende bulunması gereken özelliklere ilişkin algıları, mesleki gelişimin tanımına ilişkin algıları, mesleki gelişim programları ve aktivitelerinin meslekleri üzerindeki etkilerine ilişkin algılarının yanı sıra lisans sonrası eğitimin meslekleri ve mesleki gelişimleri üzerindeki olası etkilerine dair algıları incelenmiştir. Ek olarak, algılanan mesleki gelişim ihtiyaç alanları da incelenmiştir. Çalışmanın katılımcıları Türkiye'deki 17 farklı ilde ilk, orta ve yükseköğretim kurumlarında çalışan 36 öğretmenden oluşmaktadır. Veriler açık uçlu anket ve yarı yapılandırılmış görüşme yoluyla elde edilmiştir.

Veriler hizmet içi eğitimin en önde gelen mesleki gelişim aracı olduğunu ortaya çıkarmıştır. Ayrıca veriler lisan sonrası eğitim gören öğretmenler ve görmeyenlerin mesleki gelişim aktiviteleri arasında bir farka işaret etmektedir; lisans sonrası eğitim görenler birçok aktiviteden bahsederken görmeyenler neredeyse tamamen hizmet içi eğitimden bahsetmişlerdir.

Etkili öğretmenle ilgili algılarıyla ilgili olarak, veriler öğretmenlerin etkili bir öğretmeni alan, yöntem ve pedagoji bilgisine, öğretme, iletişim, ölçme ve değerlendirme ve materyal kullanımı becerilerine, çeşitli pozitif kişisel özellikler ve erdemlere sahip ve mesleğinde kendini sürekli geliştiren biri olarak algıladıklarını göstermiştir.

Mesleki gelişime ilişkin algılarıyla ilgili olarak, veriler en çok bahsi geçen maddenin kendini güncelleme ve alanda kendini geliştirme ve takiben mesleki gelişimin sürekli ve yaşam boyu bir süreç olduğunu ortaya çıkarmıştır. Veriler ayrıca alandaki

araştırma çalışmalarını ve günümüz trendlerini takip etmeyi, meslektaşlarla işbirliği ve alandaki teknolojik gelişmelere ayak uydurmayı mesleki gelişimi teşvik eden yollar arasında göstermiştir. Ayrıca yarı yapılandırılmış görüşmelerin sonuçları, görüşme yapılan öğretmenlerin lisans sonrası eğitimi bir mesleki gelişim aracı olarak gördüklerine işaret etmektedir. Mesleki gelişim programları ve aktivitelerinin meslekleri üzerindeki etkisine ilişkin, veriler bu program ve aktivitelerin mesleki, akademik ve kişisel alanda gelişme sağlamaları nedeniyle olumlu etkileri olduğunu göstermiştir.

Lisans sonrası eğitimin meslekleri üzerindeki etkilerine ilişkin olarak, veriler bu eğitimin öğretme, araştırma, sunum ve materyal kullanımı becerilerinin geliştirilmesine, teorik bilgi edinmeye, sürekli mesleki gelişim ve yaşam boyu öğrenmeyi teşvik etmeye, yeni bakış açıları, özgüven ve profesyonellik edinmeye, güncel trendler hakkında bilgi edinmeye ve kendini güncel tutmaya yardımcı olmasının yanı sıra zayıf ve güçlü noktaların farkındalığı ve zayıf noktaları düzeltmeyi, ve teknolojinin sınıfa entegre edilmesini teşvik ettiğini göstermektedir.

Veriler ayrıca İngilizce eğitimi veren Türk öğretmenlerin çok çeşitli ihtiyaç alanları olduğuna işaret etmektedir. En sık bahsi geçen ihtiyaç alanları konuşma becerisi ve telaffuz, yöntem ve tekniklerin uygulanması ve öğrenci motivasyonu ve hazır bulunuşluluğu arttırmaktı.

Bu çalışma mesleki gelişim programları ve aktiviteleri ile lisans sonrası eğitimin İngilizce eğitimi veren Türk öğretmenlerin meslekleri üzerinde olumlu etkileri olduğunu ve bu öğretmenlerin kendilerini mesleki olarak geliştirmeleri için onlara daha fazla fırsat sunulması gerektiğini göstermektedir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Mesleki Gelişim, İngiliz Dili Eğitimi, Mesleki Gelişim Aktivitesi olarak Lisans Sonrası Eğitim, Betimsel Araştırma.

ABSTRACT**AN INVESTIGATION INTO PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT
PERCEPTIONS OF TURKISH TEACHERS OF ENGLISH
AS A FOREIGN LANGUAGE****Arzu YILMAZ****Master of Arts, Department of English Language Teaching****Supervisor: Assoc. Prof. Dr. Şehnaz ŞAHINKARAKAŞ****September 2017, 152 pages**

The main purpose of this qualitative descriptive study was to explore the professional development perceptions of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) teachers. Within this scope, their professional development activities, their perceptions with regard to the necessary features of an effective teacher, definition of professional development, the effects of professional development programs and activities on their profession as well as the possible effects of postgraduate education on their profession and professional growth were investigated. In addition, their perceived need areas were probed. The participants of the study were made up of 36 EFL teachers working at primary, secondary and tertiary levels in 17 cities in Turkey. Data was collected through an open-ended questionnaire and semi-structured interviews.

Findings showed that in-service training was the most prominent means of professional development. The data also indicated a distinction between the professional development activities of EFL teachers with and without a postgraduate degree; while the ones with such a degree mentioned many activities, the ones without such degree almost exclusively mentioned in-service training.

With regard to their perceptions of an effective teacher, the findings indicated that they view an effective teacher as someone who has subject, methodology and pedagogical knowledge, skills like teaching, communication, assessment, and material use skills, various positive personal traits and virtues, and who continuously develops himself or herself in the profession.

Regarding their perceptions of the definition of professional development, the findings indicated that the most frequently mentioned item was updating and improving

oneself in the field followed by its being continuous and lifelong process. The findings also suggested their views regarding the ways to promote professional development such as following research studies and current trends in the field, collaboration with colleagues and keeping up with technological innovations in the field. The findings of the semi-structured interviews indicated that the interviewees viewed postgraduate education as a means of professional development. As for the effects of professional development programs and activities on their profession, the findings indicated that these programs and activities had positive effects since they provide professional improvement, academic improvement, and personal improvement.

With regard to the effects of postgraduate programs on EFL teachers' profession, the findings indicated that these programs aided developing teaching, research, presentation and material use skills, gaining theoretical knowledge, promoting ongoing professional development and lifelong learning, gaining new perspectives, self-confidence and professionalism, learning about current trends and keeping up-to-date as well as promoting awareness of weaknesses and strengths, and fixing weaknesses, and integration of technology into the classroom.

The findings also suggested that EFL teachers had a great many need areas. The most frequently mentioned need areas were speaking skills and pronunciation, implementing methods and techniques, and increasing student motivation and readiness.

This study suggests that professional development programs and activities along with postgraduate education have positive effects on EFL teachers' profession and that EFL teachers need to be provided with more opportunities to professionally develop themselves.

Keywords: Professional Development, English Language Teaching, Postgraduate Education as a Professional Development Activity, Descriptive Research

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ABBREVIATIONS

EFL	: English as a Foreign Language
ELL	: English Language and Literature
ELT	: English Language Teaching
EU	: European Union
INSET	: In-service Training
MoNE	: Ministry of National Education



CHAPTER I

1. INTRODUCTION

This chapter consists of five sections. In the first section, background to the study is presented. The second section provides the statement of the problem. In the third section, the aim of the study is presented in the light of the research questions. In the fourth section, the significance of the study is discussed. The last section provides definition of the terms.

1.1. Background to the Study

In today's world of rapid change and development in all fields, education has gained more importance and teachers are expected to keep up with the new trends and approaches in their own educational fields. With the globalization of the world, the advances especially in technology, and as it is the Knowledge Era that we are in, governments and policy makers are expecting the students to be equipped with a great deal of knowledge, skills and competence in order to be ready for the future challenges. This lays an enormous burden on the teachers, which makes their job more complex and compelling.

Teacher is one of the most fundamental and significant components of any educational setting. As Mizell (1999) states, there is a strong link between "what teachers know and can do" and "what students know and do" (p.13). In order to educate the generations in a way that they can be well-equipped and sophisticated, teacher is the vital key. McLaughlin (1991) stresses that being successful at any development endeavour depends on the smallest entity of the organization, which is the teachers regarding education. Teachers are the ones who are the key factor at bringing about change. As this is the case, much emphasis has been put on teacher education and development especially in the recent decades. It has been widely accepted by the policy makers that if the teachers are not well-equipped, then it would not be possible to anticipate a better outcome from the students and schools. Thus, they have been putting into action a great many efforts by providing teachers with in-service education and training (INSET) so as to develop teachers' knowledge and skills, raise their performance, and to help them keep up with the recent scientific and technological advances in their fields. Although the professional development programs vary

regarding their content and format, the core of their aim is, as Griffin (1983) states, to “alter the professional practices, beliefs, and understanding of school persons toward an articulated end” (p. 2). Thus, it might well be asserted that the purpose of these programs is to undergo a change in the teachers’ beliefs, in their classroom practices, and as a result a change in the learning performances of the students.

Considering all, teacher professional development has gained a tremendous recognition in the literature as well as among the governments and policy makers since teachers are in the core of keeping up with the advances and attaining high level standards in education.

1.2. Statement of the Problem

Professional development is increasingly getting more focus with the tremendous amount of research in the field. However, there is a growing dissatisfaction with the traditional INSETs which involve the attendance of the teachers to ‘one-shot’, ‘sit-and-get’ conferences, where they are expected to receive the conveyed message from the authorities in the field, and to later implement it in their classrooms. As Hunzicker (2010) points out, teachers usually do not remember most of the information they receive from the presentations, and very little is applicable at their schools. Such conferences and/or workshops perceive professional development as ‘an event’. However, according to Loucks-Horsley, Harding, Arbuckle, Murray, Dubea, and Williams (1987), and many other scholars, professional development is ‘a process’ rather than ‘an event’. It has been recognized that professional development is not merely based on giving ‘new tricks’ to teachers, rather it is an ongoing attempt to develop oneself in the relevant field.

There are many different views about the features of an effective professional development program. McLaughlin (1990) and Weatherley & Lipsky (1977) suggest that professional development programs that are arranged to promote change need to be teacher specific and be centred upon the daily activities in the classroom. Similarly, some experts like Lambert (1988) and Massarella (1980) point out that professional development needs to be teacher-initiated and the activities need to be carried out by the teachers and personnel at schools. In this regard, the conventional models of INSETs seem to lack the autonomy of the teachers as well as emphasis on their day-to-day needs, which might result in the reluctance of the teachers to attend these kinds of top-

down models of training. Although teachers view the professional development programs as the most essential and available activities to foster professional growth in their job (Fullan, 1993), the research shows that most programs fail to bring about a change (Wang, Frechtling, & Sanders, 1999). According to Guskey (1986), the reasons for their failure depend on two factors, which are not considering the factors that motivate teachers to engage in professional development; and how the change is brought about in teachers. In order for the professional development activities to be successful, they need to be correspondent with teachers and straightly target their needs and concerns (Hall & Loucks, 1978). Pejouhy (1990) states that for the teachers, change and attempting something other than the existing practices might mean running the risk of failure, which may damage their sense of professional self-regard and may also be humiliating. As a result, teachers are unwilling to make changes in their current practices if they are not certain about the outcomes (Lortie, 1975).

Education has always been one of the main concerns of humanity as it is the most prominent factor in the process of development. Given the fact that we are in an era with a great many sources of knowledge and remarkable efforts to develop, every country is searching for a better education in order to maximize their development level. This being the case, there is a growing recognition of the importance of teacher training and education programs. Üstüner (2004) states that teacher is one of the three basic components of education and that among the other components, ‘teacher training’ process is the one that we have the most control over in ensuring the education system to effectively function. However, he further points out that the practices carried out in teacher training are complicated, contradictory, and insufficient.

In the light of the all the information related to professional development programs mentioned above, it might be concluded that there is still a lot to do for the sake of more efficient and effective educational outcomes, most important of which is promoting the development of quality teachers.

1.3. Purpose of the Study

This current research study aims to scrutinize the perceptions of EFL teachers with regard to the necessary features of an effective teacher as well as the definition of professional development. It also seeks to investigate their perceptions about the effects of professional development programs and activities on their profession. As a part of

this qualitative inquiry, in addition to EFL teachers' views about the possible effects of postgraduate programs on their profession and professional growth, their perceived need areas are also probed.

The research questions given below would help to frame aspects and domains about EFL teachers' views that the researcher is interested to explore:

- 1) How do the EFL teachers define being an effective teacher?
- 2) How do the EFL teachers define professional development?
- 3) What do the EFL teachers think about the effects of the professional development programs and activities on their profession?
- 4) What do the EFL teachers think about the effects of the postgraduate programs on their profession?
- 5) What areas do the EFL teachers feel in need of improvement?

1.4. Significance of the Study

As mentioned earlier, traditional INSET programs which are developed without considering the real and day-to-day needs of EFL teachers seem to lack the desired effectiveness on their professional growth. Such programs are considered to be one-shot single events in which teachers are mostly required to sit and get the new information, and then implement it in their classes. However, the literature suggests that these kinds of programs which disregard the voice of the teachers who are the real addressees of such programs do not satisfy the expectations. In this sense, this current study gives voice to the teachers by giving them the opportunity to express their feelings and opinions regarding their professional development experiences and need areas.

This study is also significant given the fact that studies which focus on the professional development of EFL teachers in Turkey are mostly limited to quantitative studies. In this sense, this qualitative inquiry sheds light on the in-depth investigation of EFL teachers' perceptions regarding their professional development experiences, which would provide a deeper understanding of the phenomenon. Such an inquiry might stimulate the policy makers to take into consideration the beliefs, perceptions and attitudes of EFL teachers while developing professional development programs. This might lead to a more target oriented approach so as to achieve the desired outcomes.

This qualitative inquiry also provides EFL teachers' views regarding their need areas which might reveal their professional development needs. In this sense, it might give the policy makers the opportunity to re-evaluate what they are currently doing, and might give insights into how to develop more effective and to the point professional development programs.

In addition to these mentioned above, this qualitative study also seeks to investigate the perceptions of EFL teachers with regard to the effects of postgraduate programs on their profession and professional growth as well as seeking to answer whether these programs might be included in the professional development activities. To the researcher's knowledge, in Finland, which is known to be among the best to have good education standards, it is a must to have a Master's degree to become a teacher. In this regard, this study might provide a comprehensive analysis of EFL teachers' views and perceptions about the postgraduate programs.

1.5. Definition of the Terms

Professional Development: Constant and ongoing effort to develop oneself in their teaching profession, which aims to bring about changes in their attitudes and beliefs towards the profession, students and school environments as well as in their classroom practices for better learning outcomes. Professional development also comprises bringing about awareness and understanding of teaching and learning processes.

In-service Training (INSET) Programs: The workshops and seminars which are directed by the officials in MoNE and offered to teachers aiming to provide them knowledge relevant to their field as well as assistance in their profession.

CHAPTER II

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter is comprised of six sections based on the research studies in the literature. In the first section, various definitions of teacher professional development are presented. The second section provides a comparison of ‘teacher development’ and ‘teacher training’. In the third section, the importance of teacher professional development is discussed. In the fourth section, criticism against the effectiveness of traditional professional development practices is discussed, and suggestions for the better practices are presented. The fifth section provides various models of teacher professional development activities. In the last section, language teacher education and language teacher professional development are reviewed.

2.1. Teacher Professional Development

2.1.1. Definition of Teacher Professional Development

With the rapid changes in almost all fields, education is also receiving its share. As education is one of the most important fields in building up the next generation in a way that they can raise their countries’ advancement level, many governments all around the world have been putting efforts into the educational reforms. In this regard, teacher education and teacher professional development have been the centre of attention. There have been tremendous amounts of studies in teacher professional development. Although the scholars put the term’s definition in different ways, the core aim in all these definitions is assisting the teachers in a way that they can improve their teaching skills and practices in order to get better learning outcomes from their students.

As mentioned above, there are various terms and definitions in regard to teacher learning and change, which are “teacher training”, “in-service education and training (INSET)”, “staff development”, “continuing professional development (CPD)”, “professional development”, “professional learning”, and “life-long learning” (Rahman, Hoban, & Nielsen, 2014). Despite the fact that the basic meaning of the definitions from a variety of perspectives usually overlaps and that they are used interchangeably, it is still quite complicated to provide a precise definition of teacher professional development. However, as complicated as it may be, as Evans (2008) emphasizes, the

term professional development needs to be comprehended so as to understand how to achieve the best outcomes from teachers. She further points out that it is essential to find out what is needed for the teacher development.

Villegas-Reimers (2003) defines professional development, in broad terms, as “the development of a person in his or her professional role” (p. 11). According to Glatthorn (1995), in more specific terms, it refers to “the professional growth a teacher achieves as a result of gaining increased experience and examining his or her teaching systematically” (p. 41). Day (1999) gives a more detailed definition of professional development:

Professional development consists of all 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 (p. 4).

Day’s (1999) definition might be considered significant as it speaks out the word “process”, which is contrary to the common belief of “one-shot/single event” aspect of the conventional professional development programs. His definition also embraces both natural learning experiences and planned activities like in-service training.

Professional development might be both institutional and self-initiated. The institutional ones are “formal experiences” like taking part in workshops, seminars, and so on while self-initiated ones are “informal experiences” such as reading relevant studies and researches about education (Ganser, 2000). He further points out that “the content of the experience”, “the process by which the professional development will occur”, and “the contexts in which the professional development will take place” need to be considered while having a look at the professional development. Considering the conventional types of professional development such as in-service training, the aim of which is to load teachers with new information in their fields through workshops, seminars or “short-term”, “one-shot” courses, this new perspective is regarded as a

“revolution” and a “new paradigm” of teacher professional development (Cochran-Smith and Lytle, 2001, p. 45). In the same vein, Villegas-Reimers (2003) asserts that it is just very recently that teacher professional development has been seen as “a long-term process that includes regular opportunities and experiences planned systematically to promote growth and development in the profession” (p. 12).

Bell and Gilbert (1994) define teacher professional development as follows:

Teacher development can be viewed as teachers learning, rather than as others getting teachers to change. In learning, the teachers were developing their beliefs and ideas, developing their classroom practice, and attending to their feelings associated with changing (p. 493).

This definition implies that teacher is not only the object of the change, but rather “both subject and object of the change (Villegas-Reimers, 2003). Bell and Gilbert (1994) further explain that there are three fundamental kinds of development which are personal, professional, and social development and that if one of these aspects do not develop, it is not likely to expect development in other aspects (p. 494). According to them, if these three fundamental kinds of development are to take place, there are two aspects of teacher development, one of which is providing “new theoretical ideas and new teaching suggestions”, and the other is “trying out, evaluation, and practice of these new theoretical and teaching ideas over an extended period of time in a collaborative situation where the teachers are able to receive support and feedback, and where they are able to reflect critically” (p. 494). From this description, it might be inferred that teacher development is a long-term process rather than short-term, and that the teachers are mentored in the process of practising the new information and reflecting on what they have gained and experienced.

Having revised the related literature on the definition of teacher professional development, Evans (2002) comes up with a definition of hers, which is “the process whereby teachers’ professionalism and/or professionalism may be considered to be enhanced” (p. 131). According to her, although it is “an individualised process” as teachers might be triggered to change their attitudes and/or practices with the effect of different agents, there needs to be a “universally applicable” teacher development process (p. 134), and she adds that the identification of teacher development process

“will contribute much towards understanding what works with one kind of teacher and what works with another, and why” (p. 135).

Rahman et al. (2014) refer to teacher professional development (TPD) as “a learning system in which influential factors and actors interrelate and interact to shape teacher learning and change” (pp. 15-30). They view TPD as a “complex system” due to two reasons. The first one is its multidimensionality, which means there are various factors that affect teacher learning and change. The second reason is its non-linearity. Citing Guskey’s (1986, 2002) and Desimone’s (2009) models of professional development, which they call “linear and deterministic”, they claim that the interrelations and interactions of the “factors and actors” are non-linear, which implies the actions in the process might not always proceed to give the same results. As a result of this complex nature of TPD, they assert that “one size fits all” approach needs to be abandoned (pp. 15-30).

Proclaiming the significance of “individual professional and career development”, Bolam (2000) defines continuing professional development as follows:

CPD embraces those education, training and job-embedded support activities engaged in by teachers, following their initial certification, and headteachers. Such activities are aimed primarily at adding to their professional knowledge, improving their professional skills and helping them to clarify their professional values so that they can educate their students more effectively (p. 267).

After giving the reasons why professional development programs do not effectively work out, Diaz-Maggioli (2004) states that his own perception of professional development is based on “faith in teachers, the institutions they work for, and the power of the broader community of educators around the globe” (p. 5). According to him, a possible definition for professional development is “a career-long process in which educators fine-tune their teaching to meet student needs” (p. 5). As this is the case, he further explains that professional development straightly deals with “teachers’ teaching styles – the patterns of decisions teachers make when mediating their students’ learning” (p. 5). He also highlights that success stories of teachers should be shared with the other teachers as they might set a good model.

Another scholar, Eraut (1977) draws attention to the natural nature of the process. He defines professional development as “the natural process of professional

growth in which a teacher gradually acquires confidence, gains new perspectives, increases in knowledge, discovers new methods and takes on new roles” (p. 10). He views teachers as subjects of the process rather than objects and as such, he believes professional development is not something that can be imposed on teachers. By the word ‘gradually’, he emphasizes that development and change do not occur overnight as they are most often attained over time, and thus the growth is usually unnoticeable and also not fully conscious. Only given the long period of time can the change and development be noticed. Not totally ignoring the impact of the agents outside the classroom, he asserts that they are not as important as “the knowledge, experience and personality of the teacher”, and “the school context” (p. 10). With this, he argues that teacher development takes place ‘naturally’ beyond any ‘interference’ from outside agents, claiming that authority-based activities are usually non-functional. It is possible to claim that, according to him, professional development activities need to be self-directed, not authority-initiated, and that his view is opposed to the deficit theory of professional development which argues that teachers need to be improved as they lack some skills or knowledge. Different from others, it is also noticeable that his definition includes teachers’ gaining confidence through the process of professional development.

In the light of all the definitions provided by various scholars, it might be inferred that professional development involves all types of activities targeting the growth of teachers, which in turn contributes to the success of the students they teach and the institutions they work for. As some scholars have identified, the perception of professional development has changed from a “single-shot, short-term” event to a “life-long” or “career-long” process. It might also be deduced that “one size fits all” approach needs to be reconsidered due to the complexity of the process and due also to the fact that it is not only the content which has an impact on the outcome, but also the context. In addition, other than in-service training, which is the first thing that comes to mind speaking of professional development, there are other types of activities such as action research, peer coaching, self-monitoring, reading journals on the field, keeping teaching journals and portfolios and last but not least sharing experiences with colleagues, which might add to the growth of teachers.

2.2. Teacher Development and Teacher Training

As mentioned in the previous section, there are numerous terms used to define professional development. Two of these are “training” and “development”. Although they are generally used to refer to teacher growth, there are some scholars who have made a distinction between the two on the basis of various aspects.

According to Richards and Farrell (2005), training is the set of activities which targets “short-term and immediate goals” (p. 3) while development indicates “general growth” which aims at a “longer-term goal” (p. 4). They point out that training is perceived as a preparation for the teachers either before they get started on their teaching career or prior to assuming a new teaching task or duty. However, development aims at assisting teachers in a way that they can gain insights into teaching and also themselves as the ones who perform teaching. Another distinction they make is that training is “top-down” as the content of the activities are regulated by officials or experts. In training, teachers put new strategies into practice with superintendence and they get feedback from others. Here, they point out the corrective aspect of training which means teachers are corrected while they are trying out these new strategies. However, they state, development is a “bottom-up” process since teachers scrutinize various aspects of their practice so that they can reflect on their experiences, which demonstrate the reflective nature of development. Other than the reflective and cognitive aspects of development, they also emphasize the collaboration with peers. They summarize the core of development strategies as “documenting different kinds of teaching practices; reflective analysis of teaching practices; examining beliefs, values, and principles; conversation with peers on core issues; and collaborating with peers on classroom projects” (p. 4).

Freeman (1989) defines training and development as “the strategies by which teachers are educated” (p. 37). These strategies serve to create a change in the teacher’s practice through collaboration. However, there are some differences between them considering the duration, decision makers, and content. In training, there is a “direct intervention” by the trainer, supervisor, or colleague, which he refers as the “collaborator”, to work on a specific issue in the teacher’s practice (p. 39). However, development functions as an “influence” by the collaborator to work on complicated and entangled features of teaching (p. 40). This implies that there is an authority over the teacher in training while in development the trainer just serves as a guide. In

addition, training focuses on gaining knowledge and skills whereas development puts emphasis on a change in attitudes and awareness of the teacher. As for the duration, training has a time constraint; the goal needs to be achieved in a particular period of time. However, in the case of development, the desired outcome is not expected to be gained in a specified period of time. To sum up their views, training aims to achieve a specific goal in a particular period of time whereas development focuses on prompting awareness in the teacher so that he or she can reflect on, criticize, and improve their classroom practice within a non-specified period of time.

Vergara-Lujan, Hernandez-Gaviria, and Cardenas-Ramos (2009) also make similar distinctions. They state that training is introduced usually due to a present, immediate need while development indicates general growth. Time devoted to both activities also differs; for training it is short term, but for development it is longer term. As for the content of the activities, they add, training is just about developing skills. However, development involves “analysis, comparison, reflection and implications of what is learned” (pp. 169-192). When it comes to decision making or how the process is initiated, they put forward that in development it is the teachers themselves who make the decisions, not officials, experts, trainers or other agents. They believe this is the most striking characteristic that distinguishes development from training. Similarly, Wallace (1991) asserts that training is oriented by others while development is self-initiated by the teachers in order to improve themselves. This also gives a hint that the motive behind development is internal while in training it is external.

Another scholar Crandall (2000) emphasizes that development does not have a time constraint as it is a “life-long process of growth” during which teachers need to reflect on their practices (p. 36). She is one of the scholars who draw attention to reflection. As Day (1999) points out, reflection is necessary to improve teachers’ abilities “to think and act professionally” throughout their teaching careers (p. 222). Karn (2007) also emphasizes the importance of reflection since it enables teachers to observe their practices and make decisions on how to improve these practices to be better teachers.

In the light of the abovementioned information, it is possible to outline the differences between training and development as it is shown in Table 1.

Table 1. Differences between Training and Development

Training	Development
Short-term goal	Long-term goal
Authority-initiated	Self-initiated
Collaborative	Individualized
Specified time	Non-specified time
Focus on a specific aspect of teaching such as skills	Focus on complicated and integrated aspects of teaching/insights into teaching
Corrective	Reflective and cognitive
Immediate needs	General growth
Control by authority	Autonomous
External motive	Internal motive

These differences do not make one superior to the other. In order for the teachers to improve their teaching skills, competences, and classroom practices, a combination of both is needed so that they can sustain effective education for the benefit of their students. Teachers need to pursue their professional growth by taking advantage of all kinds of professional development activities.

2.3. Importance of Professional Development

“Whatever they do, is what we do. If they are a good teacher and they do better stuff, we do better stuff. If they are a crappy teacher, we do bad stuff” Year 9 student (cited in Rowe, 2003, p. 15).

“Next year in Year 12, I want to get a good enter score so I am doing those subjects that have the best teachers. The trouble is, there is not enough good teachers. Good teachers make all the difference” Year 11 student (cited in Rowe, 2003, p. 15).

Maruli (2014) states that “apparently everyone needs quality teaching” (p. 193). Teacher quality, as he emphasizes, is the most significant characteristic of the schools that promote student success. According to him, students who are taught by qualified teachers have better achievements than the ones who have unqualified teachers. Thus, what teachers do in their classrooms has a great impact on their students’ learning

outcomes. This brings professional development of teachers to the fore. As it can be inferred, teacher professional development is not something that is only for the benefit of the individual teachers; the ultimate goal of professional development is to optimize the education quality in order to enhance student learning. The only way for the teachers to be able to carry out this duty is, as Day (1999) suggests, to be “well prepared for the profession”, and “able to maintain and improve their contributions through career-long learning” (p. 2). In this fast moving world, with all the changes almost in all fields, it would not be sufficient for the teachers to rely only on their undergraduate education. They need to “keep pace with change, and review and renew their own knowledge, skills and visions for good teaching” (Day, 1999, p. 2). Similarly, Richards and Farrell (2005) point out that teachers need an “ongoing renewal of professional skills” due to “the fact that not everything teachers need to know can be provided at pre-service level, as well as the fact that the knowledge base of teaching constantly changes” (p. 1).

Fielding and Schalock (1985) suggest that, although the focus has conventionally been on the growth of individual teachers, there are two other main purposes of professional development which are the “instructional program effectiveness” and “organizational effectiveness” (p. 6). Instructional program effectiveness refers to promoting the utilization of an instructional program while organizational effectiveness indicates collaboration of teachers and administrators for the sake of recognizing and overcoming the problems, and also reaching targets. As education is linked to economic growth and also social welfare of the countries, societies are struggling more than ever to increase their educational outcomes (Reynolds, 1998). This being the case, professional development is not only crucial for the individual teachers’ growth, but also for the schools’, students’ and societies’ growth.

Grossman, Hammerness and McDonald (2009) assert that “teaching is complex work that looks deceptively simple” (p. 273). Teachers face a variety of challenges on a daily basis which they have to attend to. Teaching is not transmitting the subject knowledge to the students; teachers need to deal with problems deriving from diverse groups of students with different backgrounds, needs, interests and different learning styles. If they are not offered the necessary supportive professional development activities, it would be troublesome for them to be effective in their teaching careers.

Professional development is essential especially for the novice teachers. Having just finished their teacher education programs, they might have difficulties while trying

to thrive in the shift from being a student to becoming a teacher. They also might face challenges in the effort of transferring their content knowledge into practice. So, they need support and training activities so as to adapt to their new teaching career and also to their institution. However, the reality is that they are often without any guidance or support. Crookes (1997) and Peacock (2009) state that teacher attrition occurs as a result of lack of guidance and support since novice teachers are left all alone facing the realities of real classrooms (cited in Farrell, 2015). This makes professional development activities even more vital for the novice teachers than for the veteran teachers. This, of course, does not mean that veteran teachers do not need such activities, as Day (1999) points out that teachers can learn from experience through their teaching careers, but “learning from experience alone will ultimately limit development” (p. 2).

Professional development is also important for the educational reforms to be successful in their attempts to raise the standards of education. Many societies all over the world have been introducing educational reforms not to fall behind the changes and innovations. According to Villegas-Reimers (2003), there is a “two-way, or reciprocal relationship” between teacher professional development and educational reforms, and based on some evidence, she asserts that they need to be hand in hand in order for both to result in success (p.24). Similarly, a research carried out by Futrell, Holmes, Christie, and Cushman (1995) indicates that there are several factors that have an impact on the interrelation between teacher professional development and educational reforms, one of which is the integration of teachers and teacher professional development into the educational reforms (cited in Villegas-Reimers, 2003, pp. 26-27). Therefore, teacher professional development is of fundamental importance for the educational reforms to effectively function and serve for better educational outcomes.

Day (1999) asserts that “teachers are the schools’ greatest asset”, so “successful school development is dependent upon successful teacher development” (p. 2). In the same vein, Feiman-Nemser (2001) points out that if the schools are expected to produce better outcomes regarding student learning, teachers need to be given more effective opportunities to improve their teaching practices. In order for a nation to strive and manage to be among the welfare states in all means, central are the success of teachers, schools, educational reforms and most importantly students, which makes professional development of teachers crucial.

2.4. Criticism against the Effectiveness of Traditional Professional Development Practices and Suggestions for the Better Practices

As mentioned in the previous sections, the significance of teacher professional development is well-accepted by the societies throughout the world. However, although the main intention of all kinds of teacher development activities is to enhance student learning (Diaz-Maggioli, 2004), there is a considerable amount of criticism against these activities on the basis of their failure in bringing about the desired outcomes. Several scholars have identified the reasons of the failure. Diaz-Maggioli (2004), for example, has determined 11 factors which serve as obstacles in professional development practices (pp. 2-5):

1. **Top-down decision making:** By this, he means that professional development activities are arranged not by teachers, but by officials or some experts. As they tend to put emphasis on the managerial needs, these activities usually serve as an imposition rather than a resolution.
2. **The idea that teachers need to be “fixed”:** He asserts that professional development activities are held by the false belief that the reason why students do not achieve success in learning is due mainly to the failure of teachers to teach.
3. **Lack of ownership of the professional development process and its results:** As he points out, since the professional development programs, which aim to bring about a change in teachers, lack the involvement of teachers in the designing process, teachers justifiably question why they need to engage in these activities.
4. **The technocratic nature of professional development content:** According to him, in most of the professional development programs, teachers are demanded to put into practice the techniques they are taught when they turn back to their classrooms. However, as he claims, these methods address the certain contexts; therefore, the officials cannot foresee the amount of time and endeavour that the implementation of these methods require.
5. **Universal application of classroom practices regardless of subject, student age, or level of cognitive development:** He states that although some practices might be implemented in schools with different grade levels, a “one-size-fits-all”

approach would be inappropriate if the program is aimed to be effective and successful.

6. **Lack of variety in the delivery modes of professional development:** He claims that when the issue is teacher learning, professional development programmers insist on designing just one type of activity instead of multiple activities. However, as for the student learning, the significance of a wide range of instructions in the classrooms has been highly mentioned in the literature. So, he believes that one type of activity would not foster a desired change in teachers.
7. **Inaccessibility of professional development opportunities:** Since the professional development programs usually do not involve teachers during the planning and deliverance processes, he asserts that they might fail to fulfil teachers' needs, which consequently results in the fact that few teachers can implement what they have learned in these programs.
8. **Little or no support in transferring professional development ideas to the classroom:** According to him, not enough support is provided to teachers in their efforts to transfer what they have been taught into the classrooms. Although it is the most demanding task for the teachers, they are most often left all alone without enough, if any, guidance.
9. **Standardized approaches to professional development that disregard the varied needs and experiences of teachers:** Standardized approaches to professional development programs, as he claims, do not take into consideration the different experiences and needs of teachers, which is another reason for the failure of these programs.
10. **Lack of systematic evaluation of professional development:** He points out that since the assessment of development in the teacher's competence is highly complicated, professional development programs are usually left without any evaluation. However, according to him, it is important for the teaching community to be informed about the results of these programs.
11. **Little or no acknowledgement of the learning characteristics of teachers among professional development planners:** Mostly, teachers are assumed to have the same learning styles, so the programs disregard the different learning characteristics of teachers, which in turn, as he claims, might result in the inefficiency of these programs.

Having revised the factors that might contribute to the ineffectiveness of the conventional professional development programs, Diaz-Maggioli (2004) compares his own perception of professional development with the traditional professional development, which is shown in Table 2 below.

Table 2. Traditional vs. Visionary Professional Development by Diaz-Maggioli (2004, p. 6)

Characteristics of Traditional Professional Development	Characteristics of Visionary Professional Development
Top-down decision making	Collaborative decision making
A “fix-it” approach	A growth-driven approach
Lack of program ownership among teachers	Collective construction of programs
Prescriptive ideas	Inquiry-based ideas
One-size-fits-all techniques	Tailor-made techniques
Fixed and untimely delivery methods	Varied and timely delivery methods
Little or no follow-up	Adequate support systems
Decontextualized programs	Context-specific programs
Lack of proper evaluation	Proactive assessment
Pedagogical (child-centered) instruction	Andragogical (adult-centered) instruction

Another criticism against most professional development programs is raised by Guskey (2002). According to him, traditional professional development programs do not take into consideration the “process of teacher change” (p. 382). He states that the main focus of these programs is to bring about a change in “teachers’ beliefs about certain aspects of teaching or the desirability of a particular curriculum or instructional innovation” (p. 382). As a result of this change, the program initiators believe that teachers will make changes in their teaching practices, which in the end will foster student learning. However, according to his alternative “Model of Teacher Change” (p. 383), a desirable change in teachers’ attitudes and beliefs takes place after they have tried out new practices, and only if they see any progression in student learning. Teachers tend to stick to the practices that cause enhanced learning outcomes while they are most likely to discontinue the ones that do not show any evidence of improvement in student learning. It might be inferred from his claim that professional development

programs need to provide applicable practices so that teachers can experiment them in their real classrooms, which in turn might cause a change in their beliefs and attitudes.

His alternative “Model of Teacher Change” is presented in the following figure.

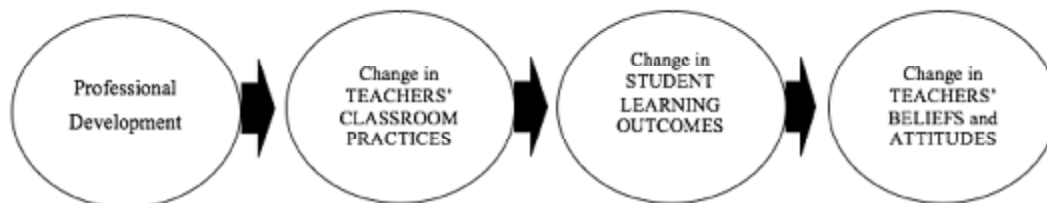


Figure 1. A Model of Teacher Change by Guskey (2002, p. 383)

Guskey (2002) also points out that the research about teacher change indicates that especially veteran teachers seek for some sort of evidence whether the new practice causes a positive change in their classrooms. So, he suggests that the planners of the professional development programs need to carefully consider the order of change in teachers if the programs are to be influential and substantial.

Another scholar Feiman-Nemser (2001) asserts that conventional professional development programs do not foster “complex learning by teachers” (p. 1014). According to her, professional development activities are “usually sporadic and disconnected, rarely tied to teachers’ classroom work and lacking any follow up” (p. 1014). As also stated by Ball and Cohen (1999), she draws attention to the necessity of seriously planned continuous professional development activities if the goal is to assist teachers so that they can overcome the challenges they encounter in their efforts to promote student learning. She further states that, as a result of the criticism against the conventional approaches, there has been a shift to new approaches, in which “teachers do the talking, thinking, and learning” (p. 1042). In order for these new approaches to be well implemented, she suggests that continuity of these programs needs to be granted as well as “professional development communities of practice” (p. 1043) should be formed so that teachers can share ideas and experiences; reflect on practices; and construct new knowledge together.

There has been a vast amount of efforts to offer a guideline of an effective professional development programs; however, as Guskey (1994) states, there is no “one right answer” (p. 5) due to the undeniably strong effect of “context” (p. 6). As each context has its own characteristics, Guskey (1994) suggests that instead of “one right

answer”, “there will be a collection of answers, each specific to a context” (p. 7). Therefore, there is a need for “finding the optimal mix – that assortment of professional development processes and technologies that will work best in a particular setting” (p. 7).

As a result of these criticism and suggestions, professional development programs need to be considered within a more constructivist approach, in which teachers, administrators, experts and schools collaborate to help teachers construct new knowledge and implement new practices rather than a “sit and get” approach. Professional development planners need to take into account the uniqueness of the contexts and also take steps to involve teachers in the process more than ever to meet their specific and varied needs. These programs need to go beyond the scope of a “single event” activity and move towards a differentiated set of continuous and growth-oriented activities, which target the growth in the individual teachers, schools, student learning, and also the community.

2.5. Paradigms and Models of Professional Development Activities

As stated in the earlier sections, there are various definitions for teacher professional development offered by many scholars. These different perspectives are grounded in several paradigms (Broad & Evans, 2006). Broad and Evans (2006) suggest that there are four main paradigms which are the “deficit paradigm”, “professional growth paradigm”, “educational change paradigm”, and “problem solving paradigm” (p. 7). “Deficit paradigm” assumes that teachers lack certain skills or knowledge, so they need to be trained through professional development activities. The impact of this paradigm can be seen in Little’s (1987) definition. According to him, professional development is “any activity that is intended partly or primarily to prepare paid staff members for improved performance in present or future roles in the school districts” (p. 491). However, it has received criticism as Garmston (1991) states, this paradigm perceives teachers as “a vessel to be filled, an apprentice to be molded into someone’s image of ‘a good teacher’” (p. 64).

According to “professional growth paradigm”, teachers self-initiate their professional development activities in order to improve their knowledge and teaching skills so that they can have a positive impact on student learning. Feiman-Nemser (2001), opposing the conventional “deficit paradigm”, argues that “instead of discrete,

external events provided for teachers, professional development should be built into the ongoing work of teaching and relate to teachers' questions and concerns" (p. 1042).

For the ones who define professional development within the "educational change paradigm", professional development activities need to aim at engendering change (Fullan, Hill & Crevola, 2006). Fullan (2005) states that the professional development needs to promote teachers' ongoing learning so that they can improve their capacities and bring about a change in their classrooms and in education as a whole.

Some others locate professional development within a "problem solving paradigm". This paradigm views professional development activities as a way of improving skills so as to find solutions to specific problems teachers encounter on a daily basis in their classrooms such as dealing with learning difficulties (Joyce & Showers, 2002).

These paradigms view professional development within the scope of different points of view. However, there are other scholars who integrate two or more paradigms, which is referred to as "integrative view of professional development" (Broad & Evans, 2006, p. 7).

With all these different views on professional development, there are also various models of professional development activities. Villegas-Reimers (2003) asserts that

with the new conception of teachers as professionals, and of their preparation as being lifelong learning process, where they are active participants in their own growth and development as teachers, the concept of teacher 'training', whether pre-service or in-service, is no longer fitting (p. 67).

She points out that professional development is an ongoing process and there are various options for teachers to improve themselves other than "courses and workshops (the 'traditional in-service' perspective)" (p. 67). She categorizes the models into two groups. The first group of models necessitates collaboration of organization or institution while the latter can be applied in a classroom or school. She clarifies that the second group is used as 'techniques' by the models in the first group (p. 70). She also adds that "most professional development initiatives use a combination of models simultaneously, and the combinations vary from setting to setting" (p. 69). The categories suggested by her are illustrated in Table 3 below.

Table 3. Professional development models/techniques by Villegas-Reimers (2003, p. 70)

Organizational partnership models	Small group or individual models
Professional-development schools	Supervision: traditional and clinical
Other university-school partnerships	Students' performance assessment
Other inter-institutional collaborations	Workshops, seminars, courses, etc.
Schools' networks	Case-based study
Teachers' networks	Self-directed development
Distance education	Co-operative or collegial development
	Observation of excellent practice
	Teachers' participation in new roles
	Skills-development model
	Reflective models
	Project-based models
	Portfolios
	Action research
	Use of teachers' narratives
	Generational or cascade model
	Coaching/mentoring

Wallace (1991) outlines three major models of teacher professional development in a chronological order which are “the craft model”, “the applied science model”, and “the reflective model” (p. 6).

“The craft model” is a highly traditional model by which novice or less experienced teachers get advice from more experienced ones on how to improve instructional skills. They also might observe the veteran teachers and imitate the techniques they use. However, he criticizes this model as it is static and based on imitation. This model also, as he asserts, does not value the growing scientific knowledge.

“The applied science model” is based on scientific knowledge and empirical research. The trainees are provided with the “findings of scientific knowledge and experimentation” by the experts in the relevant fields and later they put these findings into practice to reach professional competence (p. 9). However, he criticizes this model

as it has caused “a split between research and professional practice”, and also for the reason that it undervalues the “teachers’ expertise derived from experience” (p. 16).

In his “The reflective model”, Wallace (1991) categorizes ‘professional knowledge’ into two kinds of knowledge: i) received knowledge, ii) experiential knowledge (pp. 12-13). In the first category, the trainee is taught the facts and data based on research in the field as well as theories and skills. He calls this kind of knowledge as “received knowledge” as the trainees have not experienced or practised it yet. The second one refers to the knowledge gained through the practice of teaching. When trainees practise the “received knowledge”, they will have the chance to reflect on the “experiential knowledge”, which they gain while they are practising. As a result of this, they will improve their teaching skills and become professionally competent.

According to Guskey (2000), on the other hand, there are seven main models of professional development which are: i) training, ii) observation/assessment, iii) involvement in a development/improvement process, iv) study groups, v) inquiry/action research, vi) individually guided activities, and vii) mentoring (p. 22). Based on Guseky’s (2000) review of the advantages and shortcomings of each model, Broad and Evans (2006) have formed an “abbreviated version” shown in Table 4 below (p. 13).

Table 4. Major Professional Development Models with Advantages and Shortcomings adapted from Guskey (2000, pp. 22-29, cited in Broad & Evans, 2006, pp. 13-14)

Method	Advantage	Shortcoming
Training – presentation, workshop, demonstration, simulation, discussions, seminars, colloquia, etc.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - efficient for sharing info with large groups - shared knowledge base and vocabulary 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - little individualization or choice - often need feedback and coaching to supplement
Observation/Assessment - observation and receiving feedback e.g. peer coaching and supervision	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - positive impact on observer and observed through discussion and feedback - lessens isolation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - takes time, trust, and must separate observation and evaluation – need to be focused and well- planned
Improvement Processes curriculum/program design development or review, to implement new instructional strategies or to solve problems	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - enhances knowledge and also collaborative capacity - generally are invested in it due to local context and/or authentic problems 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - may only involve small group - may tend toward tradition and not innovation - need access to research to guide decisions/actions
Study Groups - study regarding common issue or concern – may have several groups studying different aspects of issue	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - lessens isolation and bring focus and coherence to learning – also focuses on ongoing learning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - individual involvement may vary or be discouraged by dominant members - may become opinion-focused instead of research focused
Inquiry/Action Research - 5 step AR process of selecting a problem and determining an action to take	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - tends to build knowledge and increase skills of problem solving, empowers teachers in their practice and learning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - takes significant individual effort, initiative and time
Individually Directed Activities - identify individual needs create personal plan – assess success of plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - flexible, choice, individualization, geared to personal reflection and analysis 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - may be reinventing the wheel or repetitive work if no collegial sharing is built in—less likely to be connected to SIP and other areas of PD
Mentoring - regular meetings of more and less experienced pairs about practice and improvement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - both individuals learn as mentors become more meta cognitive and also develop adult communication skills 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - time and resources, also connecting to other learners or school plans and initiatives

Pointing out that “there is no best combination of approaches”, Loucks-Horsley et al. (1987) identify 12 “alternative approaches” to professional development (p. 43). These are: i) teacher as researcher, ii) implementing innovative practices, iii) clinical supervision, iv) peer coaching, v) advising teachers, vi) mentoring beginning teachers, vii) teachers’ centers, viii) teacher institutes, ix) networks, x) partnerships, xi) training of trainers, and xii) individually guided professional development (pp. 43-44).

“Teacher as researcher” approach is opposed to the ‘deficit model’ in which the needs of the teachers are determined and attained by the researchers. This approach involves the teachers in the research process from the beginning to the end; that is, in order to bridge the gap between research and practice, researchers and teachers work together on every step of the research. As a result of this process, teachers may find solutions to their teaching problems, get new understandings, and improve their teaching skills (Loucks-Horsley et al., 1987).

“Implementing innovative practices” approach assumes that, as Loucks-Horsley et al. (1987) claim, “teachers can improve their knowledge, skills, and performance by implementing a new practice” (p. 55). By ‘new’, they do not mean a completely new practice, they rather mean a practice that is new to the teacher; not used by him or her before. This practice might be developed by the teacher, or some other people might have developed it. After defining the urgent needs, teachers search and decide on the most appropriate practice that can meet their needs in their own contexts. Once they get training about the new practice, they implement it in their classrooms. Loucks-Horsley et al. (1987) assert that implementing new practices is important as “it can not only change the behaviours, attitudes, and performance of teachers, but can also significantly change the school environment and the school’s capacity to solve its own problems and change itself” (p. 58).

“Clinical supervision” refers to the collaboration between the supervisor and the teacher to analyse the teacher’s teaching skills, with the final goal of improving these skills. Loucks-Horsley et al. (1987) describe the target of clinical supervision as “to engage teachers in a process that will assist them to further develop and strengthen their instructional skills” (p. 60). This approach is based on the assumption that if the teachers improve their skills, this will enhance student learning. So, the supervisor assists the teacher so that he or she can be “continually reflective and analytical about classroom performance” (p. 60).

“Peer coaching” is grounded in the idea that teachers can work cooperatively and learn from each other in order to improve their instructional skills. Instead of an administrator, who might be evaluative, teachers can coach each other for the intention of instructional support. This kind of collegial partnership allows teachers to work on classroom problems together rather than in isolation. As a result of “peer coaching”, teachers can achieve “a better understanding of the teaching/learning process”; “self-analysis skills”; “improved teaching performance”; and “a more positive attitude toward instructional support” (Loucks-Horsley et al., 1987, p. 73).

“Advising teachers” approach indicates a relationship between an expert and a teacher. These experts continually work with teachers and offer “personalized, nonevaluative support for the growth of individuals” (Loucks-Horsley et al., 1987, p. 77). These features distinguish this approach from the occasional in-service training, which aims to handle large numbers of teachers. In this kind of relationship, the teacher’s needs and concerns are of top priority.

“Mentoring beginning teachers” is based on the supposition that novice teachers need support as they face many difficulties in their first years of teaching. During this period, the novice teachers need assistance from the more experienced colleagues. Loucks-Horsley et al. (1987) define various roles for mentors such as “teacher, coach, role model, developer of talent, sponsor, protector, and opener of doors” (p. 87). This kind of relationship benefits not only the beginning teacher, but also the mentor as “they are enriched with newly acquired or sharpened skills and with a mental framework that sees professional growth through collegial interaction as a normal part of a teacher’s professional life” (Loucks-Horsley et al., 1987, p. 89).

“Teachers’ centers” approach is another form of professional development which functions in a school or district, or between the organizations that work together such as colleges and teachers’ associations. They may differ from each other, but they all have the same purposes. These purposes are, as Loucks-Horsley et al. (1987) suggest, “responding to teachers’ continuing learning needs, as determined by the teacher; providing an environment where teachers can work individually or in groups on developing classroom materials and projects; and advising and assisting teachers in their own improvement in a nonevaluative, supportive situation” (pp. 94-95). As “teachers’ centers” give importance to individual teachers’ needs and also as they allow the teachers to make the decisions themselves, they are quite different from the conventional in-service models.

“Teacher institutes” provide teachers with an opportunity to come together and consider new teaching practices, new concepts, and attitudes as they usually do not have enough time for these in their teaching contexts. In these institutes, teachers can experiment with new techniques; they can discuss teaching problems and issues; reflect on what they have gained; and give feedback to each other. The organizers of these institutes put emphasis on collegiality, and they provide teachers with intensive learning opportunities (Loucks-Horsley et al., 1987).

“Networks” can be defined as “professional communities that are organized around a common theme or purpose” (Loucks-Horsley et al., 1987, p. 111). Instead of dealing with problems in isolation, teachers come together to support each other in order to find solutions to their classroom problems and try out new practices. As a result of this, Loucks-Horsley et al. (1987) assert, “they begin to take on educational leadership roles themselves” (p. 112).

“Partnerships” are also effective ways of professional development. The underlying supposition is that “the quality and effectiveness of our educational system is the responsibility of the entire community, not just the schools” (Loucks-Horsley et al., 1987, p. 118). So, universities, schools, colleges, and businesses form a partnership to contribute to each other. Partnerships can promote school improvement and staff development by stimulating teachers to adopt new techniques and instructional practices. They provide teachers with the opportunity to broaden their knowledge and gain new perspectives.

“Training of trainers” is “preparing people in a school or district to assist others in learning about and using a particular program or practice” (Loucks-Horsley et al., 1987, p. 127). It encompasses training local trainers so that they can provide continual assistance to the local teachers. In this sense, it is different from in-service programs in which large numbers of teachers are engaged in occasional periods. These local trainers closely work with the teachers on how to adapt new practices to the local context. Teachers get support during the implementation process as well as feedback after the implementation.

The last approach suggested by Loucks-Horsley et al. (1987) is the “individually guided professional development” (p. 135). According to them, this approach is grounded in the idea that “a teacher’s personal judgment about areas for self-improvement or further development, perhaps supplemented by advice from peers and supervisors” (p. 136). In this approach, teachers first assess their own teaching

performance and try to determine the areas in which they need to improve. The next step is setting goals to fix the weaknesses and improve their teaching skills. As a result of this process, they can continually assess themselves and achieve professional development. As it is self-directed, this approach can provide the opportunity for the teachers to address their own needs.

Richards and Farrell (2005) provide four categories of teacher development activities which are “individual”, “one-to-one”, “group-based”, and “institutional” (p. 14). As it can be inferred, the first category indicates the activities that can be carried out individually, the second category with a colleague, the third one within a group, and the fourth one indicates the activities that are institution-directed. As can be seen in Table 5 below, some activities can go into more than one category.

Table 5. Activities for Teacher Development by Richards and Farrell (2005, p. 14)

Individual	One-to-one	Group-based	Institutional
· Self-monitoring	· Peer coaching	· Case studies	· Workshops
· Journal writing	· Peer observation	· Action research	· Action research
· Critical incidents	· Critical friendships	· Journal writing	· Teacher support groups
· Teaching portfolios	· Action research	· Teacher support groups	
· Action research	· Critical incidents		
	· Team teaching		

As stated in this section, there are various alternative models to the conventional in-service programs, of which teachers can take advantage for refinement in the areas they feel in need of. Teacher professional development opportunities are neither solely in the hands of the officials’ nor only the individual teachers’. This means teachers, administrators, institutions, and businesses need to collaborate as teacher development is vital not only for the teachers, schools or districts, but also for the whole community. In order for a professional development effort to be effective, there is a need for utilizing more than one activity; as Guskey (2000) argues, “it’s unlikely that any single

model will prove effective for all individuals under all conditions. The appropriateness of any particular model varies depending on the goals, the content, and the context for implementation” (p. 29). Therefore, while carrying out professional development activities, the goals, the content, and the context need to be taken into consideration if it is to be substantial. He further claims that “combining models in thoughtful ways can provide a highly effective means to professional growth and improvement at both the individual and organizational levels. It can also help ensure that professional development efforts remain intentional, ongoing, and systemic” (p.29). In this compelling effort, teachers need to be supported so that they can perceive these efforts as an indispensable part of their teaching career and pursue an ongoing development and improvement.

2.6. Language Teacher Education and Language Teacher Professional Development

Language teacher education has undergone some changes over the decades due to the fact that there has been a paradigm shift in the language learning field. As Johnson (2009) states, “this shift did not occur in isolation but was influenced by epistemological shifts in how various intellectual traditions had come to conceptualize human learning” (p. 7). According to her, this shift is from a “positivist epistemological perspective” to an “interpretative epistemological perspective” (pp. 7-8).

As she argues, positivist epistemological perspective encompasses the idea that learning is a cognitive process which occurs individually; disconnected from the social and physical contexts. Since it has been traditionally assumed that knowledge is general, and teachers can be transmitted the required knowledge about teaching and learning, positivist paradigm has adopted a “depersonalized” and “decontextualized” perspective, which ignores the “complex social, historical, cultural, economic, and political dimensions” of teaching and learning (Johnson, 2009, p. 8). Interpretative perspectives, on the other hand, assume that “knowledge is socially constructed and emerges from the social practices that people engage in” (Johnson, 2009, p. 9). In this sense, interpretative paradigm values socio-constructivism and takes into consideration the complexity of teaching and learning processes as well as teachers’ previous experiences, and the contexts they teach in. Johnson (2009) defines learning to teach as “a long-term, complex, developmental process that is the result of participation in the

social practices and contexts” (p. 10). Therefore, it might be argued that there has been a shift from a positivist, linear, and knowledge transmission perspective to a more holistic, context-sensitive, personalized, and socio-constructivist perspective in language teacher education and development.

According to Johnson (2009), the knowledge-base of language teacher education consists of three areas: i) the content of L2 teacher education programs: What L2 teachers need to know; ii) the pedagogies that are taught in L2 teacher education programs: How L2 teachers should teach; and iii) the institutional forms of delivery through which both the content and pedagogies are learned: How L2 teachers learn to teach (p. 11). This is quite different from the knowledge base within the positivist paradigm, in which theory and pedagogy are separated, and also which expect teachers to transfer the theories into practice.

These paradigm shifts have also changed the teacher and learner roles as well as conceptualizing learner needs in a wider sense. As stated in the post-methodology, teachers’ roles have shifted from transmitters of knowledge to facilitators, coaches, guides, and creators of the optimal learning environments. Learners’ roles have shifted from non-active receivers of knowledge to active participants and co-constructors of learning. Additionally, with the change from transmission-based classrooms to dialogic classrooms, it has been acknowledged that learners might have various language learning needs.

All these changes lay a tremendous burden on the language teachers. They need to continuously update their content knowledge and teaching skills in order to meet all the needs of the profession. According to Richards and Farrell (2005), the goals of language teacher development are realizing the course of second language development, the changes in our roles in accordance with the learners, and the decision making types which take place in the classroom as well as re-evaluating our theories, recognizing various teaching styles, and identifying the perceptions of learners related to the activities that they are engaged in in the classroom.

Another scholar Mann (2005) has come up with seven features of a language teacher development. According to him, language teacher development is a bottom-up process rather than a top-down one. It appreciates the teacher’s opinion and is usually not dependent on the institution. However, he emphasizes that if the institutions support the teachers, more effective outcomes can be obtained. He also asserts that language teacher development is an ongoing process of growth and expression of deliberate

judgments that are made as a response to the world outside of the classroom. According to him, language teacher development is a broader concept than professional development which includes personal, moral and value aspects. He finally states that language teacher development can be incorporated into education and training programs.

As for language teacher education programmes, there is a growing dissatisfaction with the way they are carried out. Grossman et al. (2009) assert that there is a disconnection between theory and practice in L2 teacher education programmes, and claim that this separation “places the focus of learning to teach upon conceptual underpinnings of teaching as opposed to the concrete practices new teachers may need to enact when they begin teaching – practice is not at the core of the curriculum” (p. 275). Similarly, Tarone and Allwright (2005) argue that “differences between the academic course content in language teacher preparation programs and the real conditions that novice language teachers are faced with in the language classroom appear to set up a gap that cannot be bridged by beginning teacher learners” (p. 12). Referring to his own experience when he first started teaching, Farrell (2015) states that he was not equipped enough to handle the challenges of teaching in a real classroom. He further asserts that beginning teachers are expected to transfer the theory they learned in their teacher education programmes into practice when they get started with their teaching career.

Despite some efforts to bridge the gap between theory and practice, such as professional development schools which offer chances to integrate theory and practice, Grossman et al. (2009) claim that “teacher educators and teacher education programmes continue to falter along this divide” (p. 276). They further suggest that there is a need for a shift from a knowledge-oriented to a practice-oriented curriculum design in language teacher education programmes, and that this shift will require teacher educators “to work to develop programs that undo the historical separation between foundation and method courses”, and also “to focus upon helping novices develop and refine a set of core practices for teaching” (p. 276). Having reviewed the problems with the L2 teacher education programmes, they come up with a solution which encompasses the curriculum design that is organized around “a set of core practices” (p. 277). This solution also includes assisting novice teachers to “develop professional knowledge, and skill, as well as an emerging professional identity around these practices” (p. 277). These core practices are the ones that take place frequently in teaching; that the

inexperienced teachers can implement regardless of different curricula or teaching approaches; that enable novices to acquire more information about learners and teaching; and finally the ones which are based on research and have the likelihood of enhancing learner attainment.

According to Crandall (2000), the trends in current language teaching education comprise four prominent shifts. The first one is “a shift from transmission, product-oriented theories to constructivist, process-oriented theories of learning, teaching, and teacher learning” (p. 34). She states that transmission-based teacher education perceives teachers as “passive recipients of transmitted knowledge rather than active participants in the construction of meaning (in learning by reconstruction)” (p. 35). It also does not consider teachers’ cognition or decision-making. However, in the constructivist perspective, teacher cognition, reflection, teacher inquiry, and teacher research are given importance (Crandall, 2000). As for the second one, asserting that teacher education programs have been unsuccessful at equipping teachers for the realities of the classroom, she suggests that there has been a shift from a decontextualized, ‘one size fits all’ theory and practice to a linked theory and practice which takes into account the multidimensional aspects of a real classroom environment. The third one is the acknowledgement of the influence of teachers’ prior learning experiences on framing their perceptions of efficient teaching and learning as well as their teaching practices. According to her, teacher education programs need to promote awareness of these preconceptions through self-observation and reflection upon those prior experiences so that they can gain new understandings of the language teaching and learning processes. As for the fourth, she states that there has been a shift from traditional one-shot, short-term teacher training programs to an ongoing professional development.

Reviewing the shifts in trends in current language teacher education, Crandall (2000) draws attention to five aspects that need to be taken into consideration in language teacher education (pp. 38-42).

1. **Teacher cognition and beliefs:** Criticizing traditional language teacher education for ignoring the importance of teacher beliefs about teaching and learning, teacher-student roles, and teachers’ preconceptions deriving from prior learning experiences, she emphasizes that there is a need for providing them chances to gain self-awareness of their beliefs about effective teaching and learning as well as to gain thinking skills.

2. **The role of reflection:** According to her, teacher inquiry and reflection, which have been long ignored in language teacher education, have regained importance as they provide “a means for prospective and experienced teachers to develop more informed practice, making tacit beliefs and practical knowledge explicit, articulating what teachers know and leading to new ways of knowing and teaching” (pp. 39-40).
3. **Teacher narratives and case studies:** She states that long-ignored teacher narratives and case studies, which provide “a means of bridging theory and practice and demonstrating the complexity of teaching as a profession” as well as providing “contextualized portraits of the many factors which influence teacher decision making and behaviour in the classroom”, have been brought back to language teacher education (p. 40). She asserts that through narratives, teachers get insights into their daily experiences as they reflect on practice while case studies give them opportunities to have a deeper understanding of their decision-making process.
4. **The role of practical experience:** Although many language teacher education programs include practicum, she asserts that these practical experiences are not sufficient for the prospective teachers to bridge theory and practice. She suggests that language teacher education programs need to include self-, mentor-, and peer-observation as well as reflective activities.
5. **The role of research:** She states that conducting research on language learning field was traditionally in the hands of university researchers. However, teacher research is increasingly gaining importance in language teacher education programs as well as in teacher professional development. She claims that “research undertaken by teachers and focused on observation, analysis, and potential changes of one’s own teaching represents one means by which teachers can reconsider their assumptions and practices and enhance teacher professionalism” (p. 42).

With all the changes in the language teaching field, it is now well recognized that teaching is a complex process which cannot be explained as transmitting the required knowledge; and that learning cannot be established by passively trying to receive the instruction. There are many factors which need to be taken into account during teaching and learning processes among which are teacher and student beliefs

about language learning and teaching, teachers' and learners' prior experiences, different learner needs, the context in which teaching and learning take place, various teacher and learner roles, and learners' different learning styles. As this is the case, language teacher education and development programs need to consider the complexity of teaching and provide teachers with the essential education and development opportunities so that teachers can create the optimal learning environments for their students. Teacher professional development is a process which starts during the teacher education programs and never ends. For this to be attained, there is a need for the universities, schools, professional development experts, and teachers to collaborate in teachers' demanding development journeys.



CHAPTER III

3. METHODOLOGY

This chapter provides a detailed description of the research methodology procedure, and is comprised of seven sections. In the first section, the context of the study is delivered. The second section provides a comprehensive explanation of the selected research design as well as why it was selected. In the third section, the participants are presented. The fourth section delivers the data collection instruments and explains why these instruments were employed. In the fifth section, the data analysis process is presented. The sixth section clarifies the procedure of the study. In the last section, trustworthiness of the study is discussed.

3.1. Context of the Study

This study was conducted with the participation of 36 English language teachers from different parts of Turkey. Turkey is one of the countries in which English is taught as a foreign language. There are many teacher education faculties in various universities whose aim is to prepare prospective teachers for their professions. Turkey has undergone many changes in its teacher education policies to keep up with the reforms that take place in different parts of the world, especially in the European Union countries. However, in Turkey, being employed as a teacher is not a right given only to the ones who are graduates of a teacher education program; that is, the ones who finish Department of English Language and Literature, Department of Translation and Interpreting, and Department of English Linguistics can also be employed as teachers after being trained in a pedagogical formation program for relatively a short period of time. As the researcher of this study, I did not do any differentiation between the participants according to the program they had graduated from. The study had no purpose of generalizing the data collected from those 36 participants who work in different institutions in various cities in Turkey.

3.2. Research Design

It is acknowledged in the literature that quantitative research held domination over qualitative research from the late 19th century until the mid-20th century. However,

there has been a growing interest in qualitative research since the second half of the 20th century (Creswell, 2013). In the literature, the distinction between qualitative and quantitative research is stated with regard to using words or numbers, or using open-ended or close-ended questions. However, Creswell (2013) handles the distinction more thoroughly by highlighting that the differences between qualitative and quantitative research are grounded in “the basic philosophical assumptions researchers bring to the study, the types of research studies used in the research (e.g. quantitative experiments or qualitative case studies), and the specific methods employed in conducting these strategies (e.g. collecting data quantitatively on instruments versus collecting qualitative data through observing a setting)” (p. 4). According to these factors, he defines qualitative research as follows:

Qualitative research is an approach for exploring and understanding the meaning individuals or groups ascribe to a social or human problem. The process of research involves emerging questions and procedures, data typically collected in the participant’s setting, data analysis inductively building from particulars to general themes, and the researcher making interpretations of the meaning of the data. The final written report has a flexible structure. Those who engage in this form of inquiry support a way of looking at research that honors an inductive style, a focus on individual meaning, and the importance of rendering the complexity of a situation (p. 4).

In this sense, qualitative research focuses on gaining insight and exploring the depth and complexity in the phenomenon through inductive reasoning and interpretation. Qualitative research does not intend to make generalizations with the findings; it acknowledges that the individuals’ lived experiences are unique. Denzin and Lincoln (2005) explain qualitative research as follows:

Qualitative research is a situated activity that locates the observer in the world. It consists of a set of interpretive, material practices that make the world visible. These practices transform the world. They turn the world into a series of representations, including field notes, interviews, conversations, photographs, recordings, and memos to the self. At this level, qualitative research involves an interpretive, naturalistic approach to the world. This means that qualitative

researchers study things in their natural settings, attempting to make sense of, or interpret, phenomena in terms of the meanings people bring to them (p. 3).

Creswell (2013) argues that the choice of qualitative or quantitative research is dependent on the different worldviews. For example, qualitative research is highly based on the constructivist or social constructivist worldview which holds the idea that “individuals develop subjective meanings of their experiences – meanings directed toward certain objects or things” (Creswell, 2013, p. 8). With these various and divergent meanings, the researcher focuses on the “complexity of views rather than narrowing meanings into a few categories or ideas” (p. 8). Thus, the participants’ views of the situation in question become the core of the research. The researcher interacts with the participants through open-ended questions so that they can construct the meaning of a situation. The researcher also pays attention to the participants’ specific contexts so that he or she can understand the participants’ cultural and historical settings which shape the meanings they have about the situation being studied. Instead of beginning with a theory, the researchers “generate or inductively develop a theory or pattern of meaning” (p. 8). The researcher also acknowledges that his or her interpretation is influenced by his or her background and lived experiences (Creswell, 2013).

Bearing all these characteristics of the qualitative research in mind, I intended to conduct a qualitative descriptive research in order to inquire about and describe the participants’ views with regard to their professional development experiences and how these experiences affected their profession. As stated by Knupfer and McLellan (1996), descriptive research is primarily interested in exploring and telling “what is” (p. 1196), so the researcher who is conducting this kind of research aims to collect as much data as he or she can in order that his or her study can offer “a comprehensive summary of an event in the everyday terms of these events” (Sandelowski, 2000, p. 336). In a qualitative descriptive research, the variables are not pre-selected or manipulated. As the researcher aims to discover “the who, what, and where of events or experiences, or their basic nature and shape”, he or she might choose open-ended interviews or observations as data collection instruments (Sandelowski, 2000, p. 338). Since I, as the researcher of this study, aimed to shed light on the meanings that the participants attach to their professional development experiences, I chose to describe these meanings through in-depth inquiry by implementing an open-ended questionnaire, which was

followed by semi-structured interviews. Another reason for selecting descriptive research is that, as stated above, there is no manipulation in the nature of descriptive research. As I did not want to have any control or effect on the participants, I selected descriptive research design to observe the phenomenon in an unchanged natural setting.

There are three basic types of descriptive research methods, which are observational method; case study method; and survey method. After gaining insights into these methods, I determined that the case study method would best fit to this study as it comprises an intensive study of an individual or a group of individuals. Gall, Borg, and Gall (1996) describes case study as “the in-depth study of instances of a phenomenon in its natural context and from the perspective of the participants involved in the phenomenon” (p. 436). In this study, the phenomenon of interest, in broad terms, was how the participants perceive their professional development experiences, since the main goal of a case study is to develop an understanding of a phenomenon that is experienced by the participants.

Considering all these, it is possible to state that this study followed a qualitative descriptive research design with a case study method since the focus of inquiry in this study was to uncover and describe language teachers’ perceptions with regard to their professional development experiences, how these experiences affected their profession, and their views about the possible effect of post graduate programs on teaching. As such an inquiry entails in-depth questioning of the participants, two data collection instruments were utilized, which were open-ended questionnaires and semi-structured interviews.

3.3. Participants and Sampling

In research studies, it is usually not possible to investigate the whole population of individuals whom the researcher is interested in. This makes sampling an important process in the research studies as the researcher aims to collect qualified data from the targeted participants. This study utilized two sampling methods at two phases. In the first phase, aim of which was to get some general information about teachers’ views on professional development, volunteer sampling was employed. Various EFL teachers from different parts of Turkey were asked if they would like to take part in the study. Twenty-one teachers stated they would like to volunteer. I also asked my colleagues at Cumhuriyet University in the School of Foreign Languages, English Language and

Literature Department and English Language Teaching Department if they would like to volunteer for the study. Fifteen participants from this university wanted to take part in the study. The total number of the participants was 36 EFL teachers from 17 cities.

As for the institution they work for, out of 36 participants, four of them work in primary schools; six of them work in secondary schools; nine of them work in high schools; and 17 of the participants work at universities. As with the gender of the participants, out of 36 participants, 14 of them are males, and 22 are females.

Table 6. Institutions the Participants Work for

Institution Type	Number of the Participants	Percentage (%)
Primary School	4	11
Secondary School	6	16
High School	9	25
University	17	47
Total	36	100

Table 7. Gender Ratio of the Participants

Gender	Number of the Participants	Percentage (%)
Female	22	61
Male	14	39
Total	36	100

Regarding the teaching experience of the participants, it varies from a year to 23 years. As Table 8 shows, out of 36 teachers, 12 of them have 1-5 years of experience; nine of them have 6-10 years of teaching experience; four of the teachers have 11-15 years of experience; seven of them have 16-20 years of experience; and four of the teachers have 21-23 years of teaching experience.

Table 8. Teaching Experience of the Participants

Years of Teaching Experience	Number of the Participants	Percentage (%)
1-5 years	12	33
6-10 years	9	25
11-15 years	4	11
16-20 years	7	20
21-23 years	4	11
Total	36	100

As for the education level of the participants, five of the participants are at the dissertation stage in MA programs; four of them have a Master's degree; three of them are at the dissertation stage in PhD programs; and six of them have a PhD degree. The remaining 18 teachers have a Bachelor degree. This means half of the participants have pursued post graduate education.

In the second phase, aim of which was to get in-depth information about specifically the views of the participants who have pursued a post graduate education, criterion and convenient sampling were employed. Four of the participants who meet this criterion were purposefully selected as cases since I wanted to explore the views of them as to whether the post graduate programs could be considered as professional development activities, and if they have had any impact on their teaching activities as well as their perspectives and/or attitudes towards teaching and learning. The first case is an EFL teacher in a high school in Adana who has 14 years of teaching experience. She is at the dissertation stage in an MA program in ELT at Çağ University. The second, the third, and the fourth cases are all instructors in School of Foreign Languages at Cumhuriyet University. The second case who has been teaching English for 10 years has a Master's degree in ELT. The third case is at the dissertation stage in a PhD program in ELT with seven years of teaching experience. The fourth case has a PhD degree in ELT who has been teaching English for 12 years. Due to convenience and practicality, three of the cases were chosen from among the researcher's colleagues. Table 9 illustrates the demographic information of the cases.

Table 9. Demographic Information of the Cases

Cases	Institution	Years of Teaching Experience	Education Level
Case 1	High School	14	Dissertation stage in an MA program (ELT)
Case 2	University	10	MA degree (ELT)
Case 3	University	7	Dissertation stage in a PhD program (ELT)
Case 4	University	12	PhD degree (ELT)

3.4. Data Collection Instruments

Since the main focus of the qualitative descriptive studies is to disclose and describe the meaning that the participants form through their experiences related to a phenomenon from their own point of view without any influence by the researcher, open-ended questionnaires and in-depth interviews were selected as data collection instruments.

In the first phase of the study, I aimed to reach as many participants as possible from different geographic areas and institutions to inquire about their perceptions of the professional development experiences, and how these experiences affected their profession. Due to the facts that the open-ended questionnaires do not require the researcher to visit the participants in their settings as they could be e-mailed, and that they provide in-depth descriptive information about the phenomenon in question, I selected open-ended questionnaires as the first data collection instrument. Open-ended questionnaires in nature do not restrict the respondents to the offered alternatives; they rather allow them to express their views freely without being influenced by the researcher. As well as being more likely to provide rich and diversified data, they also tend to prevent bias, which might impair the quality of the data. However, the most probable problematic issue about the e-mailed open-ended questionnaires is the possibility that the participants might not thoroughly comprehend the intended question, and thus give inappropriate or too broad answers. In order to avoid this, as the researcher of this study, I tried to prepare the questionnaire as explicitly as possible and

also it was clearly stated in the consent form that participants could contact me for further clarifications. The questionnaire consisted of questions such as how the participants define an effective teacher and professional development; what types of professional development activities they have been involved in, and if these activities have affected their profession; what areas they feel in need of improvement, and how they would like to improve themselves in these areas; and their views regarding whether post graduate programs have any impact in language teachers' profession (See Appendix A).

The second data collection instrument was selected as semi-structured and face-to-face interviews with the four cases who have pursued post graduate education. Interviews are widely used in qualitative research studies to explore the participants' perspectives about a phenomenon. It is broadly acknowledged that interviews provide in-depth and comprehensive information as they yield access to the participants' worlds. Face-to-face interaction ensures the avoidance of possible misunderstandings or confusions as the researcher can intervene whenever needed in order to make the questions more explicit. Just like open-ended questionnaires, interviews allow participants to freely express their feelings, experiences, and views without limiting them to fixed options. Thus, they help the researcher apprehend how participants interpret events and experiences. Among the three types of interviews regarding the structure, semi-structured interview was employed in this study. In the semi-structured interviews, the questions are predetermined, but the order of the questions can be adjusted according to the interviewees' responds. If needed, further explanations can be given, and additional follow-up questions might be asked in order to help the interviewees clarify their answers. Semi-structured interviews are usually known to best suit the exploration of participants' views, beliefs, and attitudes towards a phenomenon. They also ensure getting all of the questions answered as well as providing a flexible environment for the interviewees. The interview questions in this study were almost the same as the questions in the open-ended questionnaires except for the follow-up questions (See Appendix B).

3.5. Data Analysis

As mentioned earlier in this chapter, two data collection instruments were employed in this study. For all the data gathered through these instruments, content

analysis was applied. Patton (2002) argues that as each qualitative inquiry is different from another, there is no specific single way to analyse the qualitative data. Given the fact that content analysis is used to interpret communication in written texts or transcriptions to examine how the participants attach meanings to a particular phenomenon, I, as the researcher of this study, concluded that content analysis would best fit into this study since I aimed to gain insights into EFL teachers' perceptions regarding their professional development experiences, their professional development needs as well as their views about the effects of postgraduate education on their profession.

The data obtained from the first data collection instrument which consisted of 36 open-ended questionnaires was coded and categorized by the researcher and two colleagues, one of whom has a doctorate degree, and the other is at the dissertation stage in a Master's program, both of whom are competent in content analysis. The second data collection instrument consisted of semi-structured interviews with four of the participants who were purposefully chosen since they met the criterion, which was pursuing a postgraduate education. The data gathered through these interviews was first transcribed word by word, and then coded and categorized with the help of the same two colleagues. For the purpose of validating the qualitative results of the semi-structured interviews, member check (Lincoln & Guba, 1985) was utilized; that is, after the data was analysed, the participants were asked to read the analysis and check if it matched with the idea they meant to convey.

3.6. Procedure of the Study

Having completed the relevant literature review, I decided on the data collection instruments that would best fit into this current study. Since I first aimed to gather general information about EFL teachers' views regarding their professional development experiences, I decided to apply an open-ended questionnaire as the first data collection instrument. Having developed the questionnaire items based on the research questions, for the piloting purpose I asked a colleague who has a PhD degree in the relevant field to check the questionnaire so as to make sure that it fit the aim of this study and to ensure if the questionnaire items were explicit enough. After getting feedback from him and making necessary changes in the questionnaire, I posted a message on a social networking site in February, 2017, which asked for volunteers to

participate in this study. At first only a few returned to my post, so I kept posting the same message many times. As a result of this endeavour, 21 EFL teachers from 16 different cities in Turkey volunteered for the study, and they were immediately e-mailed the open-ended questionnaire which consisted of six questions, and the aim of which were gaining insights into the participants' views regarding their professional development experiences; their perceived need areas; and the possible effects of postgraduate education on language teachers' attitudes as well as their profession. In the consent form, which provided general information about the study along with the aim of the study, they were asked to be as straightforward as they could be, and were encouraged to feel free to answer the questions in Turkish and also to contact me if needed for further clarification (See Appendix A). Meanwhile, I asked my colleagues in School of Foreign Languages, English Language and Literature Department, and English Language Teaching Department at Cumhuriyet University if they would like to participate in this study. 15 of them who stated they would like to volunteer were handed in the questionnaire. Gathering the data from all these 36 participants took almost three weeks, after which I proceeded with the word-for-word translation of the ones which were in Turkish before I started to analyse the received data. As mentioned in the previous section, content analysis was utilized to analyse the data. For the credibility of the study, two colleagues, one of whom has a PhD degree in the field, and the other who is at the dissertation stage in a Master's program in the field were asked for assistance in the coding and categorizing processes. We had several meetings before we arrived at a consensus, after which I started to interpret the data. The interpretation process lasted more than a month given the fact that handling the qualitative data of 36 participants could be quite demanding.

Having completed analysing the data obtained from the open-ended questionnaires, I aimed to explore the views of four participants with an involvement in a postgraduate program regarding their professional development experiences; specific need areas; and the effects of postgraduate education on their profession as well as their perceptions and attitudes towards teaching. Thus, I employed criterion and convenient sampling and chose three of the participants from my institution and one from my classmates in the Master's program as my cases. As mentioned earlier, the interview questions were almost the same as the ones in the open-ended questionnaire with the exceptions of follow-up and clarification questions. The audio-recordings of the three interviews, which took three weekdays, were made in my office during the office hours.

As for the fourth interview, I had to travel to Adana for the weekend. Each of the interviews lasted about 20 minutes. In order to get the participants to freely express themselves, the interviews were held in their native language. After gathering the data, it was translated and transcribed by me word by word without any interference to avoid bias, which took about a week. The same procedure mentioned in the analysis of the first instrument was followed during the analysis process of interviews; that is, two colleagues who are competent in the field provided assistance for coding and categorizing the data. During this process, we had three meetings before we reached a consensus. Before the interpretation process, member check was utilized and the interviewees were asked to check the codes so as to make sure that we had the correct idea that they meant to convey. After all the four participants confirmed the data analysis, I proceeded with the interpretation of the data, which took about three weeks.

All the excerpts cited in this study revealed no personal identification of the participants in order for the confidentiality of the personal information and also to ensure anonymity. In the data analysis procedure of the two instruments, other than the contribution of the two knowledgeable colleagues in the field, the findings were checked by the thesis supervisor to see if they were compatible.

3.7. Trustworthiness

There is no doubt that trustworthiness is of utmost importance in all research studies. Since the aim of the qualitative inquiry is to gain in-depth knowledge of beliefs, attitudes, and perceptions as well as meaning that a person attaches to the world, it does not accept one single truth for everyone. The truth is unique to that person in his or her own context, and it is not static, fixed or objective. Qualitative inquiry also does not start out with a hypothesis to be tested and verified. Thus, ensuring the reliability of a qualitative study differs from that of a quantitative study. However, these differences might lead to concerns, especially among the ones who are not much familiar with qualitative research, about the validity and reliability of a qualitative study with the claims that it may be researcher biased, cannot be generalized, and the data may be unreliable with the supposition that participants might not reveal the truth. It is also expected that when the study is replicated, the results need to be the same. Nevertheless, there are guidelines and strategies in the literature to strengthen the trustworthiness of a qualitative study. Lincoln and Guba (1985) refer to them as credibility, dependability,

and transferability as a substitution for internal validity, reliability, and external validity in quantitative research.

Credibility refers to how the findings are accordant with the reality. Since, as mentioned above, there is no single reality in qualitative study, it is almost impossible to check the reality in qualitative inquiry. Instead of checking the reality, triangulation can be used which Denzin (1978) refers to as utilizing various methods, various sources of data, various investigators, and various theories to verify findings. In order for the triangulation of this study, regarding the use of various methods of data collection, two different data collection instruments; open-ended questionnaires and semi-structured interviews, were employed. As for the use of various sources of data, in the first instrument, volunteer sampling was employed to ensure the participation of EFL teachers from different parts of Turkey probably with different perspectives and experiences. With regard to investigator triangulation, the data was analysed with the collaboration of a team consisted of three persons including the researcher. Other than the strategies for triangulation, member check was employed in order to avoid any possible misinterpretation, which is another strategy to strengthen credibility.

Dependability is the criterion which seeks for the same results if the study is replicated. However, it is another problematic issue in qualitative research considering the human factor which is dynamic and ever-changing. The perceptions and behaviours of the humans might change with new experiences which lead to a new understanding of the world or a particular phenomenon. Thus, even the study is replicated with the same population, it would not be possible to get the same findings. However, as Merriam (2009) states, this does not make the qualitative study in question an unreliable one. In this sense, for the dependability of a qualitative study, instead of seeking for the same results, the consistency of the results with the data is checked. As for the dependability of this current study, triangulation, audit trail, and peer examination were employed. Triangulation was explained in the previous paragraph. As for peer examination, the consistency of the findings with the results was checked and confirmed by the thesis supervisor. With regard to the audit trail, the procedures of the sampling, data collection instruments, and data analysis were provided in detail as well as necessary information about the participants.

Transferability refers to the generalizability of the results. Since the aim of the researcher in a qualitative inquiry is to gain an in-depth understanding of a particular phenomenon with a purposeful sampling, the generalizability of the results is not

perceived as it is in quantitative inquiry. The underlying assumption of generalization in a qualitative study, as Merriam (2009) asserts, is the idea that particularity leads to generalization; that is, the results of a study might bring insights into a particular phenomenon, which can be transferred to similar situations. In order to achieve this, the researcher needs to provide a detailed description of the setting and participants, which were also taken into consideration in this current study. Another strategy employed to ensure transferability was maximum variation. For especially the sampling of the first instrument, open-ended questionnaire, in order to maintain heterogeneity and diversity, volunteer sampling was employed which resulted in many participants from both genders, with different backgrounds, different years of experience, from various institutions in different parts of Turkey. In addition to this, the excerpts taken from the data were not interfered or changed so as not to contaminate the data.

CHAPTER 4

4. FINDINGS

This chapter presents the findings of this study guided by the research questions. The findings of the two instruments employed in this study, which are open-ended questionnaires and semi-structured interviews, are discussed under six main titles including the introduction.

4.1. Introduction

Before presenting the findings of open-ended questionnaires and semi-structured interviews based on the research questions, it would be appropriate to specify the kinds of professional development activities and programs the participants had been involved in so as to have a deeper understanding of their perceptions about their professional development experiences. Thirty-six participants who answered the open-ended questionnaire mentioned various programs or activities which are shown in Table 10.

Table 10. Professional Development Programs or Activities Practitioners Have Been Involved In

Professional Development Programs or Activities Practitioners Have Been Involved In		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · attending in-service training programs (seminars, workshops) · attending conferences and symposiums at universities · pursuing postgraduate education · reading books, journals, and articles relevant to the field 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · writing and presenting a paper in a conference · watching videos relevant to the field on the Internet · self-monitoring · attending initial teacher training 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · collaboration with colleagues · doing action research · attending EU projects

Other than the three practitioners who pointed out that they had not been involved in any professional development programs or activities, 33 practitioners mentioned numerous activities. The data showed that attending in-service training programs seems to be one of the major means of professional development as mentioned by 23 practitioners. Nine practitioners, eight of whom have pursued postgraduate education, stated that they attended conferences and symposiums held by universities while seven expressed they had pursued postgraduate education. Another six, all of whom have pursued postgraduate education, remarked that they developed themselves by reading books, journals, and articles relevant to the field while three practitioners with a postgraduate degree stated that they wrote articles in the field and presented them in conferences. Watching educational videos relevant to the field on the Internet was mentioned by two practitioners with a postgraduate degree. The following excerpt would illustrate this issue:

- I did MA and PhD in ELT. I attended conferences, seminars and symposia.

Individual activities: I always read books, especially in research methodology. I watch training videos of different sorts (both research and teaching related). I also write articles and present them in conferences.

Self-monitoring, which would give a teacher the insights into self-evaluating himself or herself, was another professional development activity mentioned by two practitioners, both of whom have pursued postgraduate education. Two practitioners, both of whom have pursued postgraduate education, specified collaboration with colleagues in postgraduate programs as a professional development activity. One practitioner, who is at the dissertation stage in a Master's program, explained that she conducted action research occasionally. The following excerpt would illustrate this issue:

-Other than the in-service training programs of MoNE, I have attended a conference on ELT. I also conduct self-monitoring and action research from time to time. We usually share experiences and ideas with colleagues, especially with the ones in my MA class, and also I am doing MA on ELT.

One practitioner with a PhD degree stated that she had participated in EU projects to learn more about how language teaching was handled in EU countries as the following excerpt would show:

-Other than attending seminars and conferences and presenting papers in some of them both in Turkey and abroad, I also took part in some EU projects and had the chance to learn about the language teaching in other countries.

Another two pointed out they had attended initial teacher training to gain the necessary qualifications for being a teacher as the following excerpt would depict:

-I attended initial teacher training since I am a graduate of English Language and Literature Department.

The findings of the in-depth interviews with four practitioners who have pursued postgraduate education revealed similar results. They all referred to postgraduate education as a professional development activity. In addition to this, three of them stated attending conferences and reading articles about recent studies in the field were among the professional development activities they had benefited from. Three of them mentioned that they had done research and presented a paper in a conference. The following excerpt would depict this issue:

-The first and most important one is my postgraduate education, especially the MA program. I benefited from my postgraduate programs a lot. I learned there is no limit to learning. There are always new things to learn. I also attended workshops and conferences. I read articles about recent studies in the field. I also do research and present papers in some conferences.

Two practitioners also mentioned that they did action research from time to time to solve some problematic issues in the class. One practitioner, who works in a high school, also mentioned she had attended in-service training programs while another one expressed that he thought self-monitoring was among these activities as the following excerpts would depict:

-Other than attending in-service training and doing MA on ELT, I attend conferences whenever I can. I also conduct action research when I feel the need for solving a problem.

-I sometimes do self-monitoring, which I learned at my MA education. It helps to see my weaknesses.

It can be asserted that while the professional development activities of the practitioners who have not pursued postgraduate education are mostly restricted to in-service training, the ones who have attended postgraduate programs have various activities among their professional development experiences.

4.2. Definition of an Effective Teacher

The practitioners were asked two interconnected questions in the first question of the questionnaire. The first one inquired about the EFL teachers' views regarding the definition of an effective teacher, and also why they thought so. The second one looked into teachers' perceptions regarding whether they thought they were effective teachers with reasons why they thought so. Four main categories emerged from the analysis: *knowledge of the field, skills, personal traits and virtues, and professional development.*



Figure 2. EFL Teachers' Views regarding the Definition of an Effective Teacher

4.2.1. Knowledge of the Field

This category specifically implies the specialized and in-depth knowledge of the field. As can be seen in Figure 2, two sub-categories emerged under this category, which are *subject and methodology knowledge, and pedagogical knowledge*.

4.2.1.1. Subject and Methodology Knowledge

Out of 36 EFL teachers, nine of them emphasized that an effective teacher needed to have sufficient content knowledge as well as a command of methods, techniques and approaches. The following excerpts illustrate this issue:

- *He/she has extensive knowledge of the subject that he/she teaches. It is not because he will transfer this knowledge to students. It is rather because extensive knowledge of the subject makes a teacher more self-confident.*
- *An effective teacher should have a good command of English, and also knowing the approaches and techniques in language teaching is of utmost importance.*

As for the findings of the interviews, two of them stated that an effective teacher needed to have subject and methodology knowledge adding that it would not be sufficient without knowing how to implement them in different contexts as well as being aware of all the factors that affect learning and teaching processes as the following excerpt would show:

- *I think an effective teacher first needs to have subject and methodology knowledge. But, this is not enough. This is just the first step. He or she needs to know how to teach a particular subject to a particular group of students with a particular method or technique. Of course, he or she should know teaching and learning are complex processes which are affected by many factors.*

4.2.1.2. Pedagogical Knowledge

As for the pedagogical knowledge that an effective teacher needs to embody, 18 of the participants stated different aspects of pedagogical knowledge as Table 11 shows.

Table 11. Pedagogical Knowledge Themes

Pedagogical Knowledge	
· caring for students' needs & interests, and considering their levels	· promoting both intellectual & moral development
· valuing each student's personality, feelings, and emotions	· creating a positive and effective learning environment
· getting students' respect, attention, and trust	· avoiding boredom & monotony; making lessons interesting & enjoyable
· knowing students well; reaching and understanding each student	· knowing the factors in students' learning process

The data revealed that caring for students' needs and interests and considering their levels was the most frequently mentioned aspect of this category as brought up by eight practitioners. Five practitioners emphasized the need for valuing each of the student's personality, feelings, and emotions while four drew attention to the importance of getting students' respect, attention, and trust. Knowing students well, and reaching and understanding each of them was another aspect put forward by three practitioners. As stated by three of the practitioners, being an effective teacher does not only entail effective and efficient instruction; promoting their intellectual and moral development and shaping their behaviours are also of great importance. Two practitioners stressed that an effective teacher needed to create a positive and effective learning environment while another two stated that making lessons interesting and enjoyable to avoid boredom and monotony in the class was a requirement for an effective teacher. One practitioner put forward that knowing which factors played a role in students' learning process was another important feature of an effective teacher. It can be asserted that according to these practitioners, being an effective teacher is closely related with knowing the students well, accepting them as individuals rather than only a class as a whole, and caring for their emotions, needs, and interests. According to these participants, if a teacher cares for each individual student, it is most probable that he or she can get students' respect, trust, and attention, and consequently can create a positive learning environment, which in turn might lead to effective outcomes. The following

excerpts would illustrate the participants' views regarding the need for pedagogical knowledge in order to be an effective teacher:

- *An effective teacher does not only care about learners' academic success. He/she also takes account of learners' feelings -senses.*
- *I believe I am an effective teacher because I always consider my students' needs and levels, and I try to attract their attention to the lesson. Whenever I feel that my students are bored, I try to do different activities to make the lesson enjoyable and interesting.*

As for the findings of the in-depth interviews, three practitioners asserted that an effective teacher needed to care for students' needs and interests, consider their levels, and value each student's personality, emotions and feelings. Avoiding boredom and monotony by making lessons more interesting and enjoyable was mentioned by three of them while two practitioners expressed the need for getting students' attention and respect. The following excerpt would illustrate this issue:

- *An effective teacher should not view the students as just a group ready to take what you give them. They are not robots; they are human beings who have different personalities, emotions, feelings and interests. You need to show them that you care for them. You also have to get their attention so that they can be involved in the lesson. For example, before starting a lesson, I try to talk about their interests like music, movies, or social media. When they see you care about these, they like you and pay more attention to your lesson.*

4.2.2. Skills

The second category that emerged from the two interrelated questions in the first question was *skills*. This category involves the sum of the skills an effective teacher needs to have according to the participants' views. The analysis of the data revealed that the participants viewed an effective teacher as the one who has various skills. As shown in Figure 2, four sub-categories emerged under this category, which are *communication skills*, *assessment skills*, *material use skills*, and *teaching skills* under which two other sub-categories, *preparation for class* and *teacher role* emerged.

4.2.2.1. Teaching Skills

The data collected from 36 practitioners revealed that there seems to be a consensus among them that an effective teacher needs to have various teaching skills as 28 of them mentioned numerous aspects of this category as shown in Table 12.

Table 12. Teaching Skills Themes

Teaching Skills	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · using various methods, techniques taking into consideration the different learning styles, interests, needs and motivation as well as different personalities and levels of students · promoting active involvement of students, student-centred class · promoting autonomy and life-long learning · trying new things, creative methods like games; various activities · setting learning goals for students · making learning easy, even the most difficult subjects · involving students in planning and decision making 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · providing sufficient and clear input · sharing new knowledge in the field · encouraging risk taking · having good presentation skills · having class management skills · promoting creative thinking · providing review with homework
Preparation for Class	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · planning ahead · being organized 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · adapting curriculum to students' levels/needs · being ready for unexpected things
Teacher Role	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · leader · coordinator · guide · motivator · observer · organiser · listener 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · collaborator · counsellor · supervisor · gatekeeper · role model as a learner · promoter · interpreter

According to the practitioners who stated the need for teaching skills, the most prominent aspect seemed to be using various methods and techniques taking into consideration the different learning styles, interests, needs, and motivation levels as well as different personalities and levels of students as emphasized by 10 of them. These practitioners seem to be aware of the fact that being a teacher is not solely based on instruction, and that an effective teacher first needs to acknowledge the diversity of students which means each student in a class has a different personality, different needs, motivation levels, learning styles, and different levels. This makes it essential for him or her to use various methods and techniques during instruction to ensure reaching each one in a class. The following excerpts would illustrate this issue:

- *An effective teacher is someone who acknowledges the individual differences between his/her students and organizes the lessons by taking these differences into consideration.*
- *An effective teacher is the one who is aware of the differences between individual learners and their needs and who knows how to teach them what they want to know in an ideal learning environment.*

Another aspect brought up by eight of the practitioners was the priority of student-centred class which entails the active involvement of students. These practitioners seem to disregard the old conventions which perceived students as passive recipients of knowledge, and to favour contemporary perception which entails the idea that students need to be in the centre of their own learning process. Thus, according to these practitioners, to ensure the input result in positive and effective outcome, it is necessary for an effective teacher to step back and encourage the students to actively take part in class. The following excerpts would depict this issue:

- *Modern education concept is student-centred and students should take part actively in learning progression.*
- *I think I am an effective teacher because I always try to involve my students in every activity. I try to establish a student-centred class; in this way, they learn the subject faster and more effectively.*

As stated by four of the practitioners, another important issue was promoting autonomy and lifelong learning. It seems that, according to these practitioners, teaching is not spoon-feeding the students, and giving them the impression that teacher is the only source of knowledge without whom they cannot achieve learning, but rather guiding them to take the authority of learning by teaching them how to reach the knowledge and learn on their own, and thus leading them to benefit from any source of knowledge in and out of the classroom, which ultimately facilitates autonomy and lifelong learning. The following excerpts would illustrate this issue:

- *In my opinion, a teacher is successful to the degree he/she can teach students how to learn by themselves, because learning is a lifelong process that cannot be maintained only at schools with teachers always ready.*
- *I lay great emphasis on autonomy in my classes and my aim is to have autonomous learners under the hashtag of lifelong learners. I also focus on their learning process; how each individual student learns. That's why I think I am an effective teacher.*

Three of the practitioners stated that an effective teacher needed to use various activities to ensure intake, and should not refrain from trying new things and creative methods like games, which probably would open a new window into the learning process and also prevent boredom. Another two emphasized the need for setting learning goals for their students, which might make the learning process more concrete and visible to the students. Two practitioners asserted that an effective teacher was the one who would make learning easy, even the most difficult subjects since if students view it as something difficult, this might result in lack of motivation and eagerness, and also a considerable amount of anxiety. The following excerpts would illustrate this issue:

- *She must try new things like creative games to appeal students' curiosity to the lesson.*
- *An effective teacher is a supervisor who makes the most difficult topics easier to understand.*
- *An effective teacher sets learning goals for his/her students.*

Another aspect was involving students in planning and decision making stated by two practitioners. It can be asserted that these practitioners believe this would give the impression to the students that they have a voice in the classroom, and that teacher is not the absolute authority. In this way, students would be able to make preferences, which might in turn lead to better student outcome. The following excerpt would depict this issue:

- I try to do what they want to do in class if they are logical. Sometimes we learn and sometimes we enjoy. They can tell me their wishes freely. There is democracy in our class. We decide together. So I think I am generally a good teacher.

One of the practitioners pointed out that an effective teacher needed to provide sufficient and clear input, while another stated the necessity for sharing new knowledge in the field to make the instruction up-to-date. Another one of the practitioners emphasized the requirement for encouraging students to take risks as she believed making mistakes while learning was a normal state which would lead students to effective learning. Having good presentation skills was another aspect brought up by one of the practitioners who explained that an effective teacher needed to make his or her lessons interesting and attention-grabbing through good presentation skills. One practitioner emphasized the importance of class management skills while another drew attention to promoting creative thinking. Still another practitioner stated that he provided review with homework to enable retention. The following excerpts would illustrate the mentioned issues:

- An effective teacher is the one who provides the students with enough and clear input. He or she also should have good presentation skills.*
- After most of the classes, I give short but helpful homework that can make the students revisit the subject of that day.*

As for the sub-categories of *teaching skills*, one of them was *preparation for class* which was mentioned by eight practitioners. According to these practitioners, an effective teacher is the one who plans ahead; adapts the curriculum to the students'

levels and needs; and is organized and ready for unexpected things as the following excerpts would illustrate:

- *An effective teacher always plans ahead to prevent chaos during instruction and is fully aware of what comes next during the instructional flow in the classroom.*
- *An effective teacher is the one who can adapt the curriculum to the levels and needs of his/her students.*
- *I think I am an effective teacher because I always plan ahead; I know what and how I am going to teach the other day.*

The other sub-category of *teaching skills* emerged as *teacher role*. Half of the participants stated numerous teacher roles, which are teacher as a leader, a collaborator, a coordinator, a counsellor, a guide, a supervisor, a motivator, a gatekeeper, an observer, and a role-model as a learner. As stated by six of them, an effective teacher's one of the fundamental roles seems to be a motivator followed by teacher as a guide which was emphasized by five practitioners. Four of them highlighted the importance of being a role model as a learner, which implies continuous and life-long learning while another two gave priority to counselling. One of them specified teacher as an observer, which she explained as that an effective teacher needed to continuously observe the students, their learning process as well as himself or herself during instruction. It can be asserted that these practitioners view an effective teacher as someone who has various roles rather than just an instructor or transmitter role. The following excerpts would demonstrate this issue:

- *There is no limit to learning, and regardless of social or academic status, everyone needs to continuously learn, thus, an effective teacher needs to be role model for students in this respect.*
- *An effective teacher is the one who motivates and guides his/her students to learn and search.*

As for the results of the interviews, three practitioners stated that an effective teacher needed to take into consideration the different learning styles, interests, needs and motivation as well as different personalities and levels of students and organize the lesson accordingly by using various methods and techniques. Two of them specified

promoting autonomy and lifelong learning as a prominent feature of an effective teacher while one expressed the need for promoting creative thinking. Regarding the preparation for class, one practitioner stated that being organized and prepared for the class was of great importance to avoid chaos during class. The teacher roles mentioned by the four practitioners were teacher as a motivator, guide, observer and role model as a learner as the following excerpt would show:

- He or she must take into consideration the levels, needs, and interests of the students. I think the target group is very important, because every class is made up of different students with different needs, levels and interests. So, while instructing, he or she must take these into account. He or she also should guide the students to learn on their own. So, he or she should show the ways of learning to learn. For example, I advise them ways to do activities outside the classroom, so they can go on learning outside the class. Learning does not only happen in class. So when they do these activities, and when I see that they continue learning, I feel that I am effective. Also, an effective teacher should demonstrate them that learning never ends. For example, I often shared my experiences in my MA program with my students and tried to show them that I was continuing to learn. They should be aware that learning is not limited to school years.

4.2.2.2. Communication Skills

The second sub-category emerged under the *skills* category was *communication skills* which was emphasized by 15 practitioners. The data revealed three components of communication skills which are shown in Table 13.

Table 13. Communication Skills Themes

Communication Skills		
· having good interaction with students	· considering affective factors	· providing encouragement

Having good interaction and forming a friendly relationship with students seem to be a prerequisite feature of an effective teacher as stated by eight practitioners. They seem to believe that if a teacher can interact and communicate with his or her students well rather than being a distant and less communicative one, he or she can create a friendly learning environment. Another aspect of communication skills was considering the affective factors like motivation, attitude, and anxiety, which are considered as the predominant factors in learning by some scholars. To lower students' affective filter, six of the practitioners stressed the need for strong motivation. One of these practitioners emphasized that an effective teacher needed to relieve the students' anxiety by giving them the impression that making mistakes while learning is an inevitable path which leads to success in the end. As for providing encouragement, five of the practitioners stated that an important feature of an effective teacher was encouraging his or her students to learn, to search, and to be actively involved in their learning process. It seems that these practitioners do not view teaching or learning just as a give and take, but rather a complex process which involves various factors. Thus, it can be asserted that they believe an effective teacher is the one who lowers students' affective filters through motivation, good interaction, and encouragement. The following excerpts would illustrate this issue:

- *I believe that a teacher should communicate with students effectively in order to have a nice relationship with them. If the teacher has a smooth relationship with students in the class, students will feel free to participate in class.*
- *An effective teacher should keep students' motivation and attention high.*
- *An effective teacher is the one who encourages his/her students to be active in class.*
- *I think I am an effective teacher. I can communicate well with my students. We have a good relationship. I think this is very important to be effective. I also try to instil them with the idea that they can achieve anything if they are eager and if they make an effort.*

With regard to the findings of the interviews, two practitioners emphasized the significance of providing encouragement while one asserted that having good interaction with students held a great necessity for better learning outcomes as the following excerpt would show:

- *He or she must identify the students and try to reach them by establishing a good communication. Teacher is a great factor in learning, if they don't like the teacher, they don't want to listen to the lecture. So, we must first have a good relationship with them. I can say that especially after my MA education, I pay more attention to forming a good relationship with my students.*

4.2.2.3. Assessment Skills

The third sub-category emerged under the *skills* category was *assessment skills* mentioned by 14 practitioners. These practitioners expressed various aspects of assessment skills which are shown in Table 14.

Table 14. Assessment Skills Themes

Assessment Skills	
· doing needs assessment	· providing valid assessment
· being fair and objective	· giving reinforcement
· giving feedback	· focusing on process as well as
· ensuring intake	product

Six of the practitioners stated that to be an effective teacher, there was a strong need for needs assessment so as to adjust the instruction accordingly, which they believed might result in efficient learning. As for assessing students' performances, four practitioners stated that a teacher needed to be fair and objective while one of them added the need for valid assessment, which is a measure of the extent of student learning. Another two emphasized that giving meaningful feedback was of utmost importance as it provides students an explanation of what they are doing is right or wrong by which they can stick to the things they are doing right and feel self-confident, and also can see their mistakes and try to abandon them. Another practitioner asserted that an effective teacher was the one who ensured learning had taken place while still another stated that students needed to be given reinforcement. Only one practitioner emphasized that product or outcome was not the priority while assessing the students and that process was also of great importance, which takes a significant place in formative assessment. The following excerpts would illustrate this issue:

- *An effective teacher should be able to assess his/her students' needs well.*
- *An effective teacher is fair and can provide valid and reliable assessment as well as meaningful feedback.*
- *I took alternative assessment course in my MA program, and now I give importance to process as much as product. I believe we should not assess them only by grades.*

With respect to the findings of the interviews, one practitioner stated that she always tried to ensure intake by evaluating if they had learned the subject since she cared whether they had stored the new knowledge as intake. Another practitioner stressed the importance of giving feedback since it would lead them to grasp what areas they needed to fix and strengthen. The following excerpt would depict this issue:

- *Before my MA education, I used to give direct feedback to my students. But after I learned that there are many types of feedback, I started to give the appropriate type of feedback considering the level of the students and the type of the activity. I think it helps students to understand their weaknesses, which in turn would lead them to focus on and fix them. So, I always give feedback to my students and guide them to see what they need to improve.*

4.2.2.4. Material Use Skills

The last sub-category was *material use skills* which emerged under *skills* category. The components of material use skills mentioned by seven practitioners are shown in Table 15.

Table 15. Material Use Skills Themes

Material Use Skills		
· efficient use of technology in class	· adapting materials to students' levels	· authentic materials

Four of the practitioners emphasized that an efficient teacher needed to adapt to innovations and utilize technological devices in class, which would probably make the instruction less text material dependent as well as being more appealing and attention-

grabbing. Four other practitioners stressed that adapting materials to students' levels was an important duty of an effective teacher to make the instruction more efficient. One practitioner emphasized the importance of using authentic materials, which would provide students with exposure to the real usage of the target language. The following excerpts depict this issue:

- *Everything is changing constantly, so an efficient teacher should adapt to innovations and be able to use the technological devices for his/her students' benefit.*
- *Only the text materials are not enough; an effective teacher should use authentic materials so that students can learn expressions that are used in real life.*
- *I try to adapt the materials to their levels and use appropriate materials for each class. I'm also open to learn how to use materials and especially visual aids effectively such as preparing effective PowerPoint slides, using Internet connection via YouTube or other online sources.*

As for the results of the interviews, all the four practitioners emphasized the need for the efficient use of technology in class. They stated that today's students were digital natives which would bring the necessity of using technology in class in order to attract their attention and avoid monotony in class as the following excerpt would illustrate:

- *There are many sources on the Internet to use in the classroom. For example, I use websites like moviesegmentstoassessgrammargoals.blogspot.com.tr. When you start a lesson with such an audio-visual aid like this, you get their attention immediately. It is also more effective than just telling them the rules of a grammar subject. I also use slights and smart board in my lessons.*

4.2.3. Personal Traits and Virtues

This category involves the personal traits and virtues an effective teacher needs to have based on the data. Sixteen of the practitioners mentioned different features of an effective teacher which are shown in Table 16.

Table 16. Personal Traits and Virtues

Personal Traits & Virtues			
· fond of teaching	· disciplined	· empathetic	· open to change & criticism
· flexible	· entertaining	· inspiring	· friendly
· patient	· helpful	· respectful	· self-confident
· creative	· open-minded	· enthusiastic	· experienced
· understanding	· optimistic	· good humoured	

As seen in Table 16, the practitioners who participated in this study view an efficient teacher as someone who has various personal traits and virtues. Being fond of teaching seems to be one of the most important features which was emphasized by five practitioners. They seem to believe that if a teacher does not love his or her profession, students and the school environment, it is less likely for him or her to be an effective teacher. Being flexible was another aspect brought up by four practitioners. Two practitioners viewed an effective teacher as a patient one while another two as creative. Being understanding also seems to be an important feature of an effective teacher which was mentioned by two practitioners. Two other practitioners stressed the need for being disciplined while another two highlighted that being entertaining was necessary to make the lesson more appealing. Two practitioners described an effective teacher as a helpful one who would assist his or her students in every aspect while another two expressed the importance of being open-minded. Two practitioners stated that they perceived an effective teacher as someone who is optimistic about his or her students' achievements. One practitioner stated that being friendly was crucial so as to create a positive learning environment. Other necessary features include being empathetic, inspiring, respectful, enthusiastic, good humoured, experienced, and self-confident. One practitioner also stressed the need for being open to change and criticism. The following excerpts would show the practitioners' views regarding the required features of an effective teacher:

- *Effective teacher is the one who is open minded, experienced, creative, and who enjoys teaching.*
- *As I have at least most of the necessary qualities that an effective teacher and I am open to change and criticism, I think that I am an effective teacher.*
- *I think I am flexible since I try to make them feel free in the class to express their opinions and take part in the class. I think that the more I get experience, the more I will feel effective.*

As for the results of the interviews, in addition to loving students, teaching, and the field, they stated that an effective teacher needs to be open to change, flexible, friendly, creative and entertaining. One practitioner also mentioned the need for respecting students as well as the profession as the following excerpt would illustrate:

- *There are lots of teachers in my institution who face burnout. They always complain about the students, the system etc. An effective teacher must love students, teaching, and his/her field. He/she should respect the students and the profession and do his/her job with all the requirements needed.*

4.2.4. Continuous Professional Development

The last category emerged out of the data was *continuous professional development* which was mentioned by 13 practitioners. These practitioners mentioned five aspects of continuous professional development, which are shown in Table 17.

Table 17. Continuous Professional Development Themes

Continuous Professional Development	
· life-long learning	· feeling part of an academic culture
· updating	· self-criticism
· following academic research	

The data revealed that six of the practitioners viewed an effective teacher as someone who is a life-long learner, which indicates that they probably believe there is no limit to learning. Another six stated that updating, which comprises acquiring new knowledge and skills, was a prominent feature of an effective teacher. Four practitioners

emphasized the importance of following academic research in the relevant field to learn about current trends and recent studies while two practitioners expressed the need for feeling part of an academic culture, which one of them explained as attending academic conferences, and the other as doing research. One practitioner stressed that an effective teacher needed to self-criticize himself or herself to be aware of his or her weaknesses so that he or she could fix them. It can be asserted that these practitioners believe that teaching is not a static but rather a dynamic process which necessitates a teacher to review; acquire new professional knowledge; and improve his or her professional skills to best meet the needs of the students, and that in a world where everything is constantly changing, it is not favourable for an effective teacher to rely on what he or she learned during his or her undergraduate education. It might well be asserted that these practitioners view professional development activities as an inseparable component of effective teaching. The following excerpts would illustrate this issue:

- *An effective teacher feels himself as a part of an academic culture in which learning and research are key skills (rather than teaching), and he/she continuously looks for better ways of teaching (and learning).*
- *An effective teacher continuously self-criticizes and updates to meet the requirements of the era.*
- *I keep up with the latest scientific studies relevant to teaching approaches and attend academic conferences for scientific collaborations.*

With regard to the findings of the in-depth interviews, the data revealed that all the four practitioners viewed an effective teacher as someone who is a lifelong learner, and who updates himself or herself continuously. They also mentioned the need for following academic research studies in the field as the following excerpt would illustrate:

- *An effective teacher does not feel content with the knowledge he or she learns at university. S/he continuously updates him/herself by following the studies in the field, because there are always changes and advances in the field. An effective teacher is the one who takes lifelong learning as a goal.*

4.3. Definition of Professional Development

The second question of the questionnaire inquired about how EFL teachers define professional development. Two main categories emerged from the analysis of their answers, which are *description of professional development* and *ways to promote professional development* as can be seen in Figure 3.



Figure 3. EFL Teachers' Views regarding the Definition of Professional Development

4.3.1. Description of Professional Development

According to the data, seven items were mentioned by the practitioners regarding the description of professional development which are shown in Table 18 below.

Table 18. Description of Professional Development Themes

Description of Professional Development		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · updating & improving oneself in the field 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · a way of maintaining motivation & inspiration 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · being aware of strengths & weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · a continuous and lifelong process 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · changing considering different conditions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · a self-directed attempt
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · being open to new ideas, change, and experimenting 		

As stated by 23 practitioners, updating and improving oneself in the field seems to be the most prominent description of professional development. These practitioners are likely to view professional development as an effort to improve one's professional skills and to gain knowledge in the field. Nine of the practitioners, six of whom have a postgraduate degree, asserted that professional development was a continuous and life-long process, which shows that they believe one needs to sustain continuous effort to professionally develop. Five of the practitioners described professional development as being open to new ideas, change, and experimenting while another three expressed that they viewed professional development as a way of gaining motivation and inspiration. Two practitioners stated that professional development was changing taking into consideration different conditions. This indicates that these practitioners probably believe that to develop oneself professionally, he or she needs to be willing to adopt new ideas considering different conditions that he or she thinks might bring about effectiveness in the profession. Two practitioners, both of whom have a postgraduate degree, stressed that it was of utmost importance to be aware of one's strengths and weaknesses so that he or she could stick to strengths, and try to fix and improve weaknesses. One practitioner asserted professional development was a self-directed attempt.

Based on the practitioners' answers, it can be asserted that they view professional development as an ongoing effort to gain new knowledge and ideas so as to improve oneself in his or her profession, which is likely to bring about change in perspectives and/or practice. The following excerpts would depict this issue:

- *Professional development is a self-directed attempt, and a life-long process in which one takes the responsibility of improving himself or herself in the profession.*
- *Professional development is continuously updating oneself and being open to new ideas and change.*

The findings of the interviews regarding the definition of professional development revealed similar aspects. All the four practitioners stated that professional development was a continuous and lifelong process in which up-dating, keeping up with the changes, innovations, current trends, and improving oneself in the field were the key

components. Three of them also emphasized the need for being aware of weaknesses and strengths as the following excerpt would illustrate:

- I think teaching is based on lifelong learning. So, a teacher has to continuously improve him/herself in the field. We are in an era in which everything is continuously changing. So we should keep up with these changes, innovations, current trends and new methods. We cannot limit our knowledge base to what we learned at our undergraduate education. If we learn new things, we can see our weaknesses and strengths, which is vital in our profession. Self-awareness is important to develop yourself in areas you need to improve.

4.3.2. Ways to Promote Professional Development

The second category emerged from the data was *ways to promote professional development*, which was mentioned by 22 practitioners. The items for this category are presented in Table 19.

Table 19. Ways to Promote Professional Development Themes

Ways to Promote Professional Development		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · following research studies and current trends in the field 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · reading books relevant to the field 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · attending in-service training
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · collaboration with colleagues 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · attending seminars and conferences 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · pursuing postgraduate education
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · keeping up with technological innovations in the field 		

As stated by nine practitioners, six of whom have pursued postgraduate education, following research studies and current trends in the field seems to be a crucial way of promoting professional development. These practitioners expressed that following these studies was important because one could adapt and implement the practices that were proven to be effective. Six of the practitioners, four of whom have a

postgraduate degree, mentioned that collaboration with colleagues also promoted professional development, which indicates that they believe one can learn from his or her professional circle. These practitioners explained the collaboration as sharing ideas, effective practices, and solutions to problematic issues as well as helping one another with supportive criticism to find out weaknesses. Four practitioners, three of whom have a postgraduate degree, suggested that one needed to keep up with technological innovations in the field if he or she did not want to fall behind the advances that they could use in the classroom. Reading books relevant to field and attending seminars and conferences related to the field were mentioned by two practitioners while another with a Master's degree stated that attending in-service training and pursuing a postgraduate education were also among the ways of developing oneself professionally. The following excerpts would illustrate this issue:

- *In order to develop professionally, one should follow recent studies and current trends in the field. We should also collaborate with our colleagues since we can learn a lot from their experiences.*
- *Professional development should be supported with in-service training. Pursuing postgraduate education is also another important factor in developing oneself professionally.*

As for the findings of the interviews, all the seven items in Table 19 were mentioned by the four practitioners. There seems to be a consensus among them especially about pursuing postgraduate education, following research studies and current trends, keeping up with technological innovations in the field, and reading books and journals relevant to the field, which were all mentioned by four of them. However, they all stated that their postgraduate education had provided insights into how to develop oneself in the profession. The following excerpt would depict this issue:

- *I think postgraduate education is a good way of developing yourself professionally. Before I started my MA program, I did not use to read articles, books or journals, or recent research studies in the field. I was just another teacher. But when I started the program, I had to read a lot in the field which I benefited a lot from. Now I know that if I want to be good at teaching, I have to develop myself continuously.*

4.4. The Effects of Professional Development Programs and Activities

The third question of the questionnaire inquired about how the professional development programs or activities they had been involved in affected the practitioners' profession. The data revealed three main categories which are *professional improvement*, *academic improvement*, and *personal improvement* as can be seen in Figure 4.

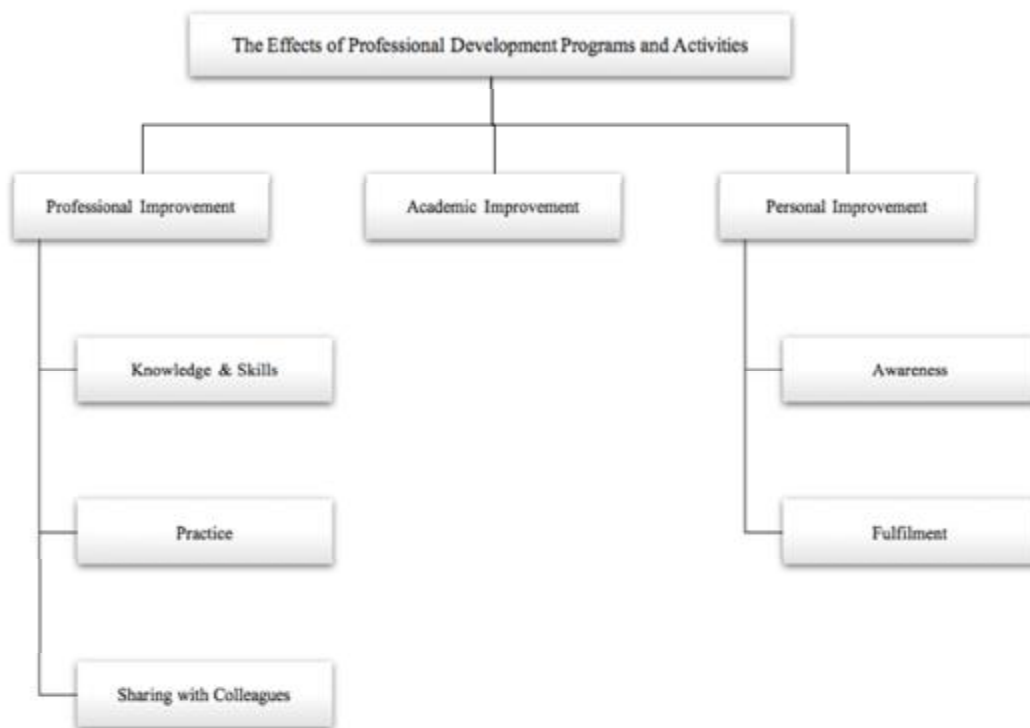


Figure 4. EFL Teachers' Views regarding the Effects of Professional Development Programs and Activities

4.4.1. Professional Improvement

This category involves the professional achievements that the practitioners gained through professional development activities or programs they had been involved in. It was mentioned by 15 practitioners, and three sub-categories emerged out of it as shown in Figure 4.

4.4.1.1. Knowledge and Skills

The data revealed that out of 36 practitioners, 15 of them stated that they had improved themselves regarding the knowledge and skills in the field. The aspects they thought they had improved at are shown in Table 20 below.

Table 20. Knowledge and Skills Themes

Improvement in Knowledge	Improvement in Skills
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · gaining more knowledge in the field · learning about new technology in education 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · improvement in teaching skills · improvement in presentation skills · improvement in language skills

Without specifying the term ‘knowledge’, eight practitioners asserted that they had gained more knowledge in the field, and one practitioner stated that she had learned about new technology in the education field. As for the improvement in skills, seven practitioners emphasized that they had improved their teaching skills; even one of them asserted that he felt he was a better teacher now adding that he had improved his language skills. According to two practitioners, professional development activities or programs they had been involved in had promoted improvement in their presentation skills. Based on the data, it can be asserted that the practitioners had benefited from these activities or programs in terms of improving their knowledge and skills in the field. The following excerpts would illustrate this issue:

- *I believe these activities have affected me in a positive way. I have gained more knowledge in the field which will help me become a more effective teacher, and also I will benefit from this knowledge not only at present but also in the future too.*
- *Since I got my BA diploma, I have improved my language skills, particularly reading and writing skills through professional development activities. I feel that I am a better teacher now, and I am better equipped with teaching skills.*

As for the findings of the interviews, all the four participants stated that they had gained more knowledge in the field, especially about methods. Two of them explained

that since they had graduated from English Language and Literature Department, they had lacked the in-depth knowledge of methodology. Thus, they stated that due to the professional development activities or programs they had attended, they had learned a great deal about methods and techniques. Three of them also expressed that they had improved their teaching skills as the following excerpt would show:

- I am a graduate of English Language and Literature Department. So, I did not know a lot about methods. Initial teacher training program was insufficient to gain this knowledge. But, thanks to my MA program and two in-service training programs about methodology that I had attended, I learned a lot about methods. Now I know what I am doing and why I am doing it while I am teaching. Of course, this affects my teaching skills in a positive way.

4.4.1.2. Practice

This sub-category involves the effects of professional development activities or programs on practitioners' practice of teaching. Three different items which were mentioned by 15 practitioners are shown in Table 21.

Table 21. Practice Themes

Practice		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · implementing new and/or effective methods/techniques 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · fixing weaknesses 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · preparing higher quality instructional materials

As can be seen in Table 21, professional development activities or programs seem to have positively affected the practitioners' practices in the classroom. Stated by 12 of them, implementing new and/or effective methods and techniques appears to be the most prominent effect of these activities or programs in this sub-category. These practitioners explained that they were able to transfer theory into practice and to implement the effective methods and techniques in their classrooms. Three practitioners emphasized that owing to these activities or programs, they could fix their weaknesses regarding their teaching practices. One practitioner asserted that he had learned how to

prepare higher quality instructional materials. The following excerpts would depict this issue:

- *Thanks to these activities, I have learned about new and effective methods in the field and I can implement them in my classes.*
- *These activities have helped me fix my weaknesses regarding my classroom practices.*

With regard to the findings of the interviews, three of them stated they had benefited from these programs since they could learn and implement new and/or effective methods and techniques while two of them mentioned these activities had helped them to fix their weaknesses as the following excerpt would show:

- *I learned new and effective methods/techniques especially from the recent studies, and also as a result of sharing with colleagues in these programs. Of course, you cannot implement all you have learned since it mostly depends on your target group. But, I can say that I benefited a great deal and they also helped me to fix my weaknesses.*

4.4.1.3. Sharing with Colleagues

This sub-category involves collaboration with colleagues, and was mentioned only by three practitioners. They explained that, owing to the professional development activities or programs they had been involved in, they could have the chance to meet other colleagues and to share their experiences, problems, and solutions regarding their profession. All three stated that they had benefited from these collaborations. The following excerpts would illustrate this issue:

- *I think sharing knowledge and observation with other colleagues have positively affected the way I teach. Sharing experiences about similar problems might sometimes provide a solution.*
- *Benefiting from colleagues especially from other institutions helped me evaluate my teaching practices.*

As for the findings of the interviews, all the four practitioners emphasized that they had benefited from their colleagues in these programs with regard to evaluating their teaching styles as well as finding solutions to problematic issues and learning about effective methods. The following excerpt would depict this issue:

- First of all, these activities gave me the chance of meeting various colleagues from different institutions. We shared a lot and I was able to evaluate myself as a teacher. I could see my weaknesses and also learned about effective methods they use in their classes, and I used them in my classes, too. As a result, this helped me to solve some problems in my classes.

4.4.2. Academic Improvement

This category, which was mentioned by nine practitioners, involves the academic improvement they gained through professional development activities or programs. The items for this category are shown in Table 22.

Table 22. Academic Improvement Themes

Academic Improvement		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · learning about current trends and new studies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · research skills · contact with the academic world 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · life-long learning

Six practitioners stated that, owing to these activities or programs, they were able to follow and learn about current trends and new studies in the field, while another specified it as the improvement in research skills. They explained that this had had a great positive impact on their profession. Another practitioner expressed that he had had the chance to contact with the academic world while still another pointed out that these activities promoted life-long learning. It can be asserted that these practitioners have sizably benefited from the professional development activities or programs they have been involved in regarding academic improvement. The following excerpts would depict this issue:

- *MA program and attending conferences at universities helped me learn about current trends and new research studies in the field, and I was able to implement some new methods. These activities also urged me to read more on ELT.*
- *I believe these activities promote life-long learning. Being a teacher does not mean learning is over.*
- *Presenting a paper in a conference provided contact with the academic world.*

The findings of the interviews revealed the same four items in Table 22. While four practitioners stated these programs promoted lifelong learning, three of them mentioned learning about new studies and advances in the field as a benefit of these programs. Two of them expressed doing research and presenting them in a conference had given them the opportunity to contact with the academic world as the following excerpt would illustrate:

- *Thanks to these programs, I learned the importance of lifelong learning, because learned a lot of new things like new studies and advancements in the field. Also, doing research and presenting it in conferences helped me to contact with the academic world. In the break time of the sessions, I met many experts in the field.*

4.4.3. Personal Improvement

The last category that the data revealed was *personal improvement*, which was mentioned by 19 practitioners. Under this category, two sub-categories emerged which are *awareness* and *fulfilment* as shown in Figure 4.

4.4.3.1. Awareness

This sub-category implies self-awareness, and was mentioned by 14 practitioners. The items for this sub-category are shown in Table 23.

Table 23. Awareness Themes

Awareness		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · gaining different perspectives 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · better understanding of decision making during instruction 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · providing insights into how to treat students
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · awareness of strengths and weaknesses 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · better understanding of how teacher role changes based on learners 	

It seems that the professional development activities or programs have provided the practitioners with awareness in various aspects. The most prominent aspect seems to be gaining different perspectives as it was mentioned by nine practitioners. Another four stated that these activities were beneficial since they helped these practitioners to see their strengths and weaknesses, which could be considered as another crucial awareness. One practitioner specified that she had gained better understanding of decision making during instruction, and how teacher role changed based on learners. Another one asserted that these activities had provided insights into how to treat students. The following excerpts can illustrate this issue:

- *I have gained different perspectives, especially on teaching and learning processes.*
- *Thanks to these activities, I have had the chance to see my strengths and weaknesses.*
- *I have understood how our roles change according to the kind of learners I am teaching as well as gaining better understanding of the kinds of decision making that occur during lessons.*

The findings of the interviews revealed three items of awareness. Two practitioners stated that they had gained awareness of weaknesses and strengths while one of them also mentioned she had gained awareness of affective factors and individual differences. One practitioner expressed that she had gained different

perspectives due to these programs and activities. The following excerpt would depict this issue:

- Before my MA program, I did not know much about the affective factors. I could not understand why my students would not participate in the lesson. But, later I learned about the affective factors, and how important they were. Now I understand them better and try to decrease their affective filters. I also began to pay attention to the individual differences. They all have different personalities, different learning styles and so on.

4.4.3.2. Fulfilment

The second sub-category that emerged under *personal improvement* category was *fulfilment*, which was mentioned by five practitioners. Table 24 depicts the aspects regarding this sub-category.

Table 24. Fulfilment Themes

Fulfilment		
· providing self-confidence	· providing motivation	· entertaining

Three practitioners asserted that these activities had provided self-confidence as they explained they felt more self-confident, and one practitioner stated that she got motivated owing to these activities. In addition to these, two practitioners expressed that these activities were entertaining adding that they had flourished their lives. The following excerpts would depict this issue:

- I improved myself and I feel myself more confident. Being better in something is a privilege and you feel yourself unique among the others.

- These activities were good as they provided personal motivation.

As for the findings of the interviews, one practitioner stated she had gained self-confidence while another expressed that these activities and programs had provided motivation in her profession as the following excerpt would show:

- *Learning a lot of things in the field gives you the impression that you are in the right path. Of course, this gives you self-confidence.*
- *Up-dating yourself and gaining different perspectives and awareness motivate you to learn more and try to be a better teacher.*

4.5. The Effects of Postgraduate Programs on EFL Teachers' Profession

The fourth question of the questionnaire inquired about EFL teachers' views with regard to the effects of postgraduate programs on language teachers' profession. The data revealed that practitioners who participated in this study generally have positive attitude towards postgraduate programs since 28 of them stated that they thought these programs had positive effects on language teachers' profession.

According to the views of three practitioners, postgraduate education has almost no effect on language teachers' profession. Two of them asserted that they thought these programs had nothing to do with being an effective teacher while the other practitioner claimed that these programs did not provide any knowledge, and that they were preferred since they would open doors for getting a job or degree. The following excerpt would illustrate this issue:

- *I think it doesn't affect people's development; it just affects people's degree. Thanks to a postgraduate program people can have a job, but this doesn't mean these people become more knowledgeable. People just see a postgraduate program a way to find a job not to get information.*

Other than these three, six practitioners pointed out that they thought these programs had no practical advantage in state schools which are run by MoNE. Although one of them claimed that by means of these programs one could gain theoretical knowledge, they all explained that these programs might only be advantageous in higher education. One of them even put forth that if a teacher attended these programs, it might be disadvantageous since the teacher might not be able to instruct taking into consideration the students' levels. The following excerpt would depict this issue:

- *I think these programs have no practical advantage in state schools. However, they might be advantageous if you are working at university.*

The rest of the practitioners specified various effects of postgraduate education on their profession as shown in Table 25.

Table 25. Effects of Postgraduate Programs on EFL Teachers' Profession

Effects of Postgraduate Programs	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Developing Skills <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Teaching Skills - Research Skills - Presentation Skills - Material Use Skills 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Gaining Professionalism
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Gaining Theoretical Knowledge 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Learning about Current Trends & Keeping Up-to-date
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Promoting Ongoing Professional Development & Lifelong Learning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Awareness of Weaknesses & Strengths, and Fixing Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Gaining New Perspectives & Self-confidence 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Promoting Integration of Technology into the Classroom

4.5.1. Developing Skills

Out of the 8 positive effects of postgraduate programs on EFL teachers' profession, the most frequently mentioned effect was developing skills. 16 practitioners stated that they thought these programs would undoubtedly develop their teaching skills, research skills, presentation skills, and material use skills.

4.5.1.1. Teaching Skills

For developing teaching skills, out of ten practitioners, three of them did not specify any aspects, but rather only stated that postgraduate programs had positive effects on developing practical teaching skills, one of whom claimed that undergraduate education was not sufficient to be an effective teacher. The rest seven put forward various aspects as to how these programs could affect teaching skills as Table 26 would show.

Table 26. Developing Teaching Skills Themes

Developing Teaching Skills		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · reconsidering teaching styles 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · making lessons more attractive and interesting 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · considering students' different learning styles & personality differences
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · better understanding of students' needs & interests 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · gaining insights into affective factors 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · creating a more effective learning environment
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · moving from teacher-centred to student-centred class 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · making positive and effective changes in the class 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · transferring theory into practice

Reconsidering teaching styles was brought up by three practitioners, who stated that gaining new knowledge in the field in these programs might assist teachers to reconsider and shape their teaching styles. One of them, who is at the dissertation stage in a PhD program, also claimed that she had begun to consider her students' different learning styles and personality differences, and that she had started to arrange the instruction accordingly. The following excerpt would depict this issue:

- I have benefited a lot from my postgraduate education. Conducting studies about effective teaching methods have helped me reconsider my teaching style. I also learned a lot about how language teaching is handled in other countries. I have started to pay attention to my student's different learning styles and personality differences. Now I strongly support the idea that 'one size does not fit all', and I try to arrange my lessons taking these into account.

Two practitioners, one of whom has a Master's degree, and the other at the dissertation stage in a Master's program, asserted that the program had helped them to have a better understanding of students' needs and interests, which might as well be considered as a development in teaching skills. The one with the Master's degree also

claimed that he had moved from a teacher-centred class to a student-centred one, adding that he had started to make his lessons more attractive and interesting to get the students' attention as the following excerpt would show:

- I have changed a lot as a teacher after attending an MA program. I have abandoned teacher-centred instruction, and tried to establish a student-centred class. I also have started to understand my students' needs and interests and tried to focus on them. Other than these, I have tried to avoid the monotony in class by making my lessons more attractive and interesting.

Another practitioner who is at the dissertation stage in a Master's program mentioned that the program had provided a great deal of advantages regarding her teaching skills such as gaining insights into the affective factors, and being able to make positive and effective changes in the class, adding that she felt she had become a more effective teacher as the following excerpt would illustrate:

- With the knowledge I got in my MA program, I have made some changes in my instruction, which I believe have resulted in more effective learning. As my thesis is about the psychology of the students, I also have learned a lot about affective factors, which affect the learning process a lot. I can say that I have become a more effective teacher thanks to my MA education.

One practitioner who has a PhD degree specified another aspect as creating a more effective learning environment for her students, which also takes place in the literature as creating an optimal learning environment. She stated that other than the knowledge she had gained in her postgraduate education, she had also had the chance to benefit from her colleagues in these programs through discussions as to how to solve a problem and make a method more effective, which she asserted that had all assisted her to create a more effective learning environment as the following excerpt would show:

- There were many colleagues from different institutions in both my MA program and PhD program, and I had the chance to benefit from their experiences. We used to have discussions about the problems we had and how to solve them, and how to make a method more effective. These experiences helped me to create a more effective learning environment for my students.

The last aspect brought up by one practitioner was transferring theory into practice, which is considered to be one of the problematic issues in the language teaching field. The practitioner who has a Master's degree stated that she had benefited from the program specifically as to how to transfer the theoretical knowledge into practice as the following excerpt would illustrate:

- I believe postgraduate programs affect language teachers' profession in a positive way. For example, in my Master's education, I learned how to put the theoretical knowledge into practice.

As for the findings of the interviews, almost the same aspects of teaching skills were brought up by the four practitioners. Three of them asserted that due the postgraduate education they had received, they found it easier to transfer their theoretical knowledge into practice adding that they started to implement more recent and creative methods in their classes. They also asserted that their undergraduate education had not been sufficient to close the gap between theory and practice, and that they had benefited from their postgraduate education in this regard. Better understanding of students' needs and interests was mentioned by two practitioners while another two pointed out that they were trying to make lessons more attractive and interesting to avoid the monotony and to attract students' attention. Gaining insights into affective factors and considering different learning styles and personality differences were emphasized by two practitioners while one practitioner asserted he had started to move from teacher-centred to student-centred class by promoting the active involvement of students. One practitioner stated that she had gained a lot of knowledge as well as sharing experiences with colleagues to create a more effective learning environment as a result of her postgraduate education. The following excerpt would illustrate the issue:

- I think our undergraduate education is not sufficient to prepare us as teachers. For example, we didn't have enough methodology classes. It was mostly linguistics and literature. They had great impact on our language competences, but I think more practice based activities should be integrated into teacher education programs to close the gap between theory and practice. We had apprenticeship, but it wasn't enough. Most often the real teacher of the class did not want to involve us in instruction, or when they involved, it was so limited. In this sense, postgraduate programs gave me insights into how to transfer theory into practice. Now I know better what to implement in a particular context. These programs also help you avoid monotony. I also approach more humanistic to my students. I take their needs, interests, different learning styles, and personality differences into consideration.

4.5.1.2. Research Skills

Another aspect brought up by four practitioners was the effect of postgraduate programs on research skills. One of them, who has a PhD degree, stated that these programs would tremendously increase one's research skills. However, he claimed that having research skills would not necessarily make a teacher an effective one. Another practitioner who has not yet pursued a postgraduate education asserted that these programs would definitely develop research skills while still another, who is at the dissertation stage in a Master's program, claimed that she had highly developed her research skills by means of the program. One practitioner, who is at the dissertation stage in a PhD program, also stated that she could easily conduct research studies owing to the postgraduate programs she had attended. The following excerpt would depict this issue:

- Postgraduate education makes teachers better at doing research and learning. This is particularly important because teaching, as an academic profession, is basically related with teaching-learning and doing research. Learning how to do research during postgraduate studies doesn't necessarily make someone a better teacher (although it makes that person obviously a better researcher).

As for the findings of the interviews, one practitioner asserted that she had developed her research skills, which can be regarded as a significant impact since it fosters continuous learning as well as providing better understanding of a phenomenon. The following excerpt would depict this issue:

- *Other than the effects I have mentioned, I should also add research skills. I learned how to do research. You get a lot of knowledge about a subject when you do a research, which in turn helps you improve your teaching skills.*

4.5.1.3. Presentation Skills

Developing presentation skills was mentioned only one practitioner regarding the effects of postgraduate programs on teaching profession. The practitioner, who has a PhD degree, asserted that she had highly developed her presentation skills, which she believed was a significant factor for effective instruction and better outcomes as the following excerpt would show:

- *Thanks to my postgraduate education, I have developed my presentation skills, which I believe is very important to be effective in my profession since it affects the outcome.*

As for the findings of the interviews, one practitioner asserted that she had improved her presentation skills, both in the classroom and in conferences as the following excerpt would illustrate:

- *I also improved my presentation skills, both in the class and in conferences, which I believe is very important both as an academician and as a teacher.*

4.5.1.4. Material Use Skills

The last skill-related aspect was the material use skills mentioned by one practitioner who is at the dissertation stage in a Master's program. As the majority of his students were in the English Language and Literature preparatory classes, he stated that by means of his Master's education, he was now able to consider their needs and use literary texts in his classes, adding that he believed these texts could provide

valuable materials for reading and analysis activities. He also asserted that these programs enhanced creating new teaching materials and activities as the following excerpt would illustrate:

- I teach prep classes, and most of my students will be attending the ELL Department when they pass the prep class. So, I have started to consider my students' needs and bring literary texts to my classes. I believe these texts are good for reading and analysis activities, which can prepare them for their department. Also, thanks to these programs, a teacher can learn how to create new materials and activities.

With regard to the findings of the interviews, two practitioners asserted that they had improved their material use skills, which they explained as taking into consideration the levels, needs, and interests of students while adapting materials as well as paying attention to the effectiveness of the materials as the following excerpt would show:

- I have begun to choose materials which are student-centred; I mean which are appropriate for their levels, needs and interests. I can say that I am now more selective in choosing the materials so that they can bring about more effective outcomes.

4.5.2. Gaining Theoretical Knowledge

The second most frequently mentioned effect of postgraduate programs was gaining theoretical knowledge in the field brought up by nine practitioners, six of whom have pursued postgraduate education. Three of them specified theoretical knowledge as discovering new methods and techniques to be used in class. Since theoretical knowledge forms the basis of teaching practice, it is of great importance to have it. However, as stated by these practitioners, a teacher could be considered as an effective one in the extent that he or she could put the theoretical knowledge into practice. In this sense, although they remarked that they had had the chance of broadening their theoretical knowledge through the assistance of experts in the field, except for one practitioner, they emphasized that transferring theory into practice was not always easy. The following excerpt would illustrate this issue:

- They make you more qualified in the sense that you become more aware of new techniques and approaches to be used in class. You also discover better the theoretical framework in which all learning takes place. In brief, you discover the boundaries of teaching through postgraduate programs. However, I can say that having theoretical knowledge does not always result in effective practice due to several factors.

Regarding the findings of the interviews, all the four practitioners stated that they had gained theoretical knowledge, two of whom specified it as learning about new methods. The other two practitioners, both of whom are graduates of English Language and Literature Department, asserted that their initial teacher training had not been sufficient to have the in-depth theoretical knowledge, and that they had had the chance to gain a comprehensive knowledge of methods owing to their postgraduate education. One of them also claimed that she could now understand the theoretical background of the practices she used to implement in her classes while another practitioner asserted that these programs promoted improvement in language competencies. The following excerpt would illustrate this issue:

- Since I am not a graduate of English Language Teaching Department, my theoretical knowledge was only based on initial teacher training. However, I did not learn much from it. I was just teaching through my instincts or through the things I learned from experienced colleagues. When I started my MA program, I started to learn more about methods. I also learned the theoretical background of some of the things I did in class. I learned about new methods through the studies I read and tried to implement them in my classes. As a result, I can say that I benefited a great deal from my MA program.

4.5.3. Promoting Ongoing Professional Development and Lifelong Learning

The data of the open-ended questionnaire revealed the third most frequently mentioned benefit of postgraduate programs as promoting ongoing professional development and lifelong learning brought up by eight practitioners. Ongoing professional development and lifelong learning are interrelated terms which are considered to be among the issues of utmost importance in the education field given the

fact that we are in an era in which we face constant changes. A teacher, therefore, needs to adopt lifelong learning as a philosophy and develop himself or herself in the profession. In this regard, six of the practitioners, four of whom have pursued postgraduate education, emphasized that postgraduate programs would promote ongoing professional development while two, one of whom has a Master's degree, asserted that these programs promoted lifelong learning as the following excerpts would depict:

- *I think postgraduate programs offer you a chance of developing yourself in your profession. They give you the idea that development is permanent and inevitable.*
- *Before I started the MA program, I had the idea that learning was something that took place when I was a student. However, now I know that there is always a lot to learn, and that we should be lifelong learners.*

With regard to the findings of the interviews, all the four practitioners emphasized that postgraduate education promoted ongoing professional development and lifelong learning. They explained that being a teacher embodied the idea of continuous learning and developing oneself in the relevant field so as to meet the needs of the era and not to be out-dated. The following excerpt would illustrate this issue:

- *Before my MA program, I thought I knew everything I needed to know. I was not much aware of the fact that I should develop myself. When I started the program, I learned that there had been many changes and advances in the field. This made me think that if I wanted to be good at my profession, I needed to continue learning and develop myself in the profession. Now I read about new studies and articles to learn about new things in the field.*

4.5.4. Gaining New Perspectives and Self-confidence

Gaining new perspectives embodies adopting new viewpoints regarding anything related with teaching and learning. Having the same mindset throughout one's teaching profession would not fit into the contemporary views which emphasize the constant need for keeping oneself up-to-date with the latest developments and new perspectives in the field. In this respect, six practitioners, three of whom have pursued

postgraduate education, asserted that these programs, especially since they could provide the chance of sharing experiences with colleagues from different institutions, promoted gaining new perspectives, which they claimed would affect the way of handling teaching and learning processes. The following excerpt would illustrate this issue:

- *Postgraduate programs bring new points of view with it. Despite studying almost the same subjects as in undergraduate programs with little differences, observing different teachers and their methods, discussing same subjects with different people gives new perspectives. As a result, this affects everything about teaching.*

Two practitioners with a postgraduate degree also asserted that these programs affected a teacher's perception of himself or herself since they could provide self-confidence, which they stated was a result of gaining a great deal of knowledge in the field as the following excerpt would show:

- *Postgraduate programs offer you an aura of self-confidence and an opportunity to experience additional qualifications to enhance your career.*

As for the results of the interviews, three practitioners expressed that they had gained new perspectives and self-confidence while one practitioner stated that her postgraduate education had provided her with motivation for the profession. With regard to the new perspectives, they stated that the knowledge they had learned in these programs, the articles they had read, and sharing with colleagues in these programs had resulted in new perspectives. When it comes to gaining self-confidence, they explained that learning many things in the field and gaining insights into teaching and learning processes had caused them to feel more confident and proud as the following excerpt would illustrate:

- Due to my postgraduate education I gained new perspectives through the new knowledge I got and the articles I read. I also had the chance to share experiences with colleagues in these programs. All these gave me new viewpoints, which helped me to perceive teaching and learning in a different way. As you see that you add on your knowledge, get new perspectives, and change some attitudes and practices in your profession, it causes you to feel more self-confident. I can say that my postgraduate education was kind of enlightenment for me.

4.5.5. Gaining Professionalism

Professionalism in teaching mainly refers to one's commitment to the profession as well as positive attitudes towards teaching, which affect his or her practice. In this sense, five practitioners asserted that postgraduate programs would give insights into teaching, which would bring along commitment, positive attitudes toward the profession, and quality in practice. The following excerpt would depict this issue:

- Pursuing a postgraduate degree in educational sciences makes a teacher a more educationally minded person who is more suitable for a teaching position and it provides gaining professionalism. It gives insights into teaching, and thus helps him or her improve his or her practice.

With regard to the findings of the interviews, two practitioners mentioned that they had gained professionalism. They elaborated this as changes in the attitudes and practice as well as feeling motivated for the profession as the following excerpt would show:

- We sometimes experience burnout in our profession. This causes us to lose our motivation. However, with my postgraduate education, I perceived many changes in my practices as well as in attitudes towards the job. Now I feel more motivated for teaching. I also feel that I am no regular teacher. I was among the lucky ones who could pursue postgraduate education.

4.5.6. Learning about Current Trends and Keeping Up-to-date

Another benefit of postgraduate programs was learning about current trends in the field and keeping up-to-date mentioned by four practitioners. As pointed out earlier, an effective teacher does not rely on what he or she knows, but rather seeks to develop himself or herself in every aspect in order to keep up-to-date and acquire new information by following current trends in the field. In this respect, four practitioners, all of whom have pursued postgraduate education, emphasized that postgraduate programs would give a teacher the opportunity to learn about current trends and keep up-to-date. It can be asserted that these practitioners attach importance to the idea that there is always new information to obtain in the field as the following excerpt would illustrate:

- If you pursue a postgraduate education, you have to read a lot of articles in the field. These articles helped me learn about current trends and innovations in the field and to re-evaluate the methods I use. It is a way of keeping up-to-date.

As for the findings of the interviews, all the four practitioners stated that due to their postgraduate education they had learned about current trends and had been able to keep up-to-date as the following excerpt would show:

- I learned a lot about the current trends and the advances in the field thanks to my postgraduate education. You learn what is going on in the field in different parts of the world, for example, how a particular country handles language teaching, which methods are perceived to be effective and so on. These programs are ways of up-dating yourself.

4.5.7. Awareness of Weaknesses & Strengths, and Fixing Weaknesses

Three practitioners, all of whom have attended a postgraduate program, specified another benefit of these programs as providing awareness of weaknesses and strengths, which in turn leads to fixing weaknesses. They stated that learning a great deal of knowledge along with conducting self-monitoring and action research in these programs had given insights into their weaknesses and strengths, which they

emphasized had resulted in the endeavour to fix the weaknesses for better student achievement. The following excerpt would depict this issue:

- *My MA program helped me to evaluate myself as a teacher, and to see my weaknesses and strengths as well as providing ways as to how to improve these weaknesses.*

The findings of the interviews revealed similar results. Three practitioners stated that their postgraduate education brought about awareness of their weaknesses and strengths in their teaching practices, which, they pointed out, had resulted in seeking ways to fix weaknesses and sticking to strengths. They seem to place importance on this kind of self-awareness since without it one would stick to what he or she is doing in the class and would not consider making any changes in his or her teaching practices to ensure better learning outcomes. The following excerpt would illustrate this issue:

- *Before my MA education, I used to get feedback from my students to evaluate my teaching. I simply asked them what they thought of my teaching practices and my attitudes towards them. This was my main method to evaluate myself. However, with the MA program, I learned a great deal about teaching and learning, and I started to evaluate myself as a teacher. I learned how to conduct self-monitoring and action research and all these gave me insights into my weaknesses and strengths. I also learned that I should not stick to the standard methods I had been taught, but that I had to be more creative and use more recent methods.*

4.5.8. Promoting Integration of Technology into the Classroom

The data revealed promoting integration of technology into the classroom as the last benefit of postgraduate programs. Given the fact that we are face to face with digital natives, an effective teacher needs to be aware of the necessity to incorporate technology into class. This will offer ways both to grab students' attention and provide more practical solutions in the classroom. In this sense, two practitioners, both of whom have a postgraduate degree, stated that these programs had helped them to integrate

technology into the classroom more than ever. The following excerpt would illustrate this issue:

- Before I started my MA and PhD programs, I used to avoid using technology in my classes. But in these programs I learned a lot about the importance of integrating technology into the class. My PhD thesis was about a writing technique based on technology, and I improved myself a lot about the use of technology. Now I can say that I use more technology in my classes although I still need improvement in this area.

As for the findings of the interviews, three practitioners stated that postgraduate programs had promoted the integration of technology into class. They pointed out that they had better realized the need for using technology in class, especially to attract students' attention. The following excerpt would depict this issue:

- Of course I knew the importance of using technology in class, but as I was not so good at it, I used to base my instruction mostly on textbook and board. After my postgraduate education, I had better understanding of my students' needs about the use of technology in class. Thus, I started to utilize technological devices more than before. Now, for example, I start a lesson with audio-visuals related with the subject of the day, and I see that my students are more interested in my lessons.

Other than the effects of postgraduate programs, the in-depth interviews also revealed a criticism about the lack of these programs in the cities they lived. They stated that since there were not so many programs in their field in Turkey, they had no alternative other than attending such programs in other cities, which they emphasized was a deterrent factor for many EFL teachers in not attending these programs. One of them even criticised some administrators who would not let the teachers/instructors in their institutions to pursue postgraduate education in other cities. In sum, they demanded for more opportunities to attend these programs since they perceived postgraduate programs as a way of developing oneself in the profession. The following excerpt would illustrate this issue:

- Especially in ELT, there are no postgraduate programs around the area I live in. This forces us to attend such programs in other cities. For example, I live in Sivas and the nearest city where I can attend a postgraduate program is about seven hours by bus. This makes pursuing postgraduate education compelling; thus, many EFL teachers do not even consider attending these programs. There are also some administrators who do not let the teachers or instructors to attend such programs in other cities. All these serve as obstacles to our professional growth.

4.6. EFL Teachers' Professional Development Need Areas

The last question of the questionnaire inquired about the areas that the EFL teachers felt in need of improvement in their profession, and in what ways they would improve these areas. According to the data, there are great many areas they feel in need of as shown in Table 27 below.

Table 27. EFL Teachers' Professional Development Need Areas Themes

EFL Teachers' Professional Development Need Areas	
· Speaking Skills & Pronunciation	· Assessment & Testing Skills
· Implementing Methods & Techniques	· Developing Appropriate Materials
· Increasing Student Motivation & Readiness	· Following Current Trends & Keeping Up-to-date
· Integration of Technology into Classroom	· Teaching Writing Skills
· Developing Cultural Awareness	· Planning
· Increasing Students' Speaking Skills	· Developing Research Skills
· Classroom Management Skills	

4.6.1. Speaking Skills and Pronunciation

The results of the data showed that the most prominent need area was speaking skills and pronunciation as mentioned by seven practitioners. There is no doubt that an effective and efficient teacher needs to have speaking skills and correct pronunciation or

else he or she cannot pass on these skills to students. It is an accepted fact that due to the testing system in Turkey, English language teaching is mainly based on teaching grammar which leaves little space for speaking skills. However, in today's world where communication skills are of prime importance, EFL teachers need to be equipped with speaking skills in the target language.

Of the seven practitioners who stated that they needed to improve their speaking skills and pronunciation, one of them specified this as lacking competency in daily usage of language, which entails the idea that he mainly has the knowledge of language in written texts. The rest specifically emphasized the need for speaking fluency as the following excerpts would demonstrate:

- *I feel I lack speaking in English fluently. I believe the constant and greatest problem for language teachers is not being surrounded by the language they teach. That's why we mostly lack speaking skills.*
- *I think I lack vocabulary and speaking skills. I cannot speak the target language I teach fluently.*

As for the ways for improving in this area, the practitioners gave several answers, almost all of which indicated that they needed to be exposed to native speakers. Two of them stated that they needed to go or be sent abroad where the target language was spoken while another two remarked that they needed to practise by communicating with native speakers. One practitioner emphasized that foreign educational programs or projects might be of great help to overcome this problem. The one who mentioned the need for improving pronunciation expressed that she could improve by searching while the one who stated the need for learning more about the daily usage of language did not specify any way to improve in this area. The following excerpts would depict this issue:

- *I think I can improve my speaking skills by joining foreign educational programs or projects. Language teachers should be given more opportunities to go abroad.*
- *I believe being able to visit the countries more often where the target language is spoken would close an important gap in terms of refreshing the speaking skills of language teachers.*

4.6.2. Implementing Methods and Techniques

The second most frequently mentioned item was implementing methods and techniques, which mainly indicates the need for putting theory into practice in an effective way. Five practitioners stated that they had problems in this area which they felt the need for improvement. Two practitioners emphasized that knowing the methods and techniques was not always sufficient to implement them in the classroom context, where there are many factors which affect the learning process while another remarked that there was a general problem in language teaching field in Turkey due to the lack of implementing effective teaching methods and techniques. One practitioner stated that she needed improvement in implementing drama in her classes for more effective teaching. The following excerpts would illustrate this issue:

- *I think language teachers need to implement effective teaching methods because I believe although students are taught English for many years, their performance is not good enough.*
- *I think I've had enough in master studies in theoretical ways but you know, to put theory into practice is not always easy. There are many factors that affect teaching and learning process.*

When they were asked in what ways they would improve themselves in this area, their answers were varied. One practitioner emphasized the need for seminars, specifically about methods and techniques used in other countries which were proven to be effective while another practitioner stated that he always tried to renew his methods in teaching. The one who mentioned that she needed to implement drama in her classes remarked that she needed special training in this area as it would not be sufficient to observe experienced teachers. Another practitioner made several suggestions such as pursuing PhD education, participating in foreign educational programs, and attending conferences on ELT. One practitioner did not give an answer to this question. The following excerpts would demonstrate this issue:

- *I think we need to attend seminars about the effective methods and techniques which are implemented in countries with better language education.*
- *I believe I need to implement more effective methods in my classes. Doing a doctorate, participating in foreign educational programs and conferences on ELT might help me improve myself in this area.*

4.6.3. Increasing Student Motivation & Readiness

Increasing students' motivation and readiness levels is one of the main concerns of language teachers as low levels of motivation and readiness might hinder better learning outcomes. In this regard, four practitioners mentioned that they felt a need for improvement in motivating their students and promoting readiness. One practitioner stated that she had difficulty in motivating her students which, she assumed, resulted in inefficient active involvement of students while another indicated that her students experienced anxiety and learned helplessness which would probably inhibit their motivation and readiness. Another practitioner mentioned problems with students' different levels of readiness in writing classes which, he claimed, prevented desired progression. One practitioner indicated that he lacked motivating shy students in speaking classes. The following excerpts would depict this issue:

- *I think I have problems with increasing my students' motivation and this usually causes them to be less active in class.*
- *I sometimes have difficulty in handling my students' anxiety and learned helplessness which lowers their motivation. I need to find ways to motivate them as it affects their learning process.*

As for the ways for improving in this area, only two practitioners made suggestions, which were reading relevant studies in the field, and the need for mentoring from experts as illustrated in the following excerpts:

- *I usually benefit from relevant studies in the field in terms of overcoming this problem.*
- *Since I have difficulties in terms of bringing all my students to the desired levels of motivation and readiness in writing classes, I think being advised by experts on how to accomplish this would assist me to overcome this problem.*

4.6.4. Integration of Technology into Classroom

With the recent technological advances, integrating technology into the classroom has gained more significance in language teaching. As the students are digital natives now, teachers are required to be equipped with skills to integrate technology into their classrooms. The data revealed that three practitioners felt the need for improvement in this area. While two of them stated that they lacked efficient integration of technology in their classes, one practitioner mentioned that she had technology related difficulties in distant language teaching. The following excerpt would illustrate this issue:

- *I particularly need improvement in effective integration of technology into my classes to make my students more active as today's students are digital natives. So, I believe teaching based only on books would not satisfy them.*

As for the ways to improve in this area, two practitioners emphasized that attending professional development activities which are specifically about technology integration would be of great assistance to them while one practitioner who stated she needed improvement in distant language teaching remarked that she searched for information on the Internet to overcome her technology related problems. The following excerpt would demonstrate this issue:

- *I think attending professional development activities which would specifically train teachers on how to use technology effectively in the classroom would be of great help.*

4.6.5. Developing Cultural Awareness

It is well-accepted in the literature that culture is an inseparable component of language. In this regard, it might be asserted that lacking cultural awareness might hinder better understanding of the target language. The data revealed that three practitioners felt the need for improvement in developing cultural awareness. They stated that in order to assist their students to develop cultural awareness, firstly they needed to improve themselves in this area as the following excerpt would depict:

- Teaching my students only the language itself is not enough; I also need to help them develop cultural awareness of the target language. To do this, I myself need to be exposed to that culture.

When it comes to the ways of developing cultural awareness, one practitioner stated that she might consider conducting a study with the involvement of students from different countries and cultures while another remarked that attending foreign educational programs might close this gap. Still another suggested that officials might consider sending language department students and teachers abroad to summer camps. The following excerpt would show this issue:

- I think going abroad and attending foreign educational programs might help me develop cultural awareness.

4.6.6. Increasing Students' Speaking Skills

Increasing students' speaking skills was another problematic area brought up by three practitioners. As mentioned earlier, developing students' speaking skills is known to be one of the troublesome issues in the language teaching field. In this regard, two of the practitioners stated that they had difficulties in enabling students to be active in speaking activities while one of them emphasized that due to the students' exposure almost exclusively to academic language, students lacked the daily usage of the language which resulted in being less active in speaking classes. The following excerpts would illustrate this issue:

- *I have some problems in speaking classes with 9th graders. They do not feel secure enough in speaking classes and some of them also do not pay attention to these classes.*
- *I have some difficulties in developing my students' speaking skills. Whatever I do to make them feel free in speaking, they mostly try to avoid actively involving in speaking activities.*

As for how they would like to improve themselves in this area, one stated that in order to rule out the possibility of anxiety, he could create a warmer classroom environment, and that he could try new methods and techniques in speaking classes. Another practitioner remarked that both students and teachers needed to be given the opportunity to go abroad so as to be exposed to authentic language, which might result in better speaking skills. One of the practitioners did not mention any solution to this problem. The following excerpt would depict this issue:

- *I should form a warmer classroom climate to lower their anxiety filter in speaking classes. At the same time, I should use new methods or techniques for speaking classes to attract their attention. So, now I'm planning to use games in speaking classes to remove their negative feelings in process.*
- *I think MoNE should create opportunities for students and teachers to go abroad so that we can hear the real language.*

4.6.7. Classroom Management Skills

Another area practitioners felt in need of improvement was classroom management mentioned by two practitioners. They stated that especially in crowded classrooms, where there is a great deal of noise, they had some difficulties in taking their attention and making them listen during instruction. In this regard, they remarked that they needed to improve their classroom management skills as the following excerpt would show:

- *I need to improve my classroom management skills, because I easily get distracted in the classrooms where there is a lot of noise, and this damages the effective instruction.*

When they were asked in what ways they would consider improving themselves in this area, one of them stated that he could try to involve the students who were most likely to make noise while the other suggested that he could benefit from the experiences of colleagues. The following excerpt would depict this issue:

- In order to find a solution to this problem, I might think of benefiting from my colleagues' experiences.

4.6.8. Assessment & Testing Skills

Another problematic area which practitioners mentioned they felt in need of improvement was assessment and testing skills. One practitioner stated that although she had been attending a workshop on assessing students' writing, she still found it troublesome while the other practitioner complained about not being able to prepare appropriate tests considering the levels of her students. The following excerpt would illustrate this issue:

- I must improve myself in many areas but firstly, I can say that I need more improvement because sometimes I make a little bit hard exams and it doesn't help me to take feedback.

As for the ways to improve themselves in this area neither of them suggested a way on how they would like to overcome the problem.

4.6.9. Developing Appropriate Materials

Developing and using appropriate materials was another issue brought up by two practitioners. One practitioner stated that she needed practical and time-saving ways to develop various materials while the other remarked that he felt the need for preparing authentic materials in listening activities. The following excerpts would illustrate this issue:

- I feel I need improvement in developing various materials and using them effectively.

- I think I lack using authentic materials in listening activities.

When they were asked how they would like to overcome this problem, one practitioner suggested that as she did not have enough time to prepare various materials, the institution might set up a testing office while the other remarked that he might consider sparing some time to prepare authentic materials in his classes. The following excerpt would show this issue:

- I cannot spare enough time to developing materials because I have a lot of responsibilities. I think a testing office would solve this problem.

4.6.10. Following Current Trends & Keeping Up-to-date

English language teaching has encountered many changes, and still continues to witness innovations. This forces the teachers to keep themselves up-to-date, follow current trends, and reconsider the methods they use. In this regard, two practitioners stated that they felt the need for improvement in this area. They both mentioned that they relied on the knowledge they had obtained at undergraduate level, and that they needed to follow current trends in the field to keep up-to-date as the following excerpt would illustrate:

- I lack the knowledge of new methods and techniques in the field. When you start teaching profession, you do not consider much following current trends, and you get used to using the same methods and techniques, which I believe is because of laziness.

As for the ways of improving in this area, one of them suggested that trying to be innovative and implementing different methods by searching might lead to keeping up-to-date while the other put forward that she could read articles and watch educational videos relevant to the field. The following excerpt would show this issue:

- I should try to keep up-to-date by following valid sources in the field and I might learn about and implement different methods.

4.6.11. Teaching Writing Skills

Developing students' writing skills is another important problematic issue in language teaching field. Two practitioners mentioned that they had difficulties in assisting students to improve their writing skills. As to how to improve in this area, one of them stated that in-service training might be of help for him while the other did not specify any suggestion. The following excerpt would illustrate this issue:

- I need some help in teaching my students how to develop their writing skills. I believe seminars or workshops specifically on this issue might help us to overcome this problem.

4.6.12. Planning

Only one practitioner mentioned that he felt he needed to improve his planning skills. He stated that he had a great many responsibilities which made him spare insufficient time for planning. He also emphasized that failing to do planning prevented him from being an effective teacher and caused a chaotic situation in the classroom as the following excerpt would show:

- I need to check my organizational skills and spare some time for planning. I think this related with the issue of time. The less time I have, the less planning I do. The less planning I do, more chaotic everything gets and the more chaotic everything gets, the less time I have and so on. It is like a vicious circle. I think I need less responsibilities and more planning, therefore.

4.6.13. Developing Research Skills

Another issue brought up by one practitioner was developing research skills. She seems to be one of the supporters of 'teacher as a researcher', which is a hot topic in language teaching field. She stated that since she had completed her undergraduate education in another country, she felt the lack of knowledge in research methods area. As to the ways of improving in this area, she remarked that she benefited from the knowledge and experience of her colleagues as the following excerpt would illustrate:

- I need qualification in research methods area. This is because I have completed my education in a different country. I didn't have enough experience in this field. Thanks to my colleagues here at our university, I have an opportunity to conduct interdisciplinary researches collaborating with experienced colleagues from different departments.

The findings of the in-depth interviews revealed similar need areas. Two practitioners mentioned they needed to improve their speaking skills, which they specified as fluency problems and lacking the usage of daily speech. As for solution to this problem, they both stated that EFL teachers needed to be given more opportunities to go abroad where the target language was spoken. Two other stated that they had problems with motivating the students. One of them pointed out that since she had gained deeper understanding of students' psychology during her MA thesis research, she now found it easier to motivate her students. Preparing materials was also among the need areas mentioned by two practitioners, both of whom stated that they could not spare much time for preparing different materials to use in their classes. One of them suggested that the administrators might consider establishing a testing office, which would also ensure standardization. One practitioner expressed that she needed support to use technology more in her classes while another emphasized that he always felt the lack of knowledge in the field since it faced continuous changes and advances. Thus, he stated that he was considering PhD education to continue developing himself and gaining more knowledge in the field. Other than the need areas of the four practitioners, the data of the in-depth interviews also revealed a criticism about insufficient support from the officials with regard to the professional development of EFL teachers. Three of them pointed out that there were almost no professional development programs or activities in their institution and they added that due to the conference fees as well as transportation and accommodation costs, they mostly did not consider attending conferences in other institutions. One of them emphasized that mainly the EFL teachers who pursued postgraduate education were the ones who could update themselves by following current trends and learning about advances in the field as the following excerpt would illustrate:

- *When we want to go to a conference for example, we do not get enough support, so it becomes a deterrent for us. Other than that, our institution could support us with professional development programs. Our field constantly faces changes, but for example, in my institution there are just a few colleagues who follow new trends in the field. Especially the ones who pursue postgraduate education follow the trends and learn about new advances in the field; they update themselves thanks to these postgraduate programs. We need professional development programs which are available for us.*

One practitioner raised a criticism against the in-service training. She stated that there was a deficiency of in-service training programs in the field and that workshops or seminars did not usually target their need areas adding that she had benefited from her MA program in this regard as the following excerpt would illustrate:

- *There is a lack of in-service training in our field. I always check and cannot find any programs relevant to my need areas. MoNE follows the new trends, for example, in the current textbooks, they follow constructivist approach. But teachers do not know anything about it. I learned it in my MA program. MoNE does not support us as to how to utilize these approaches. There is a great deficiency in in-service programs. When for example they prepare in-service training, teachers are made to attend them, I mean they are compulsory, but they have no practical advantage. So, MoNE must prepare programs to help us improve our real need areas and teach us the new trends. For example, while I was doing MA, my colleagues usually asked me about what was new in the field. They want to learn, but there are not good in-service training programs for this. The officials see us just as implementers. They do not care about the teachers' needs; they do not ask us anything.*

She also provided a striking example which showed how she had benefited from her MA program instead of in-service training programs as the following excerpt would show:

- For example, we have performance work in the textbook, but no one knows what it is and how it should be implemented. In my MA program, I got detailed information about it, and then implemented it. I also shared this knowledge with some of my colleagues. But if I hadn't attended this program, I would not have learned about it. The officials should check and take into account our need areas and prepare more in-service training programs.



CHAPTER V

5. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

This chapter presents the discussion of the findings of this current study guided by the research questions, and is comprised of nine sections. The first section presents the discussion on the professional development experiences of the 36 EFL teachers who participated in this study. In the second section, the EFL teachers' perceptions of an effective teacher are discussed. The third section provides the discussion on the EFL teachers' views about the definition of professional development. In the fourth section, EFL teachers' views about the effects of professional development programs and activities on their profession are discussed. The fifth section provides the discussion on the EFL teachers' perceptions of the effects of postgraduate programs on their profession. In the sixth section, the perceived need areas EFL teachers feel in need of improvement are discussed. The seventh section provides the limitations of this current study while implications for practice are presented in the eighth section. The last section provides recommendations for further research.

5.1. Professional Development Experiences of the EFL Teachers

As mentioned in the Literature Review in Chapter 2 (See Section 2.5.), there are various professional development models and activities that EFL teachers can utilize. The findings of this study revealed attending in-service training to be the most prominent activity since it was mentioned by 23 EFL teachers. Thus, it can be asserted that EFL teachers, especially the ones who teach English at primary and secondary levels perceive in-service training as the main means of professional development since 19 of them work in primary or secondary schools. The data also revealed a distinction between the professional development practices of the ones who had pursued postgraduate education and of the ones who had not. That is; while the ones without a postgraduate degree almost exclusively mentioned in-service training among their professional development experiences, the ones who had pursued postgraduate education specified many activities such as attending conferences, reading books or journals relevant to the field, self-monitoring, and so on (See Table 10), which might indicate that postgraduate education might provide various ways to professionally develop. In addition, the preference of professional development program or activity

might imply that while the ones who have not pursued postgraduate education view professional development as an externally initiated activity, the ones with postgraduate degree perceive it mostly as self-directed given the fact that the professional development practices they mentioned were mainly self-initiated ones. Thus, it can be asserted that pursuing postgraduate education possibly provides autonomy to the practitioners and gives them the chance of holding the responsibility of their own professional growth. On the other hand, the ones who have not pursued postgraduate education seem to lack autonomy since they appear to mainly depend on outsiders for their development.

5.2. Discussion on the EFL Teachers' Perceptions of an Effective Teacher

According to the conventional view, a teacher was someone who was supposed to stand in front of the board and transmit the required knowledge to the students. However, with all the changes and innovations in the teaching field, this conventional view has been buried in the dusty pages of history. Today, a teacher is someone who has various skills and qualities. It is acknowledged in the literature that teacher is one of the significant factors who can bring about improvements in the students' learning outcomes. Markley (2004) emphasizes that teachers and what they do in their classes are the predominant factors in the learning outcomes of students. As this is the case, a great many studies have been conducted to define the qualities of an effective teacher.

Although the complexity of the definition of an effective teacher is acknowledged in the literature, there are some studies which try to shed light on the qualities of an effective teacher. Young and Shaw (1999), for instance, define an effective teacher as someone who has good communication skills; who can create a warm learning environment; who cares for student learning, student motivation, and the organization of the course (cited in Arıkan, Taşer, and Saraç-Süzer, 2008, p. 43). It is also acknowledged that an effective teacher needs to be competent in the field as well as having some positive personal characteristics like being friendly, fair, creative, and enthusiastic. In his longitudinal study, Walker (2008) asked college students, in-service and pre-service teachers to write an essay about the qualities of the most memorable teacher throughout their schooling. Out of the findings of these essays, he came up with 12 personal and professional features of an effective teacher which were "being prepared", "having a positive attitude towards teaching and students", "holding high

expectations for student learning”, “being creative and fair”, “displaying a personal touch”, “cultivating a sense of belonging”, “being compassionate”, “having a sense of humour”, “respecting students”, “being forgiving”, and “admitting mistakes” (pp. 64-67). Although there are many similarities, the findings of this current study revealed a more detailed definition of an effective teacher. As can be seen in Figure 2, the participants of this study viewed an effective teacher as someone who has subject, methodology, and pedagogical knowledge; who has various skills like teaching skills, communication skills, assessment skills, and material use skills; who has various personal traits and virtues; and who continuously develop him or herself in the profession. Furthermore, to the best knowledge of the researcher, the studies based on the qualities of an effective teacher are mainly from the perspectives of students. However, in this study teachers were the participants who were asked to define an effective teacher and to evaluate themselves in the search for what qualities and characteristics they held would make them an effective teacher. As Ghaith and Shaaban (1999) assert, teachers’ behaviours and the methods they use during instruction are mostly based on how they perceive effective teacher and teaching. As this is the case, this study might be claimed to display important findings.

The findings of this study also revealed that other than the qualities and characteristics an effective teacher needed to hold, the EFL teachers who participated in this study emphasized the need for continuous professional development in order to be an effective teacher. As mentioned in the earlier chapters, professional development of teachers is one of the hottest topics in the teaching field. Every country is making an endeavour so as to provide teachers with professional development activities and programs for improved student learning outcomes. The findings of this study indicated that teachers were well aware of the fact that they needed to continuously update and develop themselves so as to meet the requirements of the profession and become an effective teacher.

5.3. Discussion on the EFL Teachers’ Perceptions of Professional Development

There have been various definitions of professional development in the literature. Although there might be some differences between the definitions, there is a contemporary, common and accepted concept of professional development which implies that it is a lifelong and continuous process through which teachers gain new

knowledge, skills, perspectives, and practices. This view can be seen in Day's (1999) definition since he defines professional development as "a 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 (p. 4). In Bolam's (2000) definition of continuing professional development (CPD), he asserts that professional development activities are "aimed primarily at adding to their professional knowledge, improving their professional skills and helping them to clarify their professional values so that they can educate their students more effectively" (p. 267). The end product of all these improvements in knowledge, skills, perspectives, and classroom practices are intended to be improvements in student learning, school success and in the whole community.

One of the aims of this current study was to uncover EFL teachers' views regarding the definition of professional development. The findings indicated that the most frequently mentioned item was updating and improving oneself in the field followed by its being continuous and lifelong process. This implies that EFL teachers' views go in line with the contemporary concept of professional development. The findings also revealed that participants of this study viewed professional development as a way of gaining motivation and inspiration. Being aware of weaknesses and strengths was also among the definition of professional development put forward by participants, which might imply reflecting on practices similar to the definitions of Glatthorn (1995) and Bell and Gilbert (1994).

The findings also highlighted practitioners' views regarding how to professionally develop oneself. Among the ways to promote professional development, the most frequently mentioned item was following research studies and current trends in the field followed by collaboration with colleagues and keeping up with technological innovations in the field. It might be asserted that practitioners view professional development as a continuous effort through which they can gain new knowledge, skills and perspectives, which might bring about changes in their practices as well as beliefs and attitudes towards students, teaching and learning, which all might contribute to improved student learning.

The findings of the interviews also revealed that the four interviewees viewed postgraduate education as a way of professional development since, as they stated, it

had provided them with new knowledge, skills and perspectives as well as ways to professionally develop. More discussion will be presented about the effects of postgraduate education on EFL teachers' profession in this chapter (See Section 5.5.).

5.4. Discussion on the EFL Teachers' Views about the Effects of Professional Development Programs and Activities on Their Profession

Finding out the impacts of professional development programs has been receiving attention among the researchers. There are many studies on this issue in the world; however, to the researcher's best knowledge, there are limited numbers of studies which investigate the impact of professional development in Turkey, and most of them are quantitative. For example, in their review of literature on professional development and in-service training of EFL teachers, Hoş and Topal (2013) reviewed the studies published between 2000 and 2012 and found that most of the studies were evaluative, which means the investigation of the perceptions of EFL teachers or instructors with regard to professional development or in-service training, and the rest were impact studies, which means investigating the impact of a specific professional development or in-service training program. They also found that a great majority of the studies were conducted with the participation of the instructors at preparatory schools at universities. However, as a part of the research questions, one of the aims of this study was to investigate the views of both EFL teachers working at primary and secondary levels and instructors at universities regarding the effects of professional development programs and activities on their profession. In this regard, as well as its being a qualitative inquiry, the findings of this study might be claimed to provide a more detailed picture of how these programs and activities influenced their profession.

The findings of the study suggest that professional development programs and activities have a positive effect on EFL teachers and their profession within three aspects which are professional improvement, academic improvement, and personal improvement. As for professional improvement, it seems that these programs and activities promote gaining more knowledge in the field and improvement in teaching, presentation, and language skills; help practitioners implement new and effective methods, fix weaknesses, and prepare higher quality instructional materials; and lead to sharing experiences with colleagues, which all might assist better instruction and student learning. The findings of the interviews also suggest that these professional

development programs and activities provide more knowledge about methods and thus, they might be of greater source for the ones who are graduates of departments other than English Language Teaching. As stated by one of the interviewees, a graduate of English Language and Literature, initial teacher training seems to lack sufficient support for gaining such knowledge about methods. Given the fact that English language teaching field is constantly facing many changes, not only the graduates of non-ELT departments, all EFL teachers need to be given regular chances to gain new knowledge and skills through effective professional development programs and activities.

When it comes to academic improvement, it seems that professional development programs and activities promote learning about current trends and new studies; improve research skills; provide contact with academic world; and foster lifelong learning. It was also striking that the ones who mentioned academic improvement were mainly the ones with a postgraduate degree.

As for personal improvement, it seems that these programs and activities also provide practitioners with awareness and fulfilment. With respect to awareness, the most prominent items were gaining new perspectives and awareness of weaknesses and strengths. There was one additional item emerged from the interviews which was awareness of affective factors and individual differences both of which play a significant role in the learning process. All these aspects of awareness are of utmost importance in the search for better instruction and student achievement. Regarding fulfilment, these programs and activities seem to provide self-confidence and motivation owing to gaining a great deal of knowledge in the field.

In the light of all these findings, it can be asserted that professional development programs and activities contribute to the professional, academic and personal growth of practitioners in several ways, which all might bring about changes and improvements in their classroom practices and enhanced student learning.

5.5. Discussion on the EFL Teachers' Views about the Effects of Postgraduate Programs on Their Profession

In today's competitive world, every nation is striving to advance. Since education is considered to be the vital key of creating the future generation, officials in every country are seeking to improve their education systems. For better equipped students to meet the requirements of the era, quality in education has become a priority.

Since teachers are the significant agents in education, it is of utmost importance that they are qualified, well-equipped and skilled. In order to generate such teachers, they need to be provided with proper chances of professional growth. In this sense, postgraduate education might be considered as one of the paths of teacher professional development. For instance, in Finland, which is recognized as having one of the most successful education systems in the world, Master's degree is a prerequisite for becoming a teacher. There are also some states in the U.S.A. which require teachers to have a Master's degree or Master of Arts in Teaching to be licensed as a teacher. In addition, along with some alternative performance-based teacher compensation, teachers with advanced degrees like a Master's degree are paid more than the ones with a bachelor's degree in the U.S.A. In Ireland primary school teachers are financially supported for postgraduate studies, and England is funding in-service teachers to engage in postgraduate programs and research (Erixon, Frånberg, & Kallós, 2001). Although postgraduate education is mostly perceived as a way of climbing the ladders for a more prestigious career, there are some teachers who pursue especially Master's education for improving their teaching. Thus, as part of this qualitative inquiry, I aimed to investigate the EFL teachers' views about the effects of postgraduate education on their profession.

The findings of the data revealed that of all the 36 participants, only three of them asserted that these programs had almost no effect on a teacher's profession, and another five claimed that they had almost no practical advantage for the ones who work at primary and secondary schools. However, it should be noted that all these eight practitioners do not have a postgraduate degree. Since the rest 28 practitioners mentioned various benefits of these programs, it might be asserted that most of the practitioners have a positive attitude towards the postgraduate education. The findings of both open-ended questionnaires and semi-structured interviews revealed similar results regarding the effects of postgraduate programs on their profession. The results indicate that postgraduate programs aid developing skills and gaining theoretical knowledge; promote ongoing professional development and lifelong learning; provide gaining new perspectives, self-confidence, and professionalism; and enhance learning about current trends and keeping up-to-date, awareness of weaknesses & strengths and fixing weaknesses as well as promoting integration of technology into the classroom. There are some similarities between the findings of this study and Şahinkarakaş's study (2014) in which she investigated the deliveries of an English Language Teaching M.A. program with the participation of 112 participants who had either completed the

program or were at the dissertation stage. These similarities will be examined within the discussion of the mentioned effects of postgraduate programs in this current study.

The findings revealed the most frequently mentioned effect of these programs as their assistance for developing teaching skills, research skills, presentation skills, and material use skills. As for teaching skills, the most frequently mentioned among all skills, it seems that postgraduate programs help practitioners to reconsider their teaching styles by means of the new knowledge they receive, and give them the incentive to search for more effective teaching practices. This was also among the deliveries of Şahinkarakaş's study since some of the participants mentioned the changes they had made in their teaching as in the quotation which specified that he or she was looking for more effective methods to use in the classroom (p.11). In addition, it also seems that some participants in this study have gained insights into the students' needs and interests, different learning styles and personality differences, and affective factors. Taking all these into consideration and adjusting the instruction accordingly might bring about a more effective learning environment for the students. The findings of the interviews also indicate that through the postgraduate education, practitioners can find it easier to put theoretical knowledge into practice since, as claimed by three of them, undergraduate education might not be sufficient to close the gap between theory and practice, which is also highlighted by Grossman et al. (2009) as a disconnection between theory and practice in L2 teacher education programs. As for developing research skills, although it was mentioned by only four practitioners, it seems that these practitioners have understood the importance of 'teacher doing research', which is also highlighted in the literature. In her M.A. thesis, Karakaya (2015) conducted a qualitative study with 18 EFL teachers from various institutions and found that EFL teachers have a positive attitude towards teacher research as a professional development activity, and that teacher research might be beneficial for "solving context specific classroom problems, raising awareness in teaching, promoting teacher autonomy, strengthening collaboration among colleagues and serving teachers as a feedback channel into the student perceptions" (p. iv). In Şahinkarakaş's study (2014), it was found that some of the participants had changed their attitudes towards doing research and that they had understood how important it was. It seems that their postgraduate study have changed their perceptions about the importance of doing research since it might lead a teacher to deal with his or her own teaching related problems. Other than improvement in presentation skills, the findings also suggest that some practitioners

have improved their material use skills since they have started to adapt materials taking into consideration students' levels, needs and interests, which also take place in Şahinkarakaş's study as understanding the significance of adapting materials. To sum, it can be inferred from the findings that postgraduate education might bring about some improvements in practitioner's teaching, research, presentation, and material use skills, which all might lead to improvements in student learning.

Gaining theoretical knowledge seems to be another benefit of postgraduate education based on the findings of the study, which also takes place in Şahinkarakaş's study under the category of *knowledge of the field* (p. 10). In this study, the participants specified the theoretical knowledge mainly as discovering new methods and techniques to be used in the classroom as well as gaining a more comprehensive knowledge about the methods. Stated by one of the practitioners, a graduate of ELL department, the findings of the interviews indicate that especially the graduates of non-ELT departments find initial teacher training insufficient for providing an extensive knowledge of theoretical knowledge. In this regard, postgraduate education might be considered as a supplementary which might provide practitioners with a more comprehensive theoretical knowledge in the field.

Another finding of this study suggests that postgraduate education might promote ongoing professional development and lifelong learning, which was mainly mentioned by the ones with a postgraduate degree. It seems that these practitioners have come to an understanding that learning takes place all through the life, and that they view postgraduate education as a solid way of professional development. This is also present in Şahinkarakaş's study under the category of professional attainment (p. 11). In her study, it was found that their M.A. program had contributed to the participants' professional development and that some intended to continue improving themselves in the field. Thus, it can be claimed that postgraduate programs contribute to practitioners' professional development throughout their teaching career providing them the importance of lifelong learning.

Another benefit of postgraduate programs emerged as gaining new perspectives and self-confidence. As for new perspectives, it seems that gaining more knowledge in these programs as well as through articles they read, sharing experiences with colleagues in these programs, and observing the teachers might lead to new perspectives about teaching and learning. With regard to self-confidence, which is also among the findings of Şahinkarakaş's study under the category of *personal attainment* (p. 13), it

can be asserted that, with all the benefits mentioned by the participants, postgraduate programs might lead to stronger self-confidence. When they feel self-confident, this might as well lead to self-efficacy and promote student learning.

Gaining professionalism emerged as another benefit of postgraduate programs based on the findings. The practitioners mainly linked professionalism to changing attitudes towards the profession as well as changes in practices and gaining motivation towards the profession. In this sense, it resembles the findings of Şahinkarakaş's study since some participants in her study stated that their attitudes towards the profession had changed in a positive way and that they had gained motivation. It might be inferred that gaining professionalism and motivation towards the profession might boost better teaching and learning outcomes.

Learning about current trends and keeping up-to-date was another advantageous effect of postgraduate programs according to the findings of this study. It seems that especially through reading articles about new studies in the field help practitioners to learn about current trends and renew their knowledge in the field, which was also among the findings of Şahinkarakaş's study under the category of *knowledge of the field*. This is considered to be one of the most important topics in the field given the fact that it is constantly going through many changes and advancements. In this sense, it can be asserted that the practitioners are well aware of this fact and the need for constantly up-dating themselves.

Another benefit of postgraduate programs emerged as awareness of strengths and weaknesses, and fixing weaknesses. Besides the new knowledge they gain through these programs, especially self-monitoring and action research seem to provide self-evaluation, which might also be stated as reflecting on. Through self-evaluation, practitioners might be able to see their strengths and weaknesses as a result of which they might stick to strengths and try to find ways to fix their weaknesses, which are all factors that contribute to better teaching practices. This benefit of postgraduate programs was also among the findings of Şahinkarakaş's study under the category of *personal attainment* (p. 13), in which participants stated similar views.

The last advantageous effect of postgraduate education seems to be the integration of technology into the classroom. The findings suggest that through the knowledge and experience they get in these programs, they have better understanding of their students' needs about the use of technology. As mentioned earlier, since there are many technological advancements in the field and also as today's students are digital

natives, teachers need to use more technology in their classes both for better instruction and for getting students' attention to be actively involved in the lesson.

To sum, it can be asserted that postgraduate programs might have tremendous effects on practitioners' profession. As the findings suggest, some practitioners have changed their attitudes, beliefs and perspectives about teaching, as well as making changes or adjustments in their classroom practices as a result of which they mostly think these programs are great chances to professionally develop. Although an article titled 'Changing Teacher Compensation Methods: Moving Toward Performance Pay' in the website of The Council of State Governments suggests that there is no explicit correlation between advanced degrees and student outcomes, the findings of this study as well as Şahinkarakaş's indicate that the practitioners have gone through a great many changes through their postgraduate education, which most probably might bring about improvements in learning outcomes. In addition to the benefits of these programs, the findings of the interviews indicate that there is a scarcity of these programs in some parts of Turkey which might pose a challenge for those living in these parts to pursue such programs. It seems that practitioners urge for more opportunities to develop themselves in the field.

5.6. Discussion on the EFL Teachers' Views about Their Professional Development Need Areas

There are many studies about the professional development of teachers some of which are mainly concerned about the professional development need areas of EFL teachers in Turkey. Although there are some slight differences between the results of these studies and the findings of this current study, it is obvious that there is a high resemblance considering the most frequently mentioned need areas. For instance, in Korkmazgil's (2015) doctoral dissertation, the findings of her qualitative study conducted with the participation of 41 EFL teachers revealed that EFL teachers mostly need to improve their speaking skills, implementing approaches and techniques, integrating technology into the classroom, and developing effective materials (p. 95), which is almost in line with the findings of this study. There were also other similarities between the findings of her study and this study such as assessment, class management, and planning needs. Similarly, in Ekşi's (2010) unpublished MA thesis, her quantitative study revealed similar need areas such as new theories and practices of ELT, use of

technology in ELT, assessment and evaluation, increasing student motivation, test development, preparing supplementary materials, class management, and lesson planning (p. 50). However, this study also revealed two additional need areas which were developing cultural awareness, which is essential for the better understanding of the language, and developing research skills, which supports the idea of 'teacher as a researcher'.

To start with the findings of this study, the most frequently mentioned need area was speaking skills and pronunciation. Considering the curriculum changes from grammar-based instruction to a more communicative approach, it is essential that EFL teachers have the speaking proficiency to meet the curriculum and student needs. Based on the findings of this study, it can be asserted that EFL teachers do not feel competent in speaking the target language they are teaching, which poses a great problem since if they cannot speak English, it is not possible that they improve their students' speaking skills. In this regard, the participants of this study put forward some solutions to get over this problem, which mainly focused on the need for practising speaking with native speakers. Thus, they called for the assistance of the officials to provide them with opportunities to have an abroad experience which was also among the findings of Korkmazgil's study (2015, p. 123). As stated by the participants in her study, there are some European projects through which they can have abroad experience; however, writing and submitting such proposals are not so easy procedures. In addition, to the researcher's best knowledge, the countries which approve such proposals are mainly the ones where English is not the native language. In this regard, the officials might consider creating more opportunities for the EFL teachers to visit the countries where the target language is spoken, which in turn might lead to improvement in the EFL teachers' and their students' oral communication skills.

Implementing methods and techniques was the second most frequently mentioned need area, which was also among the need areas of the participants in Korkmazgil's (2015) and Ekşi's (2010) studies. It is quite obvious that practitioners are well aware of the fact that ELT field is going through many changes which they need to catch up with through professional development programs and activities. Turkey is known to rank low in language learning achievement, which lays a great burden on EFL teachers. Based on the statements of the participants in this study, EFL teachers aspire to learn more effective methods and techniques for better learning outcomes. The findings also suggest that knowing the methods and techniques is not sufficient to

implement them in different contexts with a diversity of learners. In addition to this, the findings of both this study and Korkmazgil's (2015) study suggest that the non-ELT graduates lack the ELT methodology knowledge. Thus, EFL teachers need to be supported with professional development programs which are specifically about the knowledge and implementation of various effective methods and techniques in a diversity of contexts.

Increasing student motivation and readiness was also among the top three need areas of practitioners. Educational psychology suggests that student motivation and readiness are among the most important factors which might affect learning. There might be several reasons for low motivational and readiness levels such as high affective filters, classroom environment, the materials and even the teacher. For better learning outcomes, teachers have a leading role in increasing their students' motivation and readiness. However, it seems that practitioners have difficulties in achieving this. In this regard, they need to be supported through professional development programs which specifically focus on this issue.

Other than the top three most frequently mentioned need areas, the findings of this study revealed that EFL teachers have many other need areas such as integration of technology into the classroom, developing cultural awareness, increasing student' speaking skills, classroom management skills, assessment and testing skills, developing appropriate materials, following current trends and keeping up-to-date, teaching writing skills, planning, and finally developing research skills. It seems that they acknowledge what they need to improve, and they ask for help from officials to take initiatives in order to support them with appropriate professional development programs. Along with this, the findings of the in-depth interviews revealed some criticism about the lack of these opportunities. Three of the practitioners, who work at a state university, asserted that there were no professional development programs or activities that they could attend to in their institution or city they live in, and that they were not financially supported to attend conferences in other institutions which they remarked as a deterrent. One practitioner who works in a public school criticized the in-service training programs. She stated that there was a great deficiency in these programs, which again indicates that EFL teachers are not provided with the sufficient support for their ongoing professional development. She also asserted that she could not find such programs which were relevant to her need areas. This might indicate that in-service programs fail to consider the varied need areas of the EFL teachers. As stated by Diaz-

Maggioli (2004) as a criticism against the conventional professional development programs, it can be asserted that these programs do not involve teachers in decision making process, which means that some officials and/or experts are the ones who decide on these programs. As a result of this, instead of an initiative to address the specific need areas of EFL teachers, these programs end up with standardized approaches which do not take into consideration the varied needs of teachers, which was also among the criticism raised by Diaz-Maggioli (2004). Other than these criticisms, it was also striking that the practitioner who criticized the in-service training programs put forward that she had filled the aforementioned gap with her MA program.

Considering all the findings of this study, it can be asserted that EFL teachers are well aware of the importance of ongoing professional development and they need the support of the officials. It would be in students', teachers', schools', and communities' best interest to provide the teachers with sufficient, appropriate, and effective professional development programs. The findings also suggest that most of the EFL teachers highly value postgraduate programs as a means of professional development.

5.7. Limitations of the Study

This qualitative descriptive study aimed to explore the perceptions of EFL teachers regarding the definition of an effective teacher and professional development, their professional development experiences and the effects of these experiences on their profession as well as the effects of postgraduate education, and their professional development need areas. With the advantages such a study might yield, this study also has some limitations.

As stated in Chapter 3 (See Section 3.2.), a qualitative descriptive study provides an in-depth exploration of a phenomenon. However, as Creswell (2013) states, such a study involves an interpretative approach, which entails the idea that the interpretation of the data might be affected by the researchers' perceptions, background, and experiences. Although as the researcher of this study I paid great attention to prevent any effects of my personal views and bias, and to ensure trustworthiness as mentioned in the methodology chapter, this still might pose a limitation for this study.

Other than the interpretative limitation, as a qualitative descriptive study aims to explore and interpret a phenomenon in terms of the meaning that individuals or groups attach to that particular phenomenon, the findings that this study revealed need to be

interpreted as the participants' own perceptions influenced by their lived experiences, backgrounds, and their contexts. This as well might be considered as another limitation.

As qualitative research recognizes the uniqueness of the individuals' lived experiences, it has no such intention to make generalizations with the findings. In this sense, it can be suggested that the findings of this study only reveals the participants' perceptions based on their own personal experiences. Thus, the findings of this current study cannot be generalized.

5.8. Implications for Practice

Based on the findings of this current study and the relevant literature on professional development, it is possible to draw following implications for practice:

To start with the professional development practices of EFL teachers, it seems that in-service training has the leading role for the professional development of the teachers in primary and secondary levels. Thus, the officials have a profound responsibility to provide as many opportunities for the teachers so that they can improve themselves. In addition, as the findings of this study revealed, the professional development practices of teachers who have pursued a postgraduate education and who have not significantly differ; that is, the ones with a postgraduate degree have a great many activities among their practices while the ones who have not pursued a postgraduate education rely mostly on in-service training programs. As also mentioned by some of the participants, postgraduate education might be considered among the professional development activities. This being the case, more opportunities need to be created for the teachers so that they can benefit from these programs as a part of their professional development.

Since a teacher's perceptions of an effective teacher and teaching play a crucial role in shaping his or her instruction as well as his or her behaviours and attitudes, it is significant to find out their perceptions of the qualities and characteristics of an effective teacher. The findings of this current study revealed that EFL teachers were well aware of the required qualities and characteristics of an effective teacher. They view teaching as a profession which necessitates sufficient subject, methodology and pedagogical knowledge, skills like teaching, communication, assessment and material use skills, some positive personal traits and values, and continuous professional development. This suggests that along with all the required qualities, they perceive an

effective teacher as someone who continuously develops, which draws attention to the fact that they are well aware of the need to continuously develop and that they need to be given the proper and efficient support.

As the findings of this study suggest, the EFL teachers view professional development as a continuous and lifelong effort through which they update and improve themselves in every aspect so as to meet the needs of their students. Thus, they need to be supported with sustained professional development programs. In addition, as the in-depth interviews revealed, the ones who have pursued postgraduate education view postgraduate education as a way of professional development. As mentioned earlier, it might be suggested that EFL teachers should be provided with more opportunities to attend to postgraduate education.

As for the effects of professional development programs and activities, the findings of this study suggest that EFL teachers attain professional, academic, and personal improvement through these programs and activities. This again emphasizes the need for reaching every EFL teacher and providing them with the quality professional development programs so that they can improve themselves. The study also indicates that especially the ones who are non-ELT graduates are the ones who need such programs most. Thus, the officials should give priority to their training especially in terms of methodology.

The results of this study indicate that according to the majority of the participants, postgraduate programs have numerous benefits such as developing skills and gaining theoretical knowledge, promoting ongoing professional development and lifelong learning, gaining new perspectives, self-confidence, and professionalism, learning about current trends and keeping up-to-date, awareness of weaknesses & strengths and fixing weaknesses as well as promoting integration of technology into the classroom. As this is the case, EFL teachers need to be given more opportunities to pursue such programs for the sake of quality teaching and better student outcomes.

With regard to the need areas of EFL teachers, the findings suggest that they have various need areas and that they are not supported with sufficient, appropriate and need-oriented professional development programs. Thus, the officials need to consider a precise need area analysis of the EFL teachers and assist them in their endeavour to improve themselves.

5.9. Recommendations for Further Research

As clarified earlier in this chapter, this qualitative descriptive study aimed to explore the perceptions of EFL teachers regarding the definition of an effective teacher and professional development, their professional development experiences and the effects of these experiences on their profession as well as the effects of postgraduate education, and their professional development need areas. Since the study only provides the participants' perceptions regarding these phenomena, another study might be conducted which is based on the observation of these participants in their classroom reality.

Although the study was conducted with the participation of 36 participants from 17 cities in Turkey, the number of the participants might still be limited. Thus, a similar study might be conducted with the participation of more participants from every part of Turkey. In addition, other data collection instruments might be included for more clarified results.

This study did not involve any administrators. Thus, a new study might be conducted with the involvement of one administrator from each institution to bring an external point of view. In addition to this, the participants of the first data collection instrument were comprised of both participants with a Bachelor degree and postgraduate degree, and the participants for semi-structured interviews involved four of these participants who pursued a postgraduate education. Thus, the findings of the study revealed similar results from the two instruments. A new study might be conducted with two separate groups to compare and contrast the perceptions of the participants who have not pursued a postgraduate education and of the ones who have.

6. REFERENCES

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7. APPENDICES

7.1. Appendix 1: Consent Form and Open-Ended Questionnaire

OPEN-ENDED QUESTIONNAIRE CONSENT FORM LANGUAGE TEACHERS' PERCEPTIONS OF PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

This study is conducted by Arzu Yılmaz, an instructor at School of Foreign Languages at Cumhuriyet University, under the supervision of Assoc. Prof. Dr. Şehnaz Şahinkarakaş, who works in the English Language Teaching Department at Çığ University. The aim of the study is to investigate the language teachers' perceptions and opinions about professional development as well as their professional development techniques and needs. The data collected from this study will be used in the researcher's master thesis.

Your participation in the study is completely voluntary and no identificatory information will be revealed. Your answers will remain confidential; however, if you feel uneasy while answering the questionnaire, please feel free to withdraw.

Please be straightforward to provide accurate data since the study is significant as it can supply information that might contribute to the language teachers' professional development. If you have further questions about the study, feel free to contact instructor Arzu Yılmaz (Phone number: (0)5350265748; e-mail: arzuylmaz@outlook.com). Thank you for your attention and participation in advance.

I volunteer to participate in this study and I am informed that I can withdraw at any time. I accept that the data I provide can be used in scientific publications.

Name&Surname	Date	Signature
.....

P.S. Please make sure to hand in the questionnaire to the researcher as soon as you have finished it.

Demographic Information

1. Gender: Female Male
2. How long have you been teaching English? _____.
3. Which institute do you work for?
 Elementary school Secondary school High school University
4. Do you have a postgraduate degree?
 Yes MA Phd
 No

QUESTIONNAIRE

IT IS NOT COMPULSORY TO ANSWER IN ENGLISH; FEEL FREE TO GIVE YOUR REPLIES IN TURKISH.

Before starting the questionnaire can you identify what types of professional development programs or activities have you been involved in so far?

1. How would you define an effective teacher? Why do you think so? Do you think you are an effective teacher? Why?
2. How would you define professional development?
3. How do you think professional development programs and activities have affected your profession?
4. How do you think postgraduate programs affect language teachers' (your) profession?
5. What areas do you feel in need of improvement in your profession? Why? How would you improve yourself in these areas?

7.2. Appendix 2: Semi-structured Interview Questions

(The same questions in the open-ended questionnaire with prompts)

Before starting the interview can you identify what types of professional development programs or activities have you been involved in so far?

1. How would you define an effective teacher? Why do you think so? Do you think you are an effective teacher? Why?

.. You say an effective teacher needs to have methodology knowledge. Do you think it is enough to teach effectively?

.. So you think an effective teacher has to make students love him or her. How can you make students love you as a teacher?

.. You say Bachelor degree could not give the qualifications needed to be an effective teacher. Do you mean having a Bachelor's degree would not be enough to make a teacher an effective one?

2. How would you define professional development?

.. So you say it is continuously improving oneself in the field. How can one achieve this in your opinion?

.. You say you benefited from your postgraduate education a great deal and that it is a way of updating and improving oneself. Do you mean postgraduate education promotes professional development?

3. How do you think professional development programs and activities have affected your profession?

.. "I am a graduate of English Language and Literature. Thus, I lacked the methodology knowledge and initial teacher training was insufficient to fill this gap. However, I learned a great deal about methodology along with other things in my MA program".. So you mean your MA program affected your profession in a positive way?

.. Do you think you have become more effective?

4. How do you think postgraduate programs affect language teachers' (your) profession?

.. You say you have learned a great deal from the experts in the field in your postgraduate programs. Can you elaborate on 'learning'? What exactly did you learn?

.. You say undergraduate education was not sufficient to provide how to implement theories into practice and that you benefited from your postgraduate program regarding

this. How did your postgraduate education help you to close the gap between theory and practice?

.. Can you say that these programs helped you become a more effective teacher?

.. Considering all the advantages of your postgraduate education you have mentioned, do you mean these programs serve as professional development activities?

5. What areas do you feel in need of improvement in your profession? Why? How would you improve yourself in these areas?

.. Do you get enough support to improve yourself in these need areas?

.. So you say you cannot find in-service training programs that target your need areas and that MoNE does not consider teachers' need areas while they organize in-service training programs. Can you give an example?



7.3. Appendix 3: Approval of Ethics Committee

12
 EÜİB DERSHANE
 HAYATİ HANCIER ANI ENSTİTÜSÜ
 TEZ ÖZETİNDEN ÖNCELİK VEREN İZLENİMLERİNİ YARATAN VE İZLENİMLERİNİ YARATAN KİŞİLERİNİN İZLENİMLERİNE

TEZ NO: ADY VE SOYADI ÖZETİNİN NO: TEZ NO: 12543 E-MAİL ADRESİ: İLETİŞİM NO: TEZ BAŞLIĞI: TEZ YERİ: TEZ YÜRÜTME YERİ: TEZ YÜRÜTME YERİ:	15152733556 Aruç YILMAZ 20152013 535 020 5 445 aruc@med.sabagoutlook.com ingiliz dili eğitimi Türkçe dil öğretimi programı Tez 2016, 2017 DÖNEM AYI: YENİLEME / YENİ İZLENİMLER	
TEZİN KONUSU:	ingilizce eğitimi veren Türk öğretmenlerinin mesleki gelişimlerinin üzerine bir inceleme	
TEZİN AMAÇI:	ingilizce eğitimi veren Türk öğretmenlerinin mesleki gelişimlerinin üzerine bir inceleme... mesleki gelişimlerinin üzerine bir inceleme... mesleki gelişimlerinin üzerine bir inceleme...	
TEZİN YARARLANARAK İZLENİMLERİ:	Bu nitelikte bir çalışmada öğretmenlerin mesleki gelişimlerinin üzerine bir inceleme... öğretmenlerin mesleki gelişimlerinin üzerine bir inceleme... öğretmenlerin mesleki gelişimlerinin üzerine bir inceleme...	
ANASTİMARA TAYINLAMA VE BAŞLIKLARININ KAYDOLMASI KESİNİ:	özel ve devlet okullarında ve öğretmenler	
TEZİN İZLENİMLERİ VE BAŞLIKLARININ KAYDOLMASI KESİNİ:	1) Başlık ve konuları 2 sayfa 2) Tez yapısını ve içeriğini 7 sayfa	
ÖZETİNİN ADY VE SOYADI: <u>Aruç YILMAZ</u>	ÖZETİNİN İZLENİMLERİ: <u>[İmza]</u>	TARİH: <u>02.11.2017</u>
TEZ ANASTİMARA TAYINLAMA VE BAŞLIKLARININ KAYDOLMASI KESİNİ		
1. Başlık ve konuları ile ilgili Danışman ve jüri üyelerinin görüşleri		
2. Anlatıcı: <u>ingilizce dili eğitimi</u>		
İLİZ DERSHANE ÖZETİ		
Ady Soyadı: <u>Jehmet Sahin</u>	Ady Soyadı: <u>Muget Koz</u>	A.S.D. BAŞKANLIĞI ADY SOYADI: <u>Jehmet Sahin</u>
Unvanı: <u>Doçent Dr.</u>	Unvanı: <u>Doçent Dr.</u>	Unvanı: <u>Doçent Dr.</u>
İmzası: <u>[İmza]</u>	İmzası: <u>[İmza]</u>	İmzası: <u>[İmza]</u>
Tarih: <u>02.11.2017</u>	Tarih: <u>02.11.2017</u>	Tarih: <u>02.11.2017</u>
İLİZ DERSHANE ÖZETİ		
Ady Soyadı: <u>Muget Koz</u>	Ady Soyadı: <u>Ali Başo</u>	Ady Soyadı: <u>Muget Koz</u>
Unvanı: <u>Doçent Dr.</u>	Unvanı: <u>Doçent Dr.</u>	Unvanı: <u>Doçent Dr.</u>
İmzası: <u>[İmza]</u>	İmzası: <u>[İmza]</u>	İmzası: <u>[İmza]</u>
Tarih: <u>02.11.2017</u>	Tarih: <u>02.11.2017</u>	Tarih: <u>02.11.2017</u>
İLİZ DERSHANE ÖZETİ		
Ady Soyadı: <u>Muget Koz</u>	Ady Soyadı: <u>Ali Başo</u>	Ady Soyadı: <u>Muget Koz</u>
Unvanı: <u>Doçent Dr.</u>	Unvanı: <u>Doçent Dr.</u>	Unvanı: <u>Doçent Dr.</u>
İmzası: <u>[İmza]</u>	İmzası: <u>[İmza]</u>	İmzası: <u>[İmza]</u>
Tarih: <u>02.11.2017</u>	Tarih: <u>02.11.2017</u>	Tarih: <u>02.11.2017</u>
İLİZ DERSHANE ÖZETİ		
Ady Soyadı: <u>Muget Koz</u>	Ady Soyadı: <u>Ali Başo</u>	Ady Soyadı: <u>Muget Koz</u>
Unvanı: <u>Doçent Dr.</u>	Unvanı: <u>Doçent Dr.</u>	Unvanı: <u>Doçent Dr.</u>
İmzası: <u>[İmza]</u>	İmzası: <u>[İmza]</u>	İmzası: <u>[İmza]</u>
Tarih: <u>02.11.2017</u>	Tarih: <u>02.11.2017</u>	Tarih: <u>02.11.2017</u>
İLİZ DERSHANE ÖZETİ		
Ady Soyadı: <u>Muget Koz</u>	Ady Soyadı: <u>Ali Başo</u>	Ady Soyadı: <u>Muget Koz</u>
Unvanı: <u>Doçent Dr.</u>	Unvanı: <u>Doçent Dr.</u>	Unvanı: <u>Doçent Dr.</u>
İmzası: <u>[İmza]</u>	İmzası: <u>[İmza]</u>	İmzası: <u>[İmza]</u>
Tarih: <u>02.11.2017</u>	Tarih: <u>02.11.2017</u>	Tarih: <u>02.11.2017</u>

OKUL İZLENİMLERİ

OKUL DİJİTALİZASYONU

Çalışma yapıştığı okul ile ilgili yazılmış olduğu Anbarlar
 Farklılaşmış ve Çeşitlenmiş Okulların Eğitim Yürütme ve İzleme Kurullarına
 Karşınlanması ile ilgili olarak 2017/2018 Eğitim Yılında
 Öğretmenlerin Okullarında izlenimlerini yazmaları gerekmektedir.

OKUL İZLENİMLERİ (2 Sayfa)

OKUL DİJİTALİZASYONU (2 Sayfa)

OKUL İZLENİMLERİ (2 Sayfa)

OKUL DİJİTALİZASYONU (2 Sayfa)

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