



## English Language Teachers' Evaluation of an Alternative Professional Development Program

### İngilizce Öğretmenlerinin Alternatif Bir Meslekî Gelişim Programını Değerlendirmesi

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#### Abstract

Research on professional development (PD) and professional development program(s) (PDP) organized for teachers and foreign language instructors in Turkey has shown that these programs are not found to be effective. Hence, the purpose of the current study is to find out the opinions of pre-service and in-service English language teachers and in-service foreign language instructors on PDP in general and an alternative PDP applied (APDP) during the study in addition to the kind of PDP they prefer to receive. The APDP is prepared based on the needs of the participants' and the literature review on the expected qualities of an effective teacher in line with the givens of the curricular changes framed for primary and secondary schools and higher education institutions. Two pre-service, four in-service teachers and four in-service instructors participated in the study. A pre-program protocol, post-module protocols and a post-program interview were used as data gathering instruments. The responses of the participants were categorized under certain headings to interpret the data. The findings of the study revealed that all participants preferred the APDP to the other PDP, mainly because it made use of practice-focused rather than theory-based knowledge accumulation and practical applications.

**Keywords:** Professional development, effective teacher, in service training, English language teaching.

#### Öz

Araştırmalar Türkiye'de yabancı dil öğretmenleri ve okutmanlarına yönelik düzenlenen meslekî gelişim programlarının yeteri kadar etkili bulunmadığını göstermiştir. Bu nedenle, mevcut çalışmanın amacı, hizmet öncesi ve hizmet içi İngilizce öğretmenlerinin ve hizmet içi yabancı dil okutmanlarının, genel olarak meslekî gelişim programları ve çalışmada uygulanan alternatif meslekî gelişim programı hakkındaki fikirlerini öğrenmek ve bu farklı uygulamaları deneyimlemiş olan katılımcıların ne tür meslekî gelişim programlarını tercih ettiklerini sorgulamaktır. Alternatif meslekî gelişim programı, katılımcıların ihtiyaçlarına ve ilk, orta ve yükseköğretim kurumlarındaki müfredat değişikliklerinin getirileri göz önüne alınarak etkili bir öğretmenden beklenen özelliklerle ilgili alanyazın taramasına dayanarak hazırlanmıştır. İki hizmet öncesi, dört hizmet içi öğretmen ve dört hizmet içi okutman çalışmaya katılmıştır. Veri toplama araçları olarak, program öncesinde ve her modülün sonunda açık uçlu anketler uygulanmıştır. Program bitiminde de katılımcılarla görüşme yapılmıştır. Verileri değerlendirmek için katılımcılardan alınan dönütler belirli başlıklar altında sınıflanmıştır. Çalışmanın bulguları, bütün katılımcıların alternatif hizmet içi eğitim programımızı, kuram bazlı bilgi edinme uygulamalarından ziyade, pratiğe dayalı uygulamaları içerdiği için tercih ettiklerini göstermiştir.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** Meslekî gelişim, etkili öğretmen, hizmet içi eğitim, İngilizce öğretmenliği.

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## 1. Introduction

As foreign language teachers and instructors, we need opportunities to refresh our professional knowledge on a regular basis since the knowledge of content as well as the methods and techniques we employ while teaching and learning have been changing constantly (Richards & Farrell, 2005). Especially as foreign language teachers it is mandatory to update our knowledge in order to keep up with the changing teaching and learning environments while the components of the language such as the lexis change over time. Hence, the significance of professional development (PD) activities offered by educational institutions for their communities of practice has been increasing continually.

Guskey (2000, p. 16) defines PD as "... processes and activities designed to enhance the professional knowledge, skills, and attitudes of educators so that they might, in turn, improve the learning of students." Furthermore, he argues that PD activities must be intentional, systemic and ongoing. Hayes (1995) identifies the principles of in-service teacher development under twelve tenants. One of the crucial principles is that all teacher development activities should be classroom-centered in a way to emphasize the value of the classroom atmosphere created by its participating teachers. Another critical criterion is the necessity of organizing follow-up courses in participants' own schools so that such programs are sustainable, durable, and evolving in time.

"An education system is only as good as its teachers" (UNESCO, 2014, p. 9). Thus, it is clear that PD of teachers is of great importance for the whole education system to be successful because of the fact that teachers are the only agents who actualize the curriculum in the classroom setting along with all other planning and assessment activities. When the importance of PD for language teachers is taken into consideration, in order to grasp the current situation of the PD of language teachers in Turkey, the teacher education and PD activities applied should be examined closely to assess what we are doing to create and sustain workforce that is working in their classrooms properly and effectively.

The Ministry of National Education's (MONE) Department of In-Service Training is responsible for organizing and implementing all kinds of INSET activities for teachers working at primary and secondary schools. In addition to MONE schools, regarding the instructors working at the schools of foreign languages at universities, each university has different implementations for the development of their staff such as establishing PD units. There are many studies concerning the effectiveness of these implementations and INSETs (Arikan, 2004; Atay, 2008; Bayrakçı, 2009; Eratalay & Kartal, 2006; Hişmanoğlu & Hişmanoğlu, 2010; Küçüksüleymanoğlu, 2006; Özen, 2004; Özer, 2004; Yurtsever 2013). Findings of these studies reveal that existing PD implementations are not found to be satisfactory by the stakeholders.

## 2. Literature review

### 2.1. Developments in ELT Regarding Elementary Education (Grades 2-8)

As it is mentioned before, in the 2013-2014 academic year with a change in the education system grade 2 students started to have English lessons. In accordance with this change, MONE has revised foreign language curricula in line with the Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR). "The CEFR is a framework, published by the Council of Europe in 2001, which describes language learners' ability in terms of speaking, reading, listening and writing at six reference levels" (Cambridge ESOL, 2011 p. 4).

The new Turkish National Curriculum aims to promote a learning environment, which is amusing and motivating in order to make young learners feel relaxed and supported while learning in line with the CEFR's view that it is necessary to cultivate an affirmative perspective towards English from very young ages. Therefore, in order to motivate students and underline the communicative disposition of English, techniques such as drama and role-play are used together with authentic materials and hands-on activities in the new curriculum.

In the light of the above-mentioned characteristics of the new curriculum, the teachers need to develop themselves in specific areas to make the best of the curriculum. Since the curriculum is primarily designed for young learners, it is necessary to provide motivating, communicative learning environments while giving importance to teaching techniques such as drama, and using authentic materials such as poems in the classroom. As it is stated in the curriculum, "Enjoyment of language learning is fostered through activities such as arts and crafts, TPR, and drama." (MEB, 2013, p. VII). We should keep in mind that instead of adopting a single language teaching methodology, the new curriculum enhances the use of a mixture of methodologies to respond to the needs of young learners.

### 2.2. Developments in ELT Regarding Secondary Education (Grades 9-12)

Due to the renewals in the new 2<sup>nd</sup> – 8<sup>th</sup> Grades English Curriculum (MEB, 2013), a need to revise the 9<sup>th</sup> -12<sup>th</sup> Grades English Curriculum has emerged. As in the 2<sup>nd</sup> -8<sup>th</sup> Grades English Curriculum, the curriculum designed for the 9<sup>th</sup> -12<sup>th</sup> Graders aims to enhance communicative skills. Moreover, it emphasizes the integration of four language skills gradually

and academic English needs of the students are taken into consideration in the revised curriculum. Another point is that the use of instructional technology tools increased in line with the real-life experiences of the learners (MEB, 2014).

All in all, when the features of the revised 9<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> Grades English Curriculum are considered, it is clear that there are certain qualities expected from English language teachers who will teach these graders. Together with their professional knowledge including teaching techniques and approaches, assessment, and materials development, these teachers should brush up their knowledge in Information and Communication Technology (ICT) which is highly advocated in the revised curriculum.

### 2.3. Developments in ELT Regarding Higher Education

The students, who enroll in a higher education program of which the language of instruction is partly or completely a foreign language for the first time, take a proficiency and/or a placement test organized by higher education institutions. Based on the results of the test, whether the students are exempt from preparatory classes or not and the language levels of the students are identified. If the students fail preparatory class two years successively, they are dismissed from their departments (YÖK, 2008). The content of the preparatory programs is determined by the universities within the framework of qualifications for higher education and aims for students to achieve B1 level based on the CEFR.

If the language of instruction is Turkish, the first year students have to attend a compulsory foreign language course at least for two terms. In order to be exempt from these courses, they take an exemption exam (YÖK, 2008). The compulsory foreign language course is three hours a week and aims for students to achieve A1 level based on the CEFR.

The preparatory program and the compulsory English courses are usually provided by Schools of Foreign Languages. In Turkey there are 180 universities with preparatory programs which employ many instructors. Since teachers are expected to be the most effective factors on student learning, Continuing Professional Development (CPD) is of great importance for Schools of Foreign Languages (Borg, 2015).

According to a study implemented by Gökdemir (2005) at the school of foreign languages of a state university in Turkey, the following can be stated as being the main problems among students of preparatory classes:

- Theory is given more importance than practice.
- The lessons are not student-centered.
- Universities are not the best places to learn a foreign language.
- The universities offering preparatory classes cannot provide suitable teaching and learning conditions and necessary tools for foreign language learning.
- The universities offering preparatory classes have a quick-paced curriculum.

It can be inferred from these results that the students want to be active participants in the lessons. Moreover, they want more technology-based lessons with the use of audio-visual tools. The students are also not content with the pace of the lessons. While the solution to these problems may seem to be related to the institutions, there is a lot a teacher can do to solve them. Teachers working at the school of foreign languages of universities have to improve themselves in certain fields such as using technology, curriculum and materials development, and using more student-centered techniques.

### 2.4. Qualities Expected from Teachers

Research regarding the qualities and competences of an effective foreign language teacher gives us a general view of our needs in educating or training effective teachers (Arikan, Taşer and Saraç-Süzer, 2008; Arikan, 2010; Glenn, 2006; Gürbüz, 2012; Malikow, 2006; Shishavan & Sadeghi, 2009; Stronge, 2007; Yılmaz, 2011). It is noteworthy that all these researchers connect teachers' effectiveness and students' success while pointing at the importance of the teacher's presence in the classroom.

In 2006, MONE identified general teacher efficacies, which consisted of 6 main, 31 sub-efficacies and 233 performance skills. The six main efficacies include individual and professional values-PD, becoming acquainted with the students, the process of teaching and learning, monitoring and evaluating learning and development, the school, family and society relationship and program and content knowledge (MEB, 2006). Both HEC and MONE consider that teachers' PD is one of the basic principles of their proficiency.

Arikan (2010) studied characteristics of an effective language teacher from the perspectives of prospective and in-service teachers of English. According to pre-service teachers, effective teachers are those who:

- are able to transmit knowledge effectively,
- are interested in scientific and cultural developments,
- are open-minded to bring the outside world into the classroom,
- must value and respect students' judgments.

Similarly, he also found that in-service teachers believe that they

- must have sufficient cultural knowledge,

- must be backed up with in service training activities and
- must be backed up with an updated and proper curriculum (Arıkan, 2010, p. 221).

In consideration of the above mentioned literature review together with the developments effecting ELT in Turkey, the following qualities appeared to be expected from a teacher of English:

- Teachers should brush up and update their knowledge of subject matter and the cultural knowledge of the target language.
- Teachers should keep up with the advancements in technology in the field of teaching and learning. No matter what level they are teaching, use of ICT in the language classroom helps motivate students encouraging more communicative and student-centered lessons.
- They should have a good rapport with their students by getting to know them better.
- Teachers should improve themselves in the fields of curriculum development, lesson planning, classroom management, materials development and evaluation and feedback.
- Finally, effective teachers should give importance to their PD to improve themselves in the areas mentioned.

## 2.5. Types of PD Models

With the rise of the teacher-guided PD activities such as action research and reflective teaching, the requirement for continuous teacher education has a new focus (Richards and Farrell, 2005). Traditionally teachers are seen as knowledge consumers who are expected to implement what they have learnt in their classrooms (Borg, 2015).

Díaz-Maggioli (2004) makes a distinction between traditional and visionary PD. As it can be seen from table 1, he thinks that visionary PD practices differ from traditional ones in terms of the organization, content, follow up and evaluation of the program, the former being more collaborative, context and participant sensitive.

Table 1:

*Differences between Traditional and Visionary PD (Díaz-Maggioli, 2004, p. 6)*

<b>Characteristics of Traditional PD</b>	<b>Characteristics of Visionary PD</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Top-down decision-making</li> <li>• A “fix-it” approach</li> <li>• Lack of program ownership</li> <li>• Prescriptive ideas</li> <li>• One-size-fits-all techniques</li> <li>• Fixed and untimely delivery methods</li> <li>• Little or no follow-up</li> <li>• Decontextualized programs</li> <li>• Lack of proper evaluation</li> <li>• Pedagogical (child-centered) instruction</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Collaborative decision-making</li> <li>• A growth-driven approach</li> <li>• Collective construction of programs</li> <li>• Inquiry-based ideas</li> <li>• Tailor-made techniques</li> <li>• Varied and timely delivery methods</li> <li>• Adequate support systems</li> <li>• Context-specific programs</li> <li>• Proactive assessment</li> <li>• Andragogical (adult-centered) instruction</li> </ul>

Borg (2015, p. 5) points out the disadvantages of traditional models of PD as follows:

- Teachers may become dependent to others for their PD rather than learning to take charge of it themselves.
- Teachers may undervalue both their own knowledge and experience, believing that what they receive externally is more important.
- CPD, which is externally driven, tends to limit the contributions teachers can make to both its content and process.
- Conventional approaches to CPD tend to take place in the training room rather than the classroom and focus on teachers’ behaviors without acknowledging teachers’ beliefs.
- It fails to produce sustained positive changes in teaching and learning.

Finally, when the drawbacks of conventional PD models are taken into consideration, it is obvious that more visionary PD models which perceive teachers as generators of knowledge rather than consumers of knowledge are needed. Moreover, while developing a PD program all stakeholders in the field of education should work cooperatively considering many factors such as teachers’ problems.

## 2.6. PD Activities that MONE and Schools of Foreign Languages Organize

Having almost no teaching experience apart from the short-term teaching practice, the graduates who have gone through different kinds of education processes have to start teaching without necessary preliminary preparation. Thus,

it is clear that these graduates need INSET in order to make up the deficiency in their pre-service education and to provide standardization in the principals and techniques of foreign language teaching.

INSET is defined as "a set of activities and requirements generally under the heading of PD" (Bayrakçı, 2009, p. 10). It is considered as a crucial element to enhance the PD of teachers and to contribute to the advancement of their knowledge (Saiti & Saiti, 2006).

INSET practices for teachers working at primary and secondary educational institutions are organized by department of in-service training part of the ministry of education. These practices are performed by academic members from higher education institutions and teachers working at public or private institutions depending on the subject of the program.

One of the problems with the in-service training implementations in Turkey is that very few number of teachers benefit from them due to time and place constraints and lack of teacher trainers (Eratalay & Kartal, 2006). Furthermore, in a study conducted by Özer (2004), 2,273 secondary school teachers were given a survey to find out the opinions of teachers on INSET practices. The results revealed that although they expected to get important advantages from the INSET program, most of the teachers declared that they did not attend those in-service training programs willingly. Issues such as "not being able to afford to buy and read the publications on the profession", "lack of motivational factors for PD", "lack of adequate activities geared for PD in schools" and "not asking for teachers' opinions in determining the topics of in-service training programs" were considered as obstacles for their PD (Özer, 2004, p. 96).

In another study Bayrakçı (2009) compared the INSET practices in Japan and Turkey through semi-structured interviews. The results revealed that the most significant problems regarding INSET in Turkey are inadequacy of professional staff, lack of cooperative alliance between teachers, lack of feedback, and the INSET not being systematic.

Özen (2004), investigated the perceptions of 67 INSET participants on the competencies of INSET programs instructors through a questionnaire. The outcomes of the study showed that the participants expect the trainers to be subject specialists, and to bear the necessary skills and qualifications of the teaching profession. Arıkan (2004) studied the relationship between PD programs, and English language instructors through in depth interviews. The participants of the study were nine English language instructors from five different universities in Ankara, Turkey. The findings of the study showed the need for more humanitarian and contemporary PD implementations that may alter the work of teacher trainers who conduct classroom observations and of teachers who realize the curricular goals set by administrative units.

In another study, Turhan and Arıkan (2009) examined the opinions of university level English instructors before and after the establishment of a teacher development unit in their institution through a Likert-type questionnaire. The results of the study revealed that both novice and experienced teachers want to receive teacher development courses to improve their PD. Thus, this study argued that PD is not an issue for novice teachers, but also for experienced teachers as well. Last but not least, a more recent study by Koç (2016) revealed that activities offered in the INSET programs were found to be irrelevant to teachers' daily teaching needs while those participating teachers felt passive during the sessions.

In the light of the above mentioned issues, when the teacher education system in Turkey is considered together with the need for continuous PD of language teachers, this study firstly strives to identify the opinions of English language teachers on PD programs (PDP) in general. Secondly, the views of the participants on an Alternative PDP applied (APDP), which is prepared based on the needs of the participants' and the findings of the literature review on the subject, are investigated. Finally, the preferences of the participants regarding the PDPs are examined to learn if they favor traditional models of PD or the alternative model developed by the researchers. To be more specific, in line with the aims of the study, this study tried to answer the following research questions:

1. What are the opinions of prospective and in-service English language teachers on PDPs in terms of how they benefit from them?
2. What are the opinions of prospective and in-service English language teachers working at different institutions on the APDP during this study?
3. Do the participants prefer traditional models or the APDP developed and applied within the context of the study?

### 3. Methodology

#### 3.1. Research method

Although this is an application-based study, when the data collection and analysis are considered, qualitative approach was used. Holloway, (1997, p. 2) defines this type of research as "... a form of social inquiry that focuses on the way people interpret and make sense of their experiences and the world in which they live." According to Merriam (2002), a qualitative study aims to understand how individuals create meaning while interacting with their environment. Unlike those quantitative studies that rely on positivism, in qualitative studies, truth is not rigid, distinct or prearranged, but it has numerous structures and perceptions that co-exist in a constant state of flux. That is to say, this approach bears an

emic perspective which devotes itself to unearthing the interpretations of the participants as they try to give meaning to the situations with which they confront and through which they construct (Shulman, 1986).

### 3.2. *Setting and Participants*

Convenience sampling was used because of the fact that both researchers worked at this institution which provided the comfortable physical space to meet the participants of the study. This physical space included a large meeting room, kitchen, toilets, and classrooms. The participants of the study were eight in-service and two pre-service English language teachers working at different institutions. Eight of the participants were women and two of them were men. Their ages ranged from 25 to 37 years. Their years of experience ranged from 3 to 14 years.

### 3.3. *Instrument*

Two different open-ended protocols and a post-program interview were used as data gathering instruments. The pre-program protocol (Appendix A), which consisted of four open-ended questions, was administered before PD sessions began in order to learn the perceptions of the participants on PD programs in general. At the end of each module, post-module protocols (Appendix B), which consisted of six open-ended questions, was given to the participants in order to evaluate the effectiveness of the session. Finally, at the end of the program researchers implemented a post-program interview (Appendix C) with the participants, which aimed to compare the alternative five-week program with the other PD programs that they had received before. All of the instruments were prepared by the researchers.

### 3.4. *Procedure*

The APDP was implemented in the spring term of 2015-2016 academic year at Akdeniz University's facilities. The program consisted of five modules and the sessions were carried out at the weekends and in the evenings since the participants were working throughout weekdays. The APDP differed from traditional PDPs in certain ways such as:

- The topics of the sessions were selected based on the needs of the participants and the literature review on the qualities of an effective teacher.
- Unlike traditional PDPs, the number of participants was small paving the way for a better interaction among the participants and with the instructor.
- The duration of the sessions ranged from one to two hours.
- Each module of the program focused on a different topic.
- The sessions gave importance to practice rather than theory, so the participants were actively learning by doing during the sessions.
- All of the techniques and activities presented in the sessions were directly applicable in participants' own teaching contexts.
- The evaluation section of the modules let the participants reflect on what they have learned and how they will make use of it in the future.

### 3.5. *The Modules of the Program*

The program embodied five modules. Summaries of the modules are given below.

- Integrating drama in the EFL classroom: The aim of the session was to introduce some useful techniques and activities in drama as a method so that the participants could use them in their classrooms. The session, which lasted two hours, had three main stages namely; warming up to draw the participants' attention and lower anxiety, impersonation to raise awareness, and evaluation to check if the objectives were met.
- Training on English pronunciation: Problem sounds for Turkish speakers of English: The aim of the session was to raise awareness of problematic sounds (/æ/, /ə/, /ʌ/, /w/, /ð/, /θ/, /ŋ/) for Turkish speakers of English. The session lasted two hours and mainly had three sections; warming-up to lower anxiety and motivate the participants, practicing problematic sounds through drilling, minimal pairs and tongue twisters and finally evaluation to form a general frame reflecting the session.
- Integrating technology in the EFL classroom: The aim of the session was to introduce some technological applications and websites which a language teacher can make use of in the classroom. The session lasted 2 hours and consisted of four stages namely; warming up to elicit what the participants already know and use about ICT, providing theoretical background to inform the participants about innovations in ICT, practice to make the participants use the introduced applications and evaluation to check the effectiveness of the session.

- Creativity in materials preparation and development: The aim of the session was to raise awareness in the materials development procedures by focusing on the issue of creativity. Participants decided on the problematic parts in their course-books and the language point that they were going to teach before they set to work. Then, they worked in groups to create materials using everyday objects. At the end, each group presented their materials and explained how they were going to use it in the classroom. Participants worked in groups to create, present and assess the value of the materials collaboratively.
- Using literature in the EFL classroom: The aim of the module was to equip the participants with ideas on how to integrate literary texts in EFL classrooms. The session consisted of three stages. In the warming up stage, participants tried to lower anxiety by using literary texts such as poems. In the second stage, theoretical background on how to integrate literary texts in EFL lessons was presented. Finally, how to use a short story in the classroom was practiced and a sample lesson was co-constructed by the participants.

While preparing the modules, needs analysis procedures were followed strictly. The researchers talked to the participants about their needs. The themes of the modules were selected based on the participants' needs and the literature review on the expected qualities of an effective teacher. The lesson plans of the modules can be seen in Appendix D.

The trainers of the modules were all specialists in their fields. Before the program started, a meeting was held with the instructors of the program who were informed about the procedure and the distinctive features of the APDP. Certificates of attendance were given to the participants at the end of each session.

### 3.6. Data Analysis

In order to analyze the data gathered from the open-ended protocols, the responses of the participants were categorized under certain headings to interpret data. Before analyzing data from the interview, the records of the responses of the participants were transcribed by the researcher followed by construction of categories that are embedded in the transcriptions. During the analysis, all verbal data were transcribed and multiple readings of the data were conducted by the researchers separately to ensure that the categories were constructed in consensus.

## 4. Results

### 4.1. Research Question 1: What are the opinions of prospective and in-service English language teachers on PDPs in terms of how they benefit from them?

The first research question of the study aimed to find out the opinions of the prospective and in-service English language teachers on PDPs in general. Six out of ten participants mentioned attending seminars and conferences as a PD activity. The second mostly stated activities were reading journals or books and attending workshops and teacher training activities which were mentioned five times. Attending INSET programs conducted by MONE, using the internet to search innovations in ELT were mentioned by two participants. Sharing knowledge with colleagues, attending European Union education courses, and conducting peer observation were other PDPs each noted by one participant.

About the INSET programs that the participants have participated in so far, participants mentioned attending workshops seven times, seminars four times and conferences two times. The topics of the workshops, seminars and conferences ranged from using technological equipment in education, leadership, how to use communicative skills in the classroom, project writing for European Union, storytelling, NLP to teaching English to young learners. Moreover, participating to PDPs organized by MONE and universities was mentioned twice each. Finally, two participants mentioned having participated in overseas programs individually.

In terms of to what extent the participants found the PDPs beneficial, half of the participants agreed that the practice-focused PDPs were more effective than the theoretical ones. Two of the participants wanted PDPs to be learner-centered and communicative. Regarding the attendance, one of the participants stated that such sessions should not be compulsory. Furthermore, the PDPs designed for fostering creativity, being inspiring and intriguing and being suitable to the Turkish students' needs were each mentioned once. Participants believe that those theory-based PDPs such as MONE seminars are less beneficial. In addition, three of them stated that compulsory INSET programs organized by MONE are not beneficial while one participant asserted the INSET programs organized by MONE were boring and irrelevant to their needs. Moreover, another participant stated that the INSET programs organized by MONE were not beneficial enough since the attendance was compulsory as their attendance was checked by their administrators. The PDPs, that are not up-to-date and that are difficult to implement in the classroom and irrelevant to teachers' needs are also found to be less beneficial.

#### 4.2. Research Question 2: What are the opinions of prospective and in-service English language teachers working at different institutions on the APDP during this study?

##### 4.2.1. Module 1: Integrating drama in the EFL classroom

Findings revealed that all of the ten participants found the module very effective because the activities

- were suitable to their needs (9),
- were to the point (8),
- were engaging (7),
- were applicable (6),
- were creative and increased their creativity (3),
- enhanced their self confidence (2),
- were fun and flexible (2),
- made learning permanent(1),
- minimized their classroom anxiety (1).

In terms of the weaknesses, the findings revealed that nine out of ten participants thought that the module did not have any weaknesses. However, one of the participants asserted that if the students have a low level of English, it will be difficult to implement some of the techniques. Four participants stated that they learned to use simple materials that can be found easily in a classroom such as a chair or a piece of paper to create a context. Importance of using body language and mimics is another point stated by one participant. Participant 6 commented that, “I have learnt many activities that I can adapt to my own lessons. I can encourage the students to be more active and help them to improve their speaking skill thanks to these activities”.

##### 4.2.2. Module 2: Training on English pronunciation

Regarding the effectiveness of the module, 7 participants found the module very effective and 3 of them found it effective. On account of the strengths of the module, helping the participants to articulate sounds correctly and more consciously, which was noted by half of the participants, was the most mentioned point. Realizing pronunciation mistakes and learning some teaching tips such as drilling to teach problematic sounds were stated by four participants. One of the participants mentioned the trainer’s being a pure model as strength. Participant 5 stated that, “The strength of the module was presenting the techniques which we can use to focus on problematic sounds. We knew the methodology written on books but it is always better to have a microteaching on the subject”. Moreover Participant 7 added that the module was effective since teachers might mispronounce or forget the pronunciation of certain sounds. Participants claimed that the activities presented in this volume were:

- suitable to their needs (7),
- to the point (6),
- fun (2),
- very effective (2).

Half of the participants asserted that they were going to use the techniques that they learned during the session while teaching pronunciation. The other most mentioned point was paying more attention to their own pronunciation as teachers, which were mentioned by 4 participants. The fact that they found the recommended tools and websites beneficial was also stated by two participants.

##### 4.2.3. Module 3: Integrating technology in the EFL classroom

The module was found to be very effective by 9 participants and one of them found it effective. Regarding the strengths of the session, half of the participants stated that learning new websites and applications like Edmodo would be beneficial to share information and to connect to the colleagues, students, and the parents. Moreover, 4 of them thought that these web tools would serve to provide a more effective learning environment and the session being practical rather than theoretical was noted by 3 participants. In respect of the practicality of the session participant 3 stated that, “As all the participants were active in the session by learning via doing, it was very enjoyable and beneficial”.

Regarding the weaknesses, three participants asserted that they were already aware of some of the websites introduced in the session. Moreover, one of the participants reported that the session was not long enough to practice what they learned. Overall participants thought that the module was:

- Suitable to their needs (7),
- To the point (7),
- Concise (1),

- Relevant (1),
- Enjoyable (1),
- Up to date (1).

#### 4.2.4. Module 4: Creativity in materials preparation and development

Findings revealed that 6 participants found the module very effective and 4 of them found it effective. Half of the participants thought that focusing on practice rather than the theory was the positive aspect of the module. They added that thanks to the session they had a chance to put their theoretical knowledge into practice. Three participants stated that they realized the importance of getting other colleagues' feedback on their materials. Other mentioned strengths were learning to use daily gadgets such as a brush or a fork as new materials and the enjoyable, relaxing and cooperative atmosphere of the session, which were each mentioned once. Participant 5 noted that it was a very informative and cooperative session and she added that the participants were creative, the atmosphere was relaxing which paved the way for the participants to share their opinions and experiences freely. Regarding the weaknesses of the session, all of the ten participants thought that the module was short.

The adjectives participants used to describe the module were:

- Suitable to my needs (5),
- To the point (5),
- Effective (2),
- Concise (1),
- Cooperative (1),
- Short (1),
- Enjoyable (1),
- Inspiring (1),
- Relevant (1).

#### 4.2.5. Module 5: Using literature in the EFL classroom

Regarding the effectiveness of the session, the findings revealed that 4 participants found the session very effective and another 4 of them found it effective. According to 2 participants, it was moderately effective. All of the participants stated that learning how to use short stories effectively in the EFL classroom was a valuable asset of the session. Participant 2 stated that, "Gaining new perspectives on how to use literature effectively in the EFL classroom was the most important strength of the session".

In respect of the weaknesses of the session, 9 participants thought the session was too short. Moreover, 1 of the participants reported that the session was not creative or productive enough.

The participants asserted that the module was:

- Suitable to my needs (7),
- To the point (2),
- Concise (2),
- Too short (1),
- Not very creative and collaborative (1).

To sum up, regarding the effectiveness of the modules, as it is illustrated in the tables, the participants considered the module, 'Integrating Drama in the EFL Classroom' as the most effective session and the module, 'Using Literature in the EFL Classroom' as the least effective one. This might be because of the fact that while they were active in all stages of the drama session, they were passively listening to some theoretical information in the first half of the literature session.

Participants noted various aspects of the sessions as positive features. However, the sessions' being practical rather than theoretical was the most common mentioned strength of the sessions. Furthermore, the participants found all the techniques presented in the sessions applicable to their own teaching environments.

Regarding the weaknesses of the sessions, the most common view was the sessions' being too short. Apparently, participants needed more time to practice what they had learnt in the sessions.

#### 4.3. Research Question 3: Do the participants prefer traditional models or the APDP developed and applied within the context of the study?

At the end of the five-week program, participants were asked which model of PDP they would prefer. The findings revealed that all of the participants preferred the 5-week APDP due to many reasons. Half of the participants stated that

they preferred the PDPA because it was practical and fun. Four participants noted that the topics in the APDP were all applicable since they were suitable to their needs. Moreover each participant expressed that APDP's were informative, curiosity raising, collaborative, well-planned and thought provoking.

Participants mentioned many reasons while talking about their preferences in the content and delivery of the APDP such as:

- "I would like to attend these kinds of sessions because they are short and easy to participate. These are more enjoyable because the group is small and also we had 5 sessions with the same group which gives a wonderful sense of being a team. It was enjoyable to work in such groups this way." (Participant 8)
- "In my opinion I would choose the one we had at these five sessions. Because first of all it was enjoyable and informative but at the same time the sessions increased my curiosity as a new learner. Most importantly, it was a great experience as I had time to cooperate with other English teachers from other schools." (Participant 3)
- "I would prefer to have similar sessions since all the PD sessions were well-planned, enjoyable and thought provoking. Moreover, we were active participants rather than a silent audience." (Participant 5)

These results show that our participants were satisfied with the planning, content and delivery of the APDP we put together.

## 5. Discussion

The major limitation of this study is the small sample size and the length and recurrences of the modules (sessions) applied. In future studies, researchers should apply the modules for longer periods of time and with larger sample size. Also, data collection tools should include reflective journals, recordings or other data collection instruments so as to grasp a deeper understanding of the effects of the applications on the practitioners who participate in such sessions.

Our findings are in line with Arıkan's (2004) previous study in which a strong need for more humanitarian and contemporary PD implementations were regarded to be essential. Furthermore, Özer (2004) showed that teachers did not attend INSET programs willingly due to many reasons such as those programs were constructed without collecting teachers' opinions in determining the topics of in-service training programs. Similarly, the participants of the current study noted that the INSET programs organized by MONE were not beneficial since they were boring and irrelevant to their needs. In the same vein, another study conducted by Çelik and others (2012) found that although teachers considered PD to be important, the participants generally did not view the available programs to be applicable in their teaching contexts.

Regarding the active participation of the practitioners to the PD programs, in a study conducted in Honk Kong Lee (2011) explored how EFL teachers can be made to play a more active role by participating as presenters at CPD seminars, as well as how such a mode of CPD can promote teacher learning by using questionnaire and email interview data from 166 seminar participants and 4 teacher presenters respectively. The findings revealed that teacher learning can be enriched thanks to the opportunities for teachers' knowledge sharing and production at CPD seminars. Finally, as Borg (2015) suggests, features such as pertinence to the needs of teachers and their students, cooperation of teachers and engaging with the knowledge received are significant for the success of the PDP. When the practice-based rather than theory-based nature of the activities were considered, participants' decisions showed that having theoretical knowledge is not enough and teachers need to revise their knowledge of the subject matter on a regular basis through practical activities like these.

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### Appendix A. Pre-Program Protocol

1. What kind of activities do you do for your professional development?

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2. What are the in-service training programs that you have participated in so far?

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3. What kind of professional development programs are more beneficial for you?

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4. What kind of professional development programs are less beneficial for you?

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### Appendix B. Post-Module Evaluation Protocol

Title of the module: \_\_\_\_\_

1. How effective was the session?

- A) It wasn't effective at all.
- B) It was somewhat effective.
- C) It was moderately effective.
- D) It was effective.
- E) It was very effective.

2. What were the strengths of the module?

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3. What were the weaknesses of the module?

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4. What have you learned from the module that you have not known before?

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5. Which adjective or adjectives best describe the module in which you have participated?

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6. What aspects of the module are you going to make use of in the future?

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### Appendix C. Post-Program Interview

1. What are the similarities and differences between the PD sessions that you have attended in our program and the ones that you had experienced before?

2. Given a chance, which of these applications would you prefer for your PD? Please state your reasons.

**Appendix D. Lesson Plans of the Modules****Module 1**

<b>Title:</b> Integrating Drama in the EFL Classroom
<b>Duration:</b> 2 hours
<b>Aim and Objectives</b>
<p><b>Aim</b> The aim of the session is to introduce some useful techniques and activities in drama as a method so that the participants can use them in their classrooms.</p> <p><b>Objectives</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• By the end of the session, the participants will have learned certain activities and techniques in drama as a method.</li> <li>• The participants will have improved themselves in using their body language and mimics.</li> </ul>
<b>Summary of Tasks/ Actions</b>
<p><b>Warming up Activities</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• saying your name using certain shapes or movements</li> <li>• 1, 2, 3, 4 name game</li> <li>• inner voice</li> <li>• gibberish</li> </ul> <p><b>Impersonation Activities</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• TV channel game,</li> <li>• Impersonation using a real object.</li> </ul> <p><b>Evaluation</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The participants share their opinions on the session and how they can make use of this session in their own classrooms.</li> </ul>
<b>Materials</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• chairs</li> <li>• a piece of blank paper</li> </ul>

### Module 2

<b>Title:</b> Training on English Pronunciation: Problem Sounds for Turkish Speakers of English
<b>Duration:</b> 2 hours
<b>Aim and Objectives</b>
<p><b>Aim</b> The aim of the session is to raise awareness of problematic sounds (/æ/,/ə/, /ʌ/, /w/, /ð/, /θ/, /ŋ/) for Turkish speakers of English.</p> <p><b>Objectives</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• By the end of the session, the participants will have learned how to pronounce the problematic sounds.</li> <li>• The participants will have learned certain activities and techniques to practice these sounds.</li> </ul>
<b>Summary of Tasks/ Actions</b>
<p><b>Warming up Activities</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The instructor helps the participants feel the necessary muscles used articulating the problematic sounds (/æ/,/ə/, /ʌ/, /w/, /ð/, /θ/, /ŋ/).</li> </ul> <p><b>Practice</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• drilling</li> <li>• minimal Pairs</li> <li>• tongue twisters</li> </ul> <p><b>Evaluation</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The participants share their opinions on the session and how they can make use of this session in their own classrooms.</li> </ul>
<b>Materials</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• board</li> <li>• board marker</li> <li>• CD player</li> </ul>

### Module 3

<b>Title:</b> Integrating Technology in the EFL classroom
<b>Duration:</b> 2 hours
<b>Aim and Objectives</b>
<p><b>Aim</b> The aim of the session is to introduce some technological applications and websites which a language teacher can make use of in the classroom.</p> <p><b>Objectives</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• By the end of the session, the participants will have learned background information on websites and applications which can be used in education.</li> <li>• The participants will have practiced using the websites and applications which they have learned.</li> </ul>
<b>Summary of Tasks/ Actions</b>
<p><b>Warming up Activities</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In the warm-up stage the participants share their experiences on using ICT in the language classroom.</li> </ul> <p><b>Theoretical background and Practice</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The instructor gives information about Web 2.0 tools and applications such as Edmodo, Tiny Chat, Quizzes as well as blogs and podcasts for educational purposes.</li> <li>• The participants open Edmodo accounts for their classrooms.</li> <li>• The participants practice Quizzes application.</li> </ul> <p><b>Evaluation</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The participants share their ideas and suggestions on using the applications which are introduced in the session.</li> </ul>
<b>Materials</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• PC for each participant</li> <li>• Internet connection</li> </ul>

**Module 4**

<b>Title:</b> Creativity and Materials Preparation and Development
<b>Duration:</b> 2 hours
<b>Aim and Objectives</b>
<p><b>Aim</b> The aim of the session is to raise awareness of the materials development procedure.</p> <p><b>Objectives</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• By the end of the session, the participants will have had ideas on the important features of materials preparation and development.</li> <li>• The participants will have practiced creating materials using daily gadgets collaboratively.</li> </ul>
<b>Summary of Tasks/ Actions</b>
<p><b>Warming up Activities</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The participants share their ideas on their coursebooks which they use in their classrooms and how they adapt them to their students' needs and interests.</li> </ul> <p><b>Practice</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The instructor asks the participants to have a look at the coursebooks they are using to find a problematic part that has little communicative value.</li> <li>• Then he wants them to adapt the material in a way to make it more communicative using everyday objects such as forks, spoons, a ball, magazines, etc. which he has brought with him.</li> <li>• Then, they work in groups to create materials using everyday objects.</li> <li>• At the end, each group presents their materials and explains how they are going to use it in the classroom.</li> </ul> <p><b>Evaluation</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The participants comment on each others' materials and share their ideas and suggestions on the session.</li> </ul>
<b>Materials</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Everyday objects such as forks, spoons, a ball, magazines, etc.</li> <li>• Colorful pieces of paper</li> <li>• Scissors</li> <li>• Glue</li> </ul>

**Module 5**

<b>Title:</b> Using Literature in the EFL classroom
<b>Duration:</b> 2 hours
<b>Aim and Objectives</b>
<p><b>Aim</b> The aim of the module is to equip the participants with ideas on how to integrate literature in the EFL classroom</p> <p><b>Objectives</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• By the end of the session, the participants will have had ideas on to use literary texts in the EFL classroom.</li> <li>• The participants will have learned and practiced using a short story in the EFL classroom.</li> </ul>
<b>Summary of Tasks/ Actions</b>
<p><b>Warming up Activities</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The participants do brainstorming and share their own experiences about using literary texts in their classrooms.</li> </ul> <p><b>Theoretical Information and Practice</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The instructor provides some theoretical information about different ways of using literary texts.</li> <li>• The instructor demonstrates a sample lesson using the short story titled "The Storm".</li> <li>• Before they read the text the instructor wants the participants to look at the title and guess the topic.</li> <li>• Then after they read the texts they give their initial response by sharing ideas with their partners.</li> <li>• In the post reading part of the short story the participants write a different ending and act out the final scene.</li> </ul> <p><b>Evaluation</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Finally in the evaluation stage the participants assert their ideas about the session.</li> </ul>
<b>Materials</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The text of the short story titled "The Storm"</li> </ul>