

TÜRK ÖĞRETMENLERİN MESLEKİ GELİŞİM ALGILARININ BELİRLENMESİ¹

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ÖZ

Öğretmenlerin mesleki gelişimleri eğitimin genel kalitesini yükseltmekte önemli bir rol oynar. Bu yüzden, öğretmenlerin kendi mesleki gelişimlerinden ne anladıkları oldukça önemlidir. Bu çalışma, İngilizce öğretmenlerinin mesleki gelişim algılarını araştırmayı, katıldıkları mesleki gelişim faaliyetlerini belirlemeyi ve kendilerinin bu faaliyetlere katılmalarını olumlu ya da olumsuz etkileyen etmenleri bulmayı hedeflemektedir. Çalışmanın bir diğer hedefi İngiliz dili öğretimi alanında farklı kurumlarda çalışan öğretmenlerin –devlet ve özel- algılarını kıyaslamaktır. Çalışmaya 7 devlet ve 4 özel üniversite ve Milli Eğitim Bakanlığı'na bağlı 20 ilk ve orta öğretim kurumunda çalışan toplam 158 öğretmen katılmıştır. Sonuçlar çalışılan kurumun, İngilizce öğretmenlerinin profesyonel gelişimi algılamasında bir etken olmadığını göstermiştir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Mesleki gelişim, Öğretmen yetiştirme, Öğretmen algıları.

EXPLORING LANGUAGE TEACHERS' PERCEPTIONS OF TEACHER DEVELOPMENT IN TURKISH CONTEXT²

ABSTRACT

Teacher Professional Development (PD) is essential for improving the quality of instruction in general. Therefore, it is of vital importance to have a clear idea of teachers' views on their own PD. This paper aims at investigating English Language Teachers' perception of PD; the PD activities they are engaged in and the positive and negative

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factors affecting their engagement in these PD activities. The study also aims at comparing ELT professionals working at different institutions namely; state and private universities. The study was conducted including 158 ELT professionals from 7 state and 4 private universities and 20 primary and secondary level state schools from the Ministry of National Education (MoNE). Results reveal that institution is not a significant factor in the perception of PD of English language teachers.

Keywords: *Professional development, Teacher training, Teacher perception.*

I. Introduction

No one would ever deny that learning to teach is a lifelong process. The vast amount of development in technology as well as the reforms in education (learner and learning-centered approaches, new teaching strategies, etc.) require teachers to enhance their teaching skills continuously. As noted by Slater (in Küçüksüleymanoğlu, 2006), pre-service education in itself may not be sufficient for finding out which skills individuals have and helping them to develop these skills. Therefore, the notions of teacher learning and continuous teacher development become increasingly important for all the professionals in the field of teaching. Although there is agreement on the value of teacher development (TD), it is relatively unexplored, and the process of TD has not been clearly identified (Evans, 2002). When the following definitions in the existing literature are considered, it can easily be recognized that it is the concept of ‘knowledge’ that is usually prioritized:

- the expansion of the teaching profession’s knowledge base
- new structures and approaches for deepening and sharing knowledge for teaching
- restructuring teaching knowledge
- the amalgamation of practitioners’ experientially-acquired knowledge and the knowledge generated in higher education institutions
- the importance to professions of ‘colleagueship and the development of shared standards of practice’
- building the foundation of a profession (compiled in Evans, 2002)

Is teacher development synonymous merely with increasing knowledge base? Is increasing this base enough to attract teachers to development? Turhan and Arıkan (2009) point out that in-service teacher training programs focus on helping the teachers to further develop their teaching behaviors in the period after their initial training. While pre-service training gives essential basis before beginning teaching, in-service teacher training programs provide life-long support. Many traditional in-service teacher development programs; however, are criticized since the knowledge transmitted in these programs is generally far removed from the actual contexts of the teachers, and the situational factors affecting their classroom practices are not considered; and as a result, the aim of TD is rarely achieved (Atay, 2007). Similarly, Watts (1994) claims such programs

are often geared towards the interests of the course organizers, rather than those of the teachers themselves. According to Fullan and Miles (in Guskey, 2002, p. 382), what teachers expect to gain from TD programs are ‘...specific, concrete, and practical ideas that directly relate to the day-to-day operation of their classrooms’; therefore, in such programs TD should be considered from the bottom-up, rather than served up according to individual managers’ views of what development teachers need (Rossner, 1992).

These dilemmas of top-down vs. bottom-up; and theory vs. practice in TD are also issues in the field of English language teaching. Although the matters related to perception and applications of teacher development are likely to be common across countries, and also across different institutions within any given country; it would be interesting to explore the concept of teacher development in individual countries, in this case, Turkey, where the present research study was conducted.

A. TD in Turkish Context

As stated in Özen (2008), in Turkey, various in-service teacher training programs (INSET) are organized by Ministry of National Education (MoNE) at various intervals in order to improve the work efficiency of teachers, to ensure their orientation to new situations and developments, to prepare them for more responsible positions and to provide the scientific and technological information, skills and knowledge required by our age. In order to do so, MoNE cooperates with all central and provincial units and establishments of its own, as well as other public establishments and institutions such as Higher Education Council, universities, Foreign Culture Centers, and Nongovernmental Organizations (NGOs) under the coordination and planning of Ministry of National Education Department of In-service Training (MoNE, 2005). All the English language teachers working for the government and/or private institutions at all levels also benefit from such training programs given by MoNE. Apart from the training programs offered by the government, language teachers are still free to choose among others, such as attending in-service teacher training programs conducted by their own institutions, gaining further degrees, and following certificate programs given by institutions like British Council (Arıkan, 2004).

Other than the INSET programs designed by MoNE, some state and private universities in Turkey have Teacher Development Units in their language programs, where teacher trainers design activities to encourage the continual professional development of their instructors. In addition, to ensure and maintain quality, instructors can benefit from teaching and learning activities such as international conferences, formal training courses, short courses on specialized topic areas, as well as classroom observations and workshops.

In a study conducted by Pakkan (1995) when asked about the factors which affect their development decision, language teachers stated that teaching

more successfully, making students more active and increasing the quality of teaching/learning process were the motivations for taking further steps to develop as teachers. No matter what the reason and the form is, it is a known fact that professional development has a profound effect on the development of both novice and experienced teachers. In order to develop the school system and the instructional abilities of the teachers, short-term or one-shot in-service programs have long been conducted by experts chosen by the Ministry of Education in Turkey. In these programs, the areas in which teachers stated a need for improvement were material preparation and assessment, testing, classroom management, curriculum design and development and methodology as well as teaching vocabulary and skills, determining students' needs, ways of evaluating the effectiveness of teaching (Özen, 1997; Şentuna, 2002). Similarly, Cimer, Çakır and Çimer (2010) determined six important components of an effective INSET program: needs assessment, course content, time and duration of the courses, presentation of the course content, instructor quality, evaluation at the end of the courses and follow-up work and sustained support after the courses are stated by the participating teachers as the important things to be considered in order to increase the quality of the INSET programs. Examining the content of existing INSET programs in Turkey in more detail, it is possible to observe that they usually grant little autonomy to the teacher regarding planning their own professional development. The contents of these have been criticized for being too directive, often taking the form of traditional classrooms with trainers in the teachers' role, and teachers in the student role (Arıkan, 2004).

B. Teacher Perception of TD in Turkish Context

Putting aside the frequency of TD programs, the types of institutions that TD is offered (MoNe, universities, etc.), the dilemma between the theoretical and practical aspects of such programs, and also the conflict between course providers and course takers; the main issue to be addressed is the perception of the English language teachers working in Turkish context. Without a clear understanding of what exactly teachers understand by the term 'teacher development', no study on continuous professional development would be comprehensive.

Therefore, a retrospective look at the studies conducted on TD in Turkey brings out the following points regarding teachers' perceptions and views of TD:

1- The most common type of Teacher Development Activity (TDA) is studying theoretical books, and/or periodicals, and attending workshops and seminars for new ideas on classroom activities, and skills to apply in their own classrooms (Pakkan, 1995; Karaca, 1999 in Turhan and Arıkan, 2009).

2- Teachers usually do not consider teacher classroom research as a professional development activity (Atay, 2007).

3- Teachers state that INSET programs are an important source of job satisfaction. Their expectations from these are usually related to finding new

techniques and keeping up with the innovations in the field of ELT (Coşkuner, 2001).

4- In a larger scale study conducted with 530 teachers from 24 Turkish universities, it was seen that novice teachers are more interested in INSET programs than experienced teachers, and it was also clear that experienced teachers felt no need to attend INSET courses (Şentuna, 2002).

It can be concluded from the points discussed above that the English language teachers in Turkey have different perceptions about what counts as teacher development, which in turn affects their engagement in TDAs. Our argument in this study is a response to the need of the conceptualization of professional teacher development in Turkey. Therefore, the study in hand is an attempt to explore the following research questions:

1. Which activities are perceived as TDA by English language teachers working in different institutions in Turkey?
2. How frequently are they engaged in TD activities?
 - a. Does the type of institution affect the frequency of TD activities they are engaged in?
 - b. Does the teachers' level of experience affect the frequency and type of TD activities they are engaged in?
3. What do they think are the positive and negative factors affecting their engagement in TD activities?
 - a. Does it differ according to the institution they work for?

II. Method

A. Participants

158 English language teachers from 7 state universities located in 7 different cities, 4 private universities located in 3 different cities and 20 Ministry of National Education (MoNE) primary and secondary level state schools located in 9 different cities of Turkey participated in the study. The teaching experience ranged from 1-32 years. 31 were male, 127 female. Ages ranged between 22-64. In terms of qualifications, 35 held an ELT certificate, 79 a Bachelor's Degree, 32 a Master's degree and 12 had Doctorate degrees.

In this context, state universities refer to higher education institutions offering a 4-year undergraduate education which is mainly financed by the government. Private universities also offer 4-year undergraduate programmes, but are foundation institutions, in which students pay fees. Primary and secondary schools consist of educational institutions which cover K-12 education, and are mainly financed by the government. Table 1 below shows the composition of the participants.

Table 1. Participants' composition

<i>Institution</i>	<i>n</i>	<i>No of cities</i>	<i>No of schools</i>
Ministry of Education	42	9	20
State University	47	7	7
Private University	69	3	4
Total	158	19	31

B. Data collection methods and analysis

Instrument

To identify teachers' perceptions about TDA, and the factors that either contribute to or hinder their engagement in such activities, a questionnaire was designed. The questionnaire consisted of 5 sections:

Section 1: This section consisted of five demographic questions regarding the participant's age, gender, years of experience, current institution and the educational degree they obtained in ELT (English Language Teaching).

Section 2: The second section consisted of 22 items aimed at eliciting the type of activities which were perceived as professional development. In this section, teachers were given a list of activities, such as 'attending workshops', or 'observing others' and were asked whether they considered these as TDA or not. The items in section 2 were a collection of TDAs mentioned in the literature on teacher development as well as other activities observed by the researchers as being conducted in different institutions.

Section 3: Section three of the questionnaire consisted of 21 items in which teachers were asked to indicate how frequently they did the TDAs according to a five-point Likert-type scale ranging from (5) always to (1) never. The items in this section were taken from section three, but the item 'pursuing post graduate degrees', which did not lend itself for frequency rating, was omitted.

Section 4: The fourth section aimed at eliciting the positive factors that promoted the engagement in TDAs. In this part of the questionnaire, teachers were asked to rate the factors from the most important (9) to the least important (1), and also add any others that they thought affected them. These factors were those mentioned by teachers during the piloting stage of the questionnaire.

Section 5: This was the final part in which teachers were asked to rate the factors that hindered engagement in TDAs from the most important to the least important, on a nine-point Likert-type scale, where the highest score was 9 and the lowest 1. Teachers were also asked to make any necessary additions in this part. Here, too, the factors were taken from those reported during the piloting stage of the questionnaire.

Piloting

The questionnaire was piloted with 58 language teachers working in a university setting. The Cronbach's alpha for the total reliability and internal

consistency of the questionnaire was .71, which according to George and Mallery (2003) is an acceptable reliability level. Based on the piloting results, one item on the questionnaire, section three, was deleted because it did not lend itself for frequency rating. Regarding sections four and five, the additional factors stated by teachers were added to the questionnaire for the actual study; thus, providing a more comprehensive range of factors.

C. Data Analysis and Results

With regard to the first section of the questionnaire, frequency distributions and percentages were calculated. In sections 2, 3, 4 and 5 t-test, One-way ANOVA and Correlation were used.

The first research question related to the activities perceived as TDAs by teachers working in different institutions. Among the 22 activities listed on the questionnaire, those which received a rating higher than 90%, or lower than 60% have been highlighted. Table 2 lists the results for TDA perceptions in terms of frequency and percentages for all participants.

Table 2. Teacher perceptions of TDAs

<i>Item</i>	<i>Statement</i>	<i>n</i>	<i>%</i>
1	Attending internationally recognized certificate programs	139	87.42
2	Pursuing post graduate degrees	124	77.98
3	Attending institutional in-service training programs	139	87.42
4	Consulting experienced colleagues	134	84.27
5	Using the internet	142	89.30
6	Attending workshops	137	86.16
7	Presenting workshops	112	70.44
8	Reading books for pleasure in English	118	74.21
9	Working in study groups	110	69.18
10	Conducting Classroom teacher research	104	65.40
11	Observing other teachers	130	81.76
12	Being observed by teacher trainers/colleagues	109	68.55
13	Self-reflection through journal writing	85	53.45
14	Self-reflection through video/audio recording	100	62.89
15	Writing teaching material	123	77.35
16	Making publications in the field	112	70.44
17	Being in the country where English is spoken	113	71.06
18	Studying grammar books	104	65.40
19	Watching movies in English	128	80.50
20	Working with a mentor	124	77.98
21	Attending conferences	144	90.56

Table 2 shows that the majority of the participants, irrespective of institution, consider reading academic print material (96.85%) and attending conferences (90.56%) as activities that would be most likely to lead to professional development. Item 13 received the lowest rating (53.45%), which shows ‘self-reflection through journal writing’ was the activity least considered to lead to professional development.

The next research question was how frequently teachers were engaged in these TDAs. Table 3 shows the means and standard deviations of the 21 items in the third section of the questionnaire.

When total frequency values are analyzed, it can be seen that the top three TDAs that teachers are engaged in are ‘using the internet’ (4.37), ‘watching movies in English’ (4.34) and ‘reading the academic print material’ (3.79). ‘Self-reflection through video/audio recording’ (1.72), ‘making publications in the field’ (1.80) and ‘self-reflection through journal writing’ (1.90) are among the least popular TDAs.

Table 3. Descriptive results of all groups TDAs

<i>Item</i>	<i>Statement</i>	<i>MoNE</i>		<i>Private University</i>		<i>State University</i>		<i>TOTAL</i>	
		<i>Mean</i>	<i>Std. Dev.</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>Std. Dev.</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>Std. Dev.</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>Std. Dev.</i>
1	Attending internationally recognized certificate	2.53	1.30	2.22	1.00	1.95	1.03	2.16	1.08
2	Attending institutional in-service training programs	2.80	1.23	3.06	1.09	2.63	1.11	2.81	1.15
3	Consulting experienced colleagues	3.40	1.23	3.70	1.30	3.27	1.14	3.43	1.22
4	Using the internet	4.33	1.00	4.55	0.65	4.27	0.86	4.37	0.85
5	Attending workshops	3.16	1.45	3.72	1.07	3.19	1.22	3.34	1.26
6	Presenting workshops	2.37	1.33	1.89	0.91	2.14	1.20	2.13	1.17
7	Reading books for pleasure in English	3.98	0.92	3.81	1.08	3.58	1.11	3.75	1.06
8	Working in study groups	2.95	1.51	2.80	1.10	2.79	1.15	2.84	1.24
9	Conducting Action Research	2.26	1.38	1.93	1.04	2.30	1.21	2.18	1.21
10	Observing other teachers	3.45	1.25	2.64	1.09	2.36	1.35	2.74	1.32
11	Being observed by teacher trainers/colleagues	3.09	1.38	2.91	0.95	2.09	1.17	2.62	1.25
12	Self-reflection through journal writing	2.35	1.15	1.64	0.99	1.81	1.03	1.90	1.08
13	Self-reflection through video/audio recording	1.98	1.12	1.72	0.88	1.55	0.96	1.72	0.99
14	Writing teaching material	2.74	1.45	2.60	1.33	2.91	1.36	2.77	1.37
15	Making publications in the field	1.74	0.95	1.32	0.75	2.18	1.25	1.80	1.10
16	Being in the country where English is spoken	1.98	1.18	2.02	1.11	1.85	1.13	1.94	1.13
17	Studying grammar books	4.14	1.08	3.32	1.24	3.19	1.23	3.49	1.25
18	Watching movies in English	4.16	0.87	4.36	0.87	4.43	0.76	4.34	0.83
19	Working with a mentor	2.95	1.36	2.49	1.02	2.43	1.33	2.59	1.27
20	Attending conferences	3.14	1.13	2.98	0.99	3.44	1.02	3.22	1.06
21	Reading the academic print material about the field	4.00	0.96	3.57	1.05	3.81	1.20	3.79	1.10

Another variable explored in this study was whether experience has an effect on the frequency of participation in TDAs. Table 4 shows the relationship between experience and engagement in TDAs. In order to find out whether experience correlates, either positively or negatively with engagement in TDAs, a correlation analysis was carried out. Positive correlation shows that the more experienced the teachers, the more frequently they engage in the TDAs, indicated in Table 4. Negative correlation, on the other hand, shows that the less experienced the teachers, the more frequently they engage in the activities mentioned in Table 4.

Table 4. Experience and TDAs

<i>Positive correlation</i>		
Attending workshops	(p<.01)	r=.29
Presenting workshops	(p<.01)	r=.26
Conducting classroom teacher research	(p<.05)	r=.20
Self reflection through journal writing	(p<.05)	r=.20
Self reflection through video/audio recordings	(p<.05)	r=.19
Writing teaching materials	(p<.05)	r=.17
Making publications in the field	(p<.01)	r=.31
Being in the country where English is spoken	(p<.05)	r=.18
<i>Negative Correlation</i>		
Using the Internet	(p<.01)	r=-.22
Watching movies in English	(p<.01)	r=-.25

It is interesting to note that the more experienced teachers get, the more they report being involved with teacher development activities such as ‘attending workshops’ or ‘presenting workshops’, whereas less experienced teachers report relying more on activities such as ‘using the internet’ and ‘watching movies in English’ to develop themselves professionally. Even though the correlation coefficients are low, it still shows that experience has an impact on TDAs.

The third research question aimed to identify the factors which have a positive effect and those which have a negative effect on teachers’ engagement in TDAs. Table 5 shows the means and standard deviations for positive and negative factors.

Table 5. Descriptive statistics for positive and negative factors

<i>POSITIVE FACTORS</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>Std. Deviation</i>
Guest speakers/trainers provided by the institution	156	5,92	2,48
Facility support	156	6,65	2,44
Institutional training opportunities	156	6,79	2,15
Encouragement by the administration for PD activities	156	6,53	2,51
Encouragement by colleagues for PD activities	156	5,60	2,74
Being informed about professional development events by the institution	156	5,96	2,54
Relevancy, practicality and applicability of workshops	156	6,84	2,41
Entertaining content of workshops/seminars	156	5,53	2,69
<i>Willingness to develop as a teacher</i>	<i>156</i>	<i>7,94</i>	<i>2,24</i>
<i>NEGATIVE FACTORS</i>			
Inconvenient schedule of PD events	154	6,64	2,19
<i>Work load</i>	<i>154</i>	<i>7,43</i>	<i>1,92</i>
Lack of financial support by the institution	154	6,62	2,45
Negative working conditions	154	6,29	2,50
Lack of professional commitment/willingness	154	6,19	3,03
Cost of the Professional development events	151	6,01	2,56
Lack of resources	154	5,30	2,72
Lack of facilities and equipment	154	5,53	2,78
Lack of professional support and guidance	151	5,64	2,70

As Table 5 demonstrates, in terms of positive factors contributing to instructors' engagement, 'willingness to develop as a teacher' received the highest rating (7,94). Regarding negative factors, 'work load' is seen as the most important hindrance to instructors' engagement in teacher development activities with a mean of 7,43. To reveal any significant differences between groups in terms of either positive or negative factors, one-way ANOVA was used. In the second item on negative factors, 'work load' differed significantly from the others ($F(2, 151)=12,236, p<.01$). Tukey post hoc multiple comparison analysis of the three groups (MoNE, Private Universities and State Universities) indicates that the MoNE teachers gave significantly higher ratings than both private and state university teachers (95% CI[-2.45, -.62], $p=.01$.) The means

indicate that even though work load is an issue in all institutions, the ones working in MoNE are affected by this factor more than the other two groups ($p<0.01$).

III. Discussion

The analysis in the study focused mainly on English language teachers' perceptions on TDAs and how frequently they were engaged in these activities. It further investigated the factors involved in teachers' TDA engagement.

The responses of 158 teachers regarding their perceptions on TDA reveal that attending conferences and reading academic print material are widely considered as being TDAs in contrast to self-reflection through journal writing, which received the lowest rating. These responses show a clear preference for what Bell and Gilbert (in Evans 2002) refer to as 'input' aspects of development, in contrast to the 'trying out' aspects. The input aspects refer to the exposure to novel teaching ideas and suggestions, whereas the trying out aspects refer to the teachers' implementations of these. Popular TDAs foregrounded by the participants were all input activities, i.e. conference participation and reading of print and online material. On the other hand, trying out activities, such as self-reflection, classroom research and observation were rated considerably lower. This concentration on the input end of the continuum suggests the lack of balance. Bell and Gilbert emphasized that balance between the two aspects is important for effective professional development.

The frequency analysis presents using the internet, watching movies in English and reading the academic print material as the most common TDAs. Similar to their perceptions, these activities too are receptive, externally offered, leading to expanding teachers' input on novel ideas and suggestions. On the other hand, the activities which received the lowest rating in terms of frequency are self-reflection through video/audio recording, making publications in the field and self-reflection through journal writing, all of which require reflection on, and evaluation of, practices which are directly implemented in the classroom. Regarding institutional differences despite the differences in a few items, e.g. reading grammar books for MoNE, the tendency for the type of TDA engagement is similar in all three institutions. One major difference observed between MoNE and state universities, on the one hand, and private universities on the other, is the opportunity to visit English speaking countries. The reason for this is likely to be private universities' much greater capacity to support teachers' overseas travel.

When the role of experience is taken into account, it can be seen that there is a tendency for experienced teachers to be more involved in the *trying out* and productive professional development activities such as presenting workshops and conducting classroom teacher research. This particular finding can be attributed to an increasing level of self-confidence gained over the years. Less experienced teachers, however, rely more on generating input from sources

such as using the Internet and English language films, which could be the result of their familiarity with technology.

Besides identifying teachers' perceptions and frequency of TDA engagement, another concern of the study was the factors involved in encouraging or hindering their professional development activities. The most influential factor in teacher development is the individual teacher's willingness to take responsibility for their own development. As Lange (1990) strongly suggests, TD can only be done by and for oneself. Turhan and Arıkan (2009, p. 411) state that 'it is the teacher who decides which activities and/or resources should be used and for how long it should last for his/her own development.' It is always the teachers themselves who shape their own motivation for development, a view which is supported by the responses in this study.

Yet, irrespective of the type of institution the teachers are working for, in spite of their commitment, the factor that most obstructs their ability to participate in teacher development is the work load. Here, work load usually refers to the teaching hours expected from the participants. Knowing that the teachers are expected to cover between 18-24 hours weekly teaching in the Turkish context, this result seems to be a valid reason for their low TD activity involvement.

In conclusion, the overall results of the study can be said to confirm that teacher development is mainly an individual venture, that is, it is ultimately the teachers' own responsibility how far they improve as teachers, and to choose the methods to achieve this improvement. The results clearly show that English language teachers in Turkey are provided with variety of activities that they perceive as TD activities. Language teachers, in general, all seem to engage in some type of TD activity regardless of level of experience, and type of institution. Considering the findings regarding the 'input' and 'trying out' aspects of TD, the low ratings of 'reflection' as a TD activity, and the role of level of experience in the engagement of TD activities, as well as the factors hindering teachers' involvement in TD, following implications for TD programs could be made:

- 1- Teacher education programs could consider encouraging teachers to balance the 'input' and 'trying out' aspects of their professional development.
- 2- Experienced teachers, who, according to the results of the study, are more likely to be engaged in 'trying out' aspect of TD can be involved in teacher education as mentors for novice or less experienced teachers. These teachers could be invited to share their experience with the less experienced, and to encourage their involvement in developmental activities such as presenting workshops for colleagues, designing mini classroom teacher research projects regarding their specific classroom teaching, making publications, and the like.

- 3- The particular finding regarding the teachers' low engagement in reflection (in the forms of writing reflecting journals or reflection through audio/video recording) can be attributed to the possibility that teachers lack awareness of the true definition and potential scope of reflection. Taking into consideration that it is possible to train teachers in the process of reflection (Gün, 2011), teacher education programs could allocate more resources to reflection that is 'critical' and therefore productive.
- 4- One of the potentially most interesting findings of the study is the one regarding the negative factor(s) hindering the teachers' involvement in the TD activities. 'Workload' appears to be the major disrupting factor. It appears that teachers perceive TD as an activity for which specific amounts of time needs to be allocated. Although this may be true for some activities such as attending conferences, presenting workshops, etc.; they fail to see that considerable amount of development might take place in the classroom itself, i.e. using the time which has previously been considered 'workload', and thus unavailable for development. TD activities such as conducting classroom teacher research, inviting colleagues and/or trainers for observation for reflection purposes, and video/audio recording of classes can be carried out during classroom teaching. Therefore, it could well be part of the teacher educators' responsibility to raise teachers' awareness about the exact definition, nature and scope of teacher development.

It can be concluded from the results of this study that best results could be obtained for the development of English language teachers in Turkish context, and most probably in many other contexts worldwide, when the two main conditions are met: teachers' openness and willingness for development, and the right amount and variety of TD activities, as well as the necessary support provided by teacher education programs' and the institutions in which the development is to take place.

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