TEACHERS' PERCEPTIONS OF SELF-INITIATED PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT: A CASE STUDY ON BAŞKENT UNIVERSITY ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHERS

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ABSTRACT

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The purpose of this study was to investigate perceptions of self-initiated professional development of English language teachers at English Language School of Başkent University. Within this framework, teachers' attitudes towards their professional development, their perceptions of major professional development activities, and the factors that hinder change and growth in teachers were investigated.

The data collection instrument used was a questionnaire administered to 110 English language teachers at Başkent University. The questionnaire consisted of both open-ended and close-ended items and the data collected were analyzed descriptively to understand the general trends and differences among teachers.

The data analysis revealed that the teachers agreed with most of the concepts that reflect the importance of professional development. In addition, they were aware of the importance of major professional development activities for their growth. However, peer observation and action research, which are developmental activities, were not favoured as much as the other activities. In addition, it was found that the teachers did not make use of the activities as much as they gave importance to. Furthermore, teachers showed significant differences in importance given to and making use of the activities by the background variables. Female teachers, young teachers and the teachers who do not have much experience seemed to give more importance to and actualize some of the professional development activities more than the other teachers. Meanwhile, it was also noted that the listed factors that hinder growth were all found important by the teachers. The most important impediments to growth were indicated as excessive workload, lack of self-motivation and lack of institutional support for professional development.

Key Words: English language teachers, ongoing professional development, self-initiated development, professional development activities, impediments to change and growth.

ÖZ

ÖĞRETMENLERİN KENDİ İNSİYATİFLERİNDEKİ MESLEKİ GELİŞİM ETKİNLİKLERİ İLE İLGİLİ GÖRÜSLERİ: BAŞKENT ÜNİVERSİTESİ İNGİLİZCE HAZIRLIK BÖLÜMÜ ÖĞRETMENLERİ İLE İLGİLİ DURUM ÇALIŞMASI

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Bu çalışmanın amacı Başkent Üniversitesi İngilizce Hazırlık Bölümü öğretmenlerinin kendi insiyatifleri çerçevesinde başlattıkları mesleki gelişim etkinlikleri ile ilgili görüşlerini incelemektir. Bu çerçevede, öğretmenlerin kendi mesleki gelişimlerine karşı tavırları, belli başlı gelişim etkinlikleri ile ilgili görüşleri, gelişimi ve değişimi engelleyen faktörler incelenmiştir.

Veri toplama aracı İngilizce Hazırlık Bölümündeki 110 öğretmene verilen ankettir. Bu anket açık ve kapalı uçlu sorulardan oluşmuştur ve toplanan veriler genel yönelimi ve öğretmenler arasındaki farklılıkları anlamak için betimsel analizden geçirilmiştir.

Veri analizi, öğretmenlerin mesleki gelişimin önemini yansıtan bir çok görüşe katıldıklarını ortaya çıkarmıştır. Buna ek olarak, öğretmenler belli başlı gelişim etkinliklerinin gelişimleri için öneminin farkındadırlar. Ama, gelişim etkinliklerinden, öğretim elemanları arası sınıf içi gözlemleri ve eylem araştırması diğer etkinlikler kadar önemsenmemiştir. Buna ek olarak, öğretmenlerin mesleki gelişim etkinliklerine önem verdikleri kadar bunlardan faydalanmadıkları tespit edilmiştir. Ayrıca, öğretmenler etkinliklere verdikleri önem ve bunları kullanma konusunda alt grup değişkenlerine göre belirli farklılıklar göstermişlerdir. Bayan öğretmenler, genç olanlar ve deneyimi az olan öğretmenlerin bazı mesleki gelişim etkinliklerine daha çok önem verip, onları daha çok kullandıkları ortaya çıkmıştır. Bununla birlikte belirtilen gelişimi engelleyici faktörlerin hepsinin öğretmenler tarafından önemli bulunduğu da ortaya çıkarılmıştır. En önemli gelişimi engelleyici faktörlerin ağır iş yükü, motivasyon eksikliği ve mesleki gelişim için kurum tarafından verilen desteğin eksikliği olarak belirtilmiştir.

Anahtar kelimeler: İngilizce öğretmenleri, sürekli mesleki gelişim, öğretmenlerin kendi insiyatiflerindeki mesleki gelişim, mesleki gelişim etkinlikleri, gelişim ve değişime engeller.

To My Mother

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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

Date   05.09.2003   Signature

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background to the Study

Living in an environment, where knowledge, technology, concepts, philosophies, almost everything is rapidly changing, teaching becomes an extremely complex and demanding occupation. Keeping pace with the continuous changes and developments is considered to be a necessity for the quality of teaching and education. Therefore, ongoing professional development becomes a vital component in teachers' lives.

There are various other reasons why ongoing professional development is appreciable in education. First of all, the quality of education demands continuous improvement in teaching. Hargreaves and Fullan (1992) state the importance of the raising of educational standards, which revolves around the issue of providing equal and sufficient opportunities to learn for all children in schools. However, "opportunities to learn also require opportunities to teach" (Woods, cited in Hargreaves and Fullan, 1992, p. 1). Therefore, teachers need to be continually going ahead and equipping themselves with the knowledge and skills that will increase their ability to provide improved opportunities to learn for all their students. In order to accomplish this goal, teachers should also have opportunities

to develop themselves and be committed to use them to be better teachers. Similarly, Loucks-Horsley, Harding, Arbuckle, Murray, Dubea, and Williams (1987) state that a person who has opportunities to learn and grow can best provide such opportunities for young people.

Secondly, teachers cannot ignore their development because they should be models for their students as enthusiastic, life-long learners. Teachers must demonstrate their own commitment and enthusiasm towards continuous learning because their primary duty is to inculcate in their students a disposition towards life-long learning (Day, 1999).

Finally, the nature of teaching demands that teachers engage in career-long professional growth (Day, 1999) because as Tom (1997) puts forward, teaching expertise does mature over the span of a career. Therefore, one of the main tasks of teachers is to give importance to their own development and continue learning through making use of the opportunities they have.

Significantly, English Language Teaching (ELT) has its own challenges and is highly demanding due to a set of valid reasons. To start with, keeping up with the changes in the field is especially important for English language teachers because there are rapid innovations and changes to keep up with in this field. Curtis (cited in Bailey, Curtis, and Nunan, 2001) states that staying abreast of the rapidly evolving field of ELT is a reason to participate in professional development. Similarly, Pachier and Field (1997) state that being an effective foreign language teacher requires a commitment to keep up with the developments in the field and a willingness to engage in continuous professional development.

Furthermore, managing a foreign language classroom effectively depends on many factors and this is demanding on the part of the teacher. According to Brown (cited in Köymen and Kandiller, 1997), so as to manage a foreign language classroom effectively, teachers need to have a good deal of knowledge and comprehension of many factors and variables that control and govern the process of learning and teaching in the classroom situation. Hence, English language teachers have to consider many concepts and guidelines like motivating students and keeping them involved, teaching four skills and integrating them.

As well as that, Coşkuner (2001) argues that ELT is highly demanding in its notion of satisfying the needs of regularly increasing numbers of learners with effective teaching methodologies to be performed skilfully with dedication and enthusiasm.

The need to develop professionally as English language teachers necessitates engaging in the learning process actively and there are numerous development activities for English language teachers to engage in for the purpose of self-development. Additionally, there are a number of dimensions in which these professional development activities may vary along. For instance, according to Loucks-Horsley et al. (1987) one of them is short-term or long-term dimension of a teacher's improvement activities. A teacher may plan an improvement that takes months or years to observe the desired impact or may choose a change that is quick and simple to accomplish and see the results. Another dimension that is stated is solitary or interactive. A teacher may engage in self-development alone or with others. Self-reflection is one of the processes including solitary activities in which a teacher may assess, set goals, and implement changes. Interactive

activities may also be an alternative for self-development: a teacher may seek input from other people close by, such as students, peers or supervisors. In addition to these dimensions, a teacher may choose to prioritise the institutional opportunities for his development like in-service training activities, seminars, conferences, supervision, mentoring.

Among these various approaches to teacher development, self-initiated development stands as one of the noticeable trends. According to Wajnryb (1992), teacher development is something that happens within the classroom and within oneself. It is often initiated by teachers themselves and the role of school-based support is to help channel these energies in directions that will be valuable and meaningful to the teachers concerned. In other words, self-initiation of professional development is one of the invaluable aspects of successful professional development since it implies teachers' motivation and devotion to improve, which are considered as the key terms for successful development. They are the key terms because change and successful development is unlikely to happen unless teachers are voluntary and willing to. Day (1999) agrees with this idea and states that professional development is not something that can be forced, it is the teacher who develops actively, and not the teacher who is developed passively. He further argues that change, which is not internalized is likely to be cosmetic, "token" and temporary. Curtis (cited in Bailey et al., 2001) adds that teachers develop as professionals, if, only if, they choose to. In addition, Freeman and Cornwell (1993) favour the teacher who gathers data about one's own performance or behaviour. According to them, self-initiated development effort, driven by one's own will to improve, tends to have a stronger effect and be more

long lasting. Bailey, Curtis, and Nunan (1998) state that successful professional development must be ongoing, sustained, and self-directed. These arguments place self-initiated and self-directed development in an important position in professional development.

In conclusion, the best sources for professional development are the teachers themselves if they take charge of their own development and build a vision. They are the ones to start a practice, reflect on and evaluate their teaching to contribute to their development that will continue through their careers.

Despite the fact that professional development prioritizes the personal desire to improve and self-initiate, it has been agreed that teachers cannot develop entirely by themselves. Clark (cited in Hargreaves and Fullan, 1992) states that professional development is basically "a solitary journey" (p. 81). However, it should be added that teachers all need help and support throughout their journey. Self-initiated development and teachers taking charge of their own development doesn't mean that teachers have to develop in solitude. Therefore, it is a good idea to seek collaboration from colleagues to enhance their development efforts. In other words, teachers should take the initiative to work with colleagues for their development. By this way, they can gain an inside perspective on other teachers' experiences and raise their awareness through reflecting on their own teaching. Edge (cited in Bailey et. al., 2001) states that working in isolation holds teachers back. According to her, teaching shouldn't be limited to an individual, and subjective experience shared with no one but through cooperation teachers have a chance to escape from subjectivity, and understand own experiences and opinions.

Improving skills, knowledge and attitude by giving importance to and getting engaged in professional development can make English language teachers highly qualified and powerful. On the other hand, staying away from development may lead to incompetence and therefore may create problems in foreign language education, as in Turkey. In Turkey English language is widely taught in universities since the proclamation of the new Turkish Republic in 1923. Since then, English language has been emphasized as one of the important goals in Turkish education (Demircan, cited in Coşkuner, 2001). As well as the importance given to ELT, the problems in the area have been recognized in Turkey. According to Kocaman (cited in Kilimci, 1998), the problems in this area need to be continuously examined. Although Turkish students have approximately 10 years of foreign language education starting from the secondary school till the end of the university education, the majority of university graduates try to learn the language in language courses. Kocaman suggests giving importance to teacher development in order to eliminate this problem. Simultaneously, he claims that teacher development is not valued enough in Turkey and this is a problem. In the light of his studies and observations, language teachers are not competent in teaching a language.

In conclusion, there is a need for effective language teachers in Turkey. According to Demircan (cited in Coşkuner, 2001), in meeting this demand, training a highly qualified teaching force and retaining the good teachers within ELT profession plays a crucial role. Therefore, understanding teachers and their perceptions of their professional development is essential.

The need to study self-development of teachers in the world and in Turkey

seems clear since teacher development is crucial for the quality of education. Therefore, teachers should be engaged in this complex process whose success depends on personal efforts, opportunities to develop, engaging in some activities, and many other exponents.

In the world many research studies are done on the self-development of English language teachers for the purpose of discussing the importance of the subject and its components. There are both quantitative and qualitative studies that discuss various activities of development and their benefits for teachers and education. In addition, there are many studies questioning the benefits of pre- and in-service teacher training programmes, and suggesting alternative models on teacher development.

It appears that there are not many studies on self-development of English language teachers in Turkey. When research studies in recent related literature are examined, it appears that little attention has been devoted to the self-development of teachers. There are studies mostly focusing on the evaluation of pre- or in-service programmes in ELT. Besides, there are some studies focusing on one of the activities that foster development of teachers. The benefits of the application of some activities are also examined in these studies. However, what remains unclear is English language teachers' perceptions of self-initiated professional development. Therefore, this study aims to analyze English language teachers' attitudes towards and perceptions of their own development and self-initiated professional development.

1.2 Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study is to investigate the perceptions of self-initiated professional development of English language teachers at English Language School of Başkent University. While dealing with some professional development opportunities, impediments to development of teachers and recommendations will be studied. Specific research questions include the following:

1. What are English language teachers' attitudes toward their own professional development?

2. What major professional development activities do English language teachers perceive as critical to their development as professionals and to what degree do they make use of these opportunities?

3. What hinders change and growth in English language teachers?

1.3 Significance of the Study

This study on self-development of English language teachers is valuable for several reasons. First of all, there has been a little direct research on English language teachers' attitudes toward professional development efforts and the activities that fall into the category of self-development in Turkey. Therefore, this study provides an insight into teacher development in our schools.

Secondly, the importance of engaging in voluntary, individual, and collaborative efforts in self-development is made clear. The degree to which self-development is valued, fulfilled and the impediments to growth is discussed

through this study. Thus, the study may provide an insight for decision-makers, teacher trainers in English language schools and help them reconsider development opportunities, the need for teacher development, problems of teachers, and take some measures to improve the situation. As Coşkuner (2001) states, teachers' levels of commitment might vary depending on the work conditions and opportunities offered to them to improve accordingly in different Turkish ELT contexts.

Lastly, since the subject is given a lot of importance, in especially the foreign literature, it would be stimulating to examine some of the potential opportunities and how much English language teachers develop themselves as teachers. This study could contribute to future directions in research and practice in the field.

In conclusion, the results of the study may provide a perspective on the area of teacher development in Turkey by understanding English language teachers' perceptions of their own professional development. It may help staff developers, and teacher trainers to understand teachers' needs, communicate with them more effectively and improve teacher development opportunities for better performance in classes. As well as that, it may help teachers become aware of their conceptions and the importance of their own professional development.

1.4 Definitions of Terms

Professional development of teachers: A process of continual intellectual, experiential, and attitudinal growth of teachers. (Bailey et al., 1998).

Self-initiated professional development of teachers: Teachers' own

development of intellect, experience and attitudes, which is initiated by themselves.

Teacher attitude: Teachers' feeling, manner, or behaviour toward a situation or a cause.

Teacher perception: Teachers' understanding or awareness of a situation or a cause.

CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

In this section, first alternative conceptions of self-development will be presented. Secondly, a review of adult learning and teacher developmental stages then life cycle of teachers will be discussed. After that, activities that foster professional development of English language teachers under the headings of in-service training, peer coaching, action research will be examined. Finally, research on self-development of English language teachers both in the world and in Turkey will be discussed.

2.1 Alternative Conceptions of Self-Development

In the literature there are some alternative terms underlying self-development of teachers, like self-inquiry, self-evaluation and self-reflection. These terms are used interchangeably in the literature.

Self –inquiry is the encompassing term that includes questioning, examining, evaluating and reflecting of teachers on their performances. In order to inquire about their own skills, teachers need to reflect on their performance. Teachers' reflection is vital to develop a deeper understanding of the events that occur in the classroom. As Richert (cited in Lieberman and Miller, 1991) expresses, having an

experience does not constitute learning about it; having an experience and then thinking about it to make sense of it does.

According to Farrell (1998), reflective teaching can benefit English language teachers in three main ways: it helps free the teacher from impulsive and routine behaviour, it allows teachers to act in a deliberate, intentional manner and avoid the "I don't know what I will do today" syndrome, it distinguishes teachers as educated human beings.

Teachers first of all need to observe their performance to reflect upon. Diary writing, peer observation, action research, video or audio taping are some of the techniques that can be used to self-reflect on teaching performance.

When a teacher observes his/ her own teaching and reflects upon it, he/ she means to evaluate his/ her performance and notice the strong and weak points in his/ her teaching. This self-evaluation is the only true evaluation. As Reece and Walker (1997) state, teachers can get all sorts of assistance in evaluating themselves but, unless they make their own judgements, they will find all sorts of excuses why someone else's evaluation is invalid or unreliable. Nikolic (2002) argues that self-evaluation is a powerful means of achieving permanent positive change than any other method of professional growth or supervision because teachers can accomplish most by working on their own. They self-evaluate voluntarily, and this factor ensures they are motivated to experiment and willing to change. Self-evaluation can be achieved by combining self-reflection with some techniques like using checklists, rating scales, questionnaires, peer observations, audio or video recordings, keeping diaries.

After being involved in a classroom inquiry and evaluation, teachers gather data about their performance through the use of different techniques or activities. Then the term "reflection" is vital to develop a deeper understanding of the events that occur in the classroom. Teachers need to think about their classroom practices and alternative ways to achieve their goals or aims.

2.2 Adult Learning and Teacher Development Stages

Teachers have different needs and abilities at different stages of their careers. Therefore, understanding adult learning is important to fully understand the professional development of teachers.

Knowles (cited in Raths and Katz, 1986) identifies some principles for facilitating adult learning, regardless of one's stages of development. One of the principles which constitute the foundation of stones of modern adult learning is that; adults have a deep need to be self-directed, therefore the role of the teacher is to engage in a process of inquiry with adult learners rather than to transmit knowledge to them. Another principle is that, experience is the richest source for adult learning therefore, the core methodology of adult education is the analysis of experience.

In addition to these, adult motivation is also considered. Adults are motivated to learn as they experience needs and interests that learning will satisfy, therefore the needs and interests are appropriate starting points for organizing adult learning activities.

One of the important principles is about individual differences among adults. It is stated that individual differences among people increase with age, therefore,

adult education must make optimal provision for differences in style, time, place, and pace of learning.

In addition to Knowles, Burden (cited in Raths and Katz, 1986) underlines the importance of knowledge of teachers' personal and professional developmental changes since it can help teacher educators understand the needs and abilities of teachers at different points in their careers and serve as a basis for planning interventions to promote developmental growth. According to Burden, development generally refers to the phenomenon of change in form over time. This change is usually from simple to complex forms; it often proceeds through stages. Those who select teaching as a career exhibit these phases and developmental characteristics as do all other adults.

2.2.1 Life Cycle of Teacher

There are several ways of analyzing the professional life cycle of teachers. However, Hargreaves and Fullan (1992) and Day (1999) agree that there are some authoritative studies on this subject by teachers like Huberman (1989), Sikes et al. (1985), Fessler and Christensen (1992). As pointed out by Day, these teachers' works suggest that teachers pass through five broad stages: launching a career, stabilization, new challenges and new concerns, reaching a professional plateau and disenchantment.

During the first stages of their career, teachers go through easy or painful beginnings to their career and they present initial commitment and enthusiasm. This stage is experienced between 1-3 years of teaching experience.

After this stage, teachers find commitment and feel relatively secure in their knowledge of teaching practice and subject matter. In this stabilization stage, teachers are comfortable with their identity as members of particular school community. This stage is true for 4-6 years of teaching experience. According to this (Huberman's) model, stabilization period is rather brief but it is the key stage. The sense of growing maturity is likely to be accompanied by skill and experimentation and commitment but ultimately to monotony, stagnation and disenchantment. These may happen between 7-18 years of teaching experience.

Between 19-30 years of experience teachers may show more concern with holding on to what they have and show resistance to innovations. They may witness mid-life crisis and disenchantment to their profession. On the other hand, contrary to this conservatism, teachers may feel a greater sense of confidence and self-acceptance. They may begin to re-orientate themselves.

In the final 10-15 years of their careers teachers seem to have calmer years and experience and a gradual disengaging as they approach retirement. Disengagement may be experienced in 31-40 years of teaching experience.

In the light of these theories, it can be concluded that teachers at different stages of their careers may experience, feel, think and act differently. Therefore, professional development activities should be applied and evaluated according to the teachers' needs at different stages of their careers.

However, during the planning of professional development, teachers' cognitive development must also be taken into account. Day (1999) reports that age alone does not provide sufficient information upon which to determine a teacher's career cycle, life period, or developmental stage.

2.3 Activities that Foster Professional Development of English Language Teachers

2.3.1 In-service Training

In-service training (INSET) is defined as a planned event, series of events or extended programme of accredited or non-accredited learning, in order to distinguish it from less formal in-school development work and extended partnerships and inter school networks (Day, 1999).

As professionals, teachers need to keep pace with the rapid developments in order to be familiar with new knowledge and technologies. This is not an easy task to fulfil. As Özen (2001) states, due to rapid advances in technology and science the information content of our world today grows and doubles in comparatively short periods of time. Likewise, the roles that individuals have to fill in their professional and personal lives vary so rapidly that it sometimes becomes difficult to follow and to keep pace with them. In this respect, INSET is regarded as necessary for teachers and it is powerful in fostering teachers' development. Therefore, it is widely applied. According to Day (1999), there is evidence that INSET can and does exercise powerful effects on the thinking and practices of teachers, and thus, indirectly upon the quality of students' classroom experiences.

What is commonly agreed is that INSET is powerful in fostering teachers' development but only if it is applied with care because the application of the programme has some limitations that need to be recognized. First of all, INSET provides intensive learning but over a limited period of time, which brings

extensive learning into question. Day (1999) claims that while teachers now have more opportunities for INSET, they have less opportunity for extended learning, less choice over what they learn. Hiep (2001) also underlines the importance of extensive learning, and views education as a long-term process. However, Şentuna (2002) states in her thesis that extensive learning occurs in only a very small minority of cases.

Consequently, in order to learn extensively what is introduced in the INSET programme, follow-up support and practice are required to take place. As Hiep (2001) claims, along with the teacher training, teacher development must be a vital component in teacher education since development fills the gap in training by giving teachers opportunities to reflect on classroom practice, gain insight into teaching experiences and deal with change and divergence.

Moreover, Hargreaves and Fullan (1992) states that INSET runs the risk of emphasizing skill development of teachers rather than personal and professional development, which is a threat for extensive learning and development.

Another shortcoming of training programmes is that; they are questionable in terms of satisfying the needs of the teachers. Hargreaves and Fullan (1992) claim that INSET programmes rarely address the individual needs and concerns. On the other hand, needs of the teachers cannot be neglected during the programme since as Coşkuner (2001) also states, it is an essential factor affecting the fruitfulness of the implementation of any INSET. Fullan explains the reason for setting aside the needs of the teachers in these programmes by the fact that the topics are frequently selected by people other than those for whom in-service is intended.

Therefore, these programmes should be organized well in terms of addressing teachers' acceptance of the need for such a programme and the content of it.

The possible shortcomings of INSET programmes such as, limitation of time and extended learning, and ignoring the need of teachers bring one of the most important drawbacks into light; teacher resistance. Resistance could be a natural reaction if little value is placed on teachers' own practical knowledge and needs for their development. Clark (cited in Hargreaves and Fullan, 1992) sees the other side of the mirror and states that teachers in this approach are viewed as people to be trained and developed, not as people who can and should develop themselves and the resources are invested more in skill development than in personal growth or in creating a supportive culture. Hargreaves and Fullan (1992) also point out the possible lack of commitment of teachers as this opportunity runs the risk of imposing a top-down improvement on teachers. Furthermore, Day (1999) defines teachers who are trained in INSET programmes as delivery agents who are acting in accordance with statutory demands of the employer and states that there is a tendency now to regard development as training which may be achieved in short, sharp bursts.

All things considered, INSET programmes can have important contributions to foster teachers' knowledge and improve their classroom practices. However, these programmes' limitations and strengths need to be considered. As Day (1999) puts forward, where INSET doesn't take account of the development phases of teachers, their intellectual and emotional development needs, it is unlikely to enhance their capacity for skilled commitment over the longer period.

2.3.2 Peer Observation

Teachers have many sources to learn from others. As indicated by Freeman and Cornwell (1993), they can learn from experts by taking courses, or undergoing programmes of staff training in new techniques and approaches, from formal meetings, discussions, performance appraisals, clinical supervision, students, or peer observation. Teachers also learn from their students but they learn most, perhaps, from themselves and other teachers, particularly from colleagues in their own work place. Hence, one of the most important activities for teachers to develop themselves is peer observation, in which two teachers observe each other.

Peer observation as a self-assessment and learning tool follows some stages. In the pre-observation stage the observer and the teacher discusses the lesson plan and the focus of the observation and during the observation the observer makes notes on the steps in the lesson, recordings such things as departures from the lesson plan. In the post-observation stage both the teacher and the observer report their impressions of the lesson, and discuss any differences of interpretation. Last stage is the follow-up stage when the teacher tries out any new ideas or suggestions that arise and reports back to the observer (Nunan and Lamb, 1996).

There are many reasons for peer observation to play an important part in teachers' professional development. As can be understood from the stages of peer observation, the activity is highly interactive and this is an opportunity for both the teacher and the observer to learn from these interactions when applied successfully. As well as that, peer coaching provides both parties with an

opportunity to reflect on their own teaching skills, ways and assumptions by enabling them to observe different styles of teaching. According to Freeman and Cornwell (1993), this activity provides opportunities for critical reflection on one's own teaching. Loucks-Horsley et al. (1987) agree that teachers who go through peer coaching experiences can gain a better understanding of the teaching/ learning process.

In addition, teachers who experience peer observation for their development and critically reflect on their teaching can gain self-analysis skills. This leads teachers to gain better understanding of their teaching while at the same time, as Wajnryb (1992) states, refines their ability to observe, analyze, and interpret, an ability which can be used to improve their own teaching.

Furthermore, peer observation is beneficial in helping teachers develop and deepen collegiality. According to Seferoğlu (1996), it increases professional dialogue. Similarly, Loucks-Horsley et al. (1987) puts forward that this activity can gain a more positive attitude toward instructional support.

On the other hand, peer observation activity runs some risks. Potentially, the reason for observing another teacher's classroom practices may remind evaluation of the teacher observed. Considering observation as a way of assessing teaching can have negative results. Freeman and Cornwell (1993) state that teachers may react to peer observation as an assessment exercise, which is initiated from administration. Nunan and Lamb (1996) and Cosh (1999) also underline the same risk; the understanding of peer observation as a procedure imposed from above. This understanding brings the danger of minimum

commitment and reaction on the part of the teachers, they even may become defensive and resistant to any future suggestions.

Unfortunately, peer observation is commonly carried out as a way of evaluation of the observed in many language programmes. Cosh (1999) states that peer observation is frequently done for purposes of appraisal or judgement of the observed. He adds that this can be detrimental both to teacher confidence and to a supportive environment. Similarly, Richards and Lockhart (1996) underline the fact that in many language programmes teachers are often reluctant to take part in observation or related activities since observation is associated with evaluation.

Admittedly, observation used as a vehicle for evaluation of others has little value on teacher development because as Cosh (1999) indicates, the focus is on being developed, rather than on self-awareness and self-development. Thus, peer observation should be considered as a way of gathering information about teaching for the purpose of reassessing our assumptions, and way of teaching. In other words, as Richards and Lockhart (1996) suggest, the observer's function should be limited to that of gathering information in order for observation to be viewed as a positive rather than negative experience.

Another danger is that, giving feedback is a delicate and not an easy job to accomplish. Peers judge each other in this activity, which means the feedback they give carries the risk of being subjective and limited especially when it is given by those without training. Hence, as Cosh (1999) states, the feedback may only serve to give offence. Alternatively, the observer may feel obliged to make only positive comments and the whole exercise becomes a pointless act of mutual back patting.

In conclusion, peer observation is a powerful professional development activity for both the observers and the teachers if it is skilfully handled. It has the power to develop collegiality, enhance skills of observation and reflection and therefore, improve teaching skills. However, if it is badly handled, as Wragg (1999) defines, it may arouse hostility, resistance, and suspicion.

2.3.3 Action Research

One of the most effective ways of reflecting on their teaching for teachers is action research. Action research is referred to teacher-initiated classroom investigation which seeks to increase the teacher's understanding of classroom teaching and learning, and to bring about change in classroom practices (Gregory, Kemmis and McTaggart, cited in Richards and Lockhart, 1996). There are some steps that are suggested by Richards and Lockhart when teachers are conducting an action research in their classrooms. First of all, teachers identify a problem that they would like to change through observation of their own classroom. By identifying the need or the problem, teacher finds the focus of the research and change the theme into a concrete question. Secondly, the researcher develops a strategy for a change. The teacher works out an action plan that will address the problem and may write a hypothesis. Then, the strategy is implemented. Teacher puts his/ her plan into operation for a fixed period of time when he/ she monitors, records the action and collects data. Finally, the researcher evaluates the results and reflects on the effects of the research.

What makes action research one of the effective ways for professional development is that it is a teacher-initiated classroom investigation, which means the teachers is ready and motivated to seek ways in order to increase his/ her understanding of classroom teaching, reflect on and to bring change in his/ her practices. Therefore, being a self-initiated and designed process, action research has many advantages. As Wragg (1999) agrees, self-study is now widely recognized as a powerful influence for personal and social renewal. It does mean accepting the responsibility of accounting for own practice.

Undertaking action research for teachers means examining their own classroom practices, which is very valuable because as Freeman and Cornwell (1993) state, often what one thinks happening in their classroom can be quite different from what is actually going on. While undertaking action research, in the course of examining their own classroom data, teachers begin to notice problems that they were not aware of before. Hence, teachers are provided with better information than they already have about what is actually happening and why. On the whole, it seems that if teachers don't reflect on their practices, they then are more concerned with 'how to' questions in their daily routines, such as how to exploit a course book, handle an activity, present a subject. Richards and Nunan (1990) suggest moving away from 'how to' questions since they have limited utilitarian value, to the 'what' and 'why' questions. They argue that it is necessary to become a critically reflective teacher and improve in teaching skills.

Wragg (1999) further explains that if a teacher feels that his/ her practice is satisfactory or needs attention in some way, he/ she will be able to explain how

and why this is the case with evidence to support his/ her claims by the help of this reflective activity.

In view of all these, it can be concluded that action research is one of the effective vehicles that enables teachers as continuing learners and change agents. Therefore, encouraging teachers to become their own classroom researchers can have a beneficial effect in all areas of the curriculum. In particular, it has great potential for professional self-development and renewal (Nunan, cited in Richards and Nunan, 1990). As well as that, Richert (cited in Lieberman and Miller, 1991) adds that action research has the potential to generate genuine and sustained improvements in school.

2.4 Research on Self-Development of English Language Teachers

In Rényi's article " Building Learning into the Teaching Job," it is reported that a survey of teachers led the National Foundation for the Improvement of Education (NFIE) to recommend that the teachers take charge of their professional development opportunities if they want to go beyond merely keeping up with changes. This outstanding study was a two-year study of professional development. NFIE of the National Education Association (NEA), which represents 2.2 million education employees, set out to analyze what constitutes high-quality professional development. Over two years they examined high-functioning schools and studied their professional development opportunities, interviewed nearly 1,000 teachers and teacher leaders, solicited essays from teachers, conducted focus groups of members of the public, and consulted with leading education researchers and reformers. In 1996 they published their results

and recommendations in the NFIE report "Teachers Take Charge of Their Learning." The result of the broad survey on teachers' needs and preferences revealed that the teachers viewed "keeping up" as a continuous need throughout their careers – keeping up with changing knowledge, changing students and a changing society.

In the light of the results of the survey NFIE provided some recommendations some of which included the following:

1. Finding the time to build professional development into the life of the school through flexible scheduling and extended blocks of time;
2. Helping teachers assume responsibility for their own professional development based on students' needs, professional standards, parent input and peer review;
3. Finding common ground with the community through vision statements and community partnerships. (Rényi, 1998, p.71)

Another research was conducted by Butt and Townsend in 1990. The study focused on the use of autobiography as a means of professional development. They provided teachers with the opportunity to evolve their personal and professional life stories in collaboration with other teachers so that all participants gain a collective sense of teachers' knowledge and development while catalysing the writing and interpretation of each other's stories.

A review of more than 100 teachers' stories and intensive analysis of several of them provided a strong base for their speculations regarding teacher development. In addition, the work in schools in which the use of collaborative autobiography as a central component in school-based staff development projects provided a rich source of data.

The research has confirmed that biographical and life history approaches can be used for successful professional development. In conclusion, Butt and

Townsend put forward that using collaborative autobiography provides the necessary context and conditions for cooperative professional development.

Lally and Veleba (2000) discuss that the guidance and support given to the student teacher of foreign languages is short lived. Therefore, the teaching diary can be used as an observation tool and as a means of auto-assessment and reflection that can be employed well beyond the teaching practicum. Although teaching diaries are certainly not a new idea, their potential as an auto-assessment and observation tool is explored in Lally and Veleba's study.

Given that every student teacher is a unique participant assuming an important role within a dynamic classroom culture, the researchers (a student teacher and her supervisor) chose to approach supervision through employing diary techniques. The student teacher kept a daily diary, while the supervisor kept a simultaneous observation diary. The researchers came to the conclusion that teaching diary allowed the student teacher to express her feelings about what took place in the classroom. As well as that, it improved communication between the student teacher and her supervisor. Besides, the student teacher could fully and continuously evaluate her feelings about teaching, as opposed to reflecting upon them only when prompted by her supervisor after the classroom visits. By keeping a concrete report of otherwise fleeting thoughts, the student teacher was able to organize and verbalize ideas for improving both her immediate and future teaching.

Wang and Seth (1998) reported their research in an article titled: "Self-Development Through Classroom Observation: Changing Perceptions in China." The research was jointly carried out by a British lecturer and her Chinese

counterpart at the Language Center, Qingdao University. They hoped to turn classroom observation into an effective means for teacher development by employing a more collaborative approach.

The participants of the research were in three categories: the British lecturer, the Chinese counterpart, and the Chinese teachers, which led to four patterns of relationship: British lecturer - counterpart, British lecturer - teacher, and teacher - teacher. The procedural framework of the research was (a) pre-classroom observation questionnaire, (b) classroom observation process that includes pre-observation discussion, classroom visits, and post-observation discussion, (c) post-classroom observation questionnaire.

All those who took part in the programme agreed that they had benefited considerably in terms of their self-development. Some of the key issues, which emerged from their feedback were:

1. Classroom observation through the self-development approach was a very effective aid to teacher self-development.
2. The participants began to view classroom observation as a positive tool to help improve their teaching rather than as a means of judgement.
3. Classroom observation was not only an educational and pleasant experience but also a collaborative learning opportunity, which enabled teachers and observers to learn from each other. (Wang and Seth, 1998, p. 209)

In conclusion, the concept of teacher development in China today is new to many Chinese teachers, and for most of them traditional classroom observation still prevails. Within this context, what was done in this project was a successful attempt to make classroom observation a workable means for teachers' self-development. The perception of classroom observation had been altered within the department, and a valuable contribution had been made to the teacher-training programme at Qingdao University. It was also found that teachers in the

department had become more willing to admit strangers into the classroom, and that more observations were being carried out independently. Moreover, the use of observation tasks had enabled teachers to develop their classroom observation skills, and work independently of the programme. Perhaps more importantly, the programme fostered an atmosphere of greater enquiry generated from the teachers themselves, and improved the interpersonal relationships among the classroom observation participants.

Another project was carried out by Hong Kong educators and was reported by S. Lam, P. Yim, and T. W. Lam (2002) in an article called "Transforming School Culture: Can True Collaboration Be Initiated?" The research was initiated by a research group in the University of Hong Kong and the leaders in Education Convergence so as to detach discussion and observation of classroom teaching from staff appraisal. In a survey of Hong Kong educators, it was found that a considerable percentage of Hong Kong teachers did not welcome their peers to their classrooms. It was reported that in Hong Kong peer collaboration for staff development is rarely practised. If classroom teaching is observed or discussed, it was mostly for the sake of staff appraisal. In order to fight for the place of peer collaboration in the existing culture, Hong Kong educators faced two challenges. The first was to detach the discussion and observation of classroom teaching from staff appraisal and secure a niche for it in the practice of staff development. The second was to ward off contrived collegiality in the development of peer collaboration.

Using an action research paradigm, the project attempted to meet these challenges in two schools, one of which was a primary school and the other was a

secondary school. An action research team was formed in each of the schools to initiate peer coaching in the schools. The action plans in the project were made, implemented and evaluated by the efforts of the members of the action research teams. Meetings were held regularly among the teachers of the schools, researchers of the university and the representatives of the Education Convergence. Research data were collected through regular meetings, staff development workshops, semi-structured interviews, questionnaire surveys, and observations. The two participating schools took innovative strategies to ensure the decoupling of peer coaching and staff appraisal.

The evaluation of the project showed that the teachers generally accepted peer coaching and found it helpful to their professional development. The experts in two schools indicated that true collaboration might emerge from forming a school culture that defies the administrative procedures that only value administrative efficiency and the fulfilment of formal requirements.

Bailey, Curtis, and Nunan (1998), who are English language teachers and teacher educators at university, investigated reflective teaching and professional development by practising what they preach. For one academic year they utilized, in their English language classes, three professional development procedures: journals, videotaping, and teaching portfolios that they used as teacher educators with in-service, pre-service teachers to promote reflective teaching and improvement. Each one of them undertook professional development tasks, based on their work. David compiled a teaching portfolio (read by Andy and Kathi). Andy and Kathi were videotaped while team teaching (all of them viewed the video). For two semesters Kathi kept a teaching journal (later read by David and

Andy). In other words, there were two phases to work together: the initial professional development activity and the subsequent sharing and discussion of the outcomes because they wrote about what they did collaboratively as well as what they learned individually.

As a result of these three practices, they acknowledged that the practices worked for them for many reasons. They stated that they undertook the practices voluntarily, so there was a sense of ownership and commitment. Besides, the processes of recording and reviewing data about their teaching seemed organic and natural rather than forced. They concluded that each of the three procedures provided them with distancing mechanisms, allowing them to examine their teaching dispassionately. Furthermore, the longitudinal nature of journal keeping and portfolio compilation allowed them to trace development over time. In addition, the three practices are data based and self-directed; therefore the researchers stated that they generated insights. They also benefited from sharing the results of their efforts. The collaborative dimension helped them to learn from discussing one another's products.

In conclusion, they made sure that professional development is a matter of self-development. Just as teachers cannot do the learning for the learners, teacher educators cannot do the learning for pre- or in-service teachers. They believed that the self-selected use of any of the three activities could lead to powerful professional development, especially when the data are shared with trusted peers.

In another study reported by Cole, Raffier, Rogan, and Schleicher (1998), to meet the initial challenges and the rigorous nature of the TESOL master's degree programme at the Monterey Institute of International Studies (MIS), seven pre-

service teachers voluntarily formed an out-of-class academy study group. Out of a desire to share, express, and reflect on their process and progress through teacher education programme, the group created discussion group, arranged weekly meetings that proved to be productive and motivating. To tap the potential power of the student – student interaction, they decided to explore a medium that could capture opinions, ideas, and synergy of the group: Interactive Group Journals (IGJ). First, a computer diskette was passed from person to person, each member wrote about any issues, concerns, questions, or insights that seemed appropriate at the time. Next, they established the order in which the ICJ would be passed among group members, and each group member would be able to read and respond to the IGJ at least once a week. There were no limitations on the context, length of the entries, style or voice. The journal was maintained throughout the first and second semesters of graduate school, eventually applying the interactive concept to an assigned academic journal for a second language acquisition course.

It is reported that IGJs had a variety of implications for both learners and educators. First of all, IGJ fostered collaboration by expanding upon opportunities to inquire, explore, and discover together. Secondly, it provided discovery questioning and analysis, which is a type of reflection associated with journal writing. In addition, it was a means of building confidence within members of the journal-writing group. Finally, IGJ helped building a bridge from graduate school to professional practice.

2.5 Research on Self-Development of English Language Teachers in Turkey

In 1999 Ülkü Göde made a research as a part of her thesis study on teacher self-development. This study, which is titled as: "Teacher Reflection Through Self Observation", investigated the use of video as an observational tool and the types of reflection resulting from self-observation. Four female ELT instructors from the Preparatory School of English (YADIM) at Çukurova University participated in this study. One lesson of each participant teacher was video-recorded. Then a 'reflection session' with each participant teacher was done. Three months later a follow-up interview was carried out with each participant teacher aiming to find out whether the study had long-term effects on the teachers; that is whether the teachers had made any changes as a result of their self-reflection.

The results of the study revealed that the participant teachers all found the opportunity to observe their students more closely, and they all noticed something that they were not aware of. Besides, this study provided the teachers a chance to observe and evaluate their own ways of speaking in class. Another conclusion derived out from the study is that through the use of video recording technique teachers had a chance to find out about their own personalities and their use of board in the class. More importantly, it is stated that during the follow-up interviews all participant teachers experienced long-term effects of the study. They also made changes that would encourage a continuation of reflection.

Another invaluable way for teacher self-development through reflection is action research and it was the focus of Önel's doctoral dissertation in 1998.It is

titled as "The Effect of Action Research as a Teacher Development Model on Becoming Reflective in Teaching." This case study was conducted at English Language School of Başkent University (ELSBU). The main question the study aimed to answer was: What is the effect of a teacher development model based on teachers' conducting action research in their classes on their becoming reflective in teaching?

Both qualitative and quantitative data were collected in the study; inventories and tests employed at different times of the study to teachers who participated in the study and questionnaires given to the students, teachers' journals, observation notes of the researcher and interviews both with students and teachers.

The results of the study showed that teachers benefited from being engaged in action research. Their awareness of classroom-related issues was increased and they became more systematic in considering student feedback when planning their lessons. The teachers' attitudes towards being collaborative and professional development also changed in a positive way.

Another case study, focusing on the effectiveness of action research as a development tool was conducted by Özdemir at ELSBU in 2001. The study investigated the effectiveness of action research through analysing the changes and improvements it brings to teaching. The researcher carried out an action research study in her class of upper-intermediate students. Mainly qualitative data were collected from different data sources through the action research journal, which was kept by the researcher, the observation checklist filled in by an observer and the action research reports written by eight teachers who also conducted action research in their classes at ELSBU.

There were several conclusions drawn from the study. The researcher concluded that action research contributed to teachers' professional self-development. A change in their teaching after conducting action research was observed. Furthermore, teachers' views, perspectives, beliefs and ideas regarding language teaching have changed through action research. They have become more aware of other views and ideas by accessing to literature in the field. In addition, teachers had a chance to apply their theoretical knowledge to their teaching through this activity. They were able to overcome the current problems in their classes through the application of some techniques and strategies.

Similarly, the master thesis study by Atikler (1997) addressed action research as a way for teachers' self-development. Atikler discussed the role of action research in the self-development of an ELT teacher in her descriptive case study. The purpose of the study was to investigate whether an action research project can contribute to the self-development of an ELT teacher in accumulating knowledge of teaching situation, developing teaching skills and enhancing awareness of personal and professional aspects of teaching.

This study was conducted at the Department of Basic English (DBE), Middle East Technical University. The subject of the study was an English instructor working at the department. Qualitative data were collected through action research meetings, the subject's journal entries and interviews conducted by the researcher during and at the end of the action research project. The findings of the study indicated that the subject experienced self-development in terms of knowledge, skills and awareness of teaching practice. In addition, the findings revealed that the subject gained familiarity with the process of action research and she

experienced the most benefit in terms of awareness, realizing both her students'
and her own weak and strong points in teaching/ learning experience.

In conclusion, it was made clear by the study that action research can
contribute to the self-development of an English language teacher in terms of
accumulating knowledge of language teaching, developing teaching skills and
enhancing awareness of personal and professional aspects of teaching situations.

Classroom observation as a means of teacher development was the main theme
of Döner's master thesis. A descriptive study was designed by the researcher in
1997 in order to investigate whether teacher development could be enhanced by
making use of a technique called contrasting conversations (CCs) used during pre-
and post-observation stages of an observational process. CCs refer to
conversations conducted between the observer and the observee in which both
participants are regarded as equal in terms of criticizing and decision making in
order to assist observees in generating alternatives to their observed classroom
practices. The purpose of this study was to apply a new classroom observation
approach called contrasting conversations approach (CCA) in which contrasting
conversations are conducted to provide observees with useful insights to support
their own professional development. The subjects in this study were five teachers
with minimum teaching and no observational experience working at YADIM (the
Preparatory School of English at Çukurova University, in Adana). All five
teachers took part in a three-step observation process (pre-observation,
observation and post-observation). During these processes the expectations,
opinions of subjects were elicited. Data were gathered through interviews and a
questionnaire.

The findings of the study indicate that anticipation of traditional observation, which aims at finding a weakness in teachers' teaching, frightens observees and leads to a negative attitude towards being observed, whereas CCA applied in this study made teachers feel comfortable and work in cooperation with the observer.

CHAPTER 3

METHOD

This chapter describes the overall design of the study, research questions, data sources, development of data collection instrument, data collection, data analysis procedures, and limitations of the study.

3.1 Overall Design of the Study

The purpose of this study was to investigate the perceptions of self-initiated professional development of English language teachers at ELSBU. The relations between teachers' perceptions and gender, age, teaching experience, teaching experience at the institution, undergraduate area of study, last degree completed, current enrolment in a degree programme, programme teacher teaches at, and plans to take additional qualifications in ELT or education were also examined.

A survey design involving a questionnaire was used to collect data on teachers' perceptions of professional development opportunities, and activities they were involved in, and their comments about the constraints to professional development. The questionnaires were given to teachers at ELSBU and the data collected were analysed descriptively to understand the general trends as well as differences among the teachers.

3.2 Data Sources

The participants in this study included English language teachers at ELSBU in Ankara. All the teachers (N= 149) were asked to participate in the study but a total of 110 teachers were reached.

Teachers in ELSBU are predominantly female. Only 12.7% of teachers are male. Teaching experience of teachers differs from each other. Teachers who have been teaching 6-10 years form the largest group of respondents (42.2%). Less experienced teachers who have been teaching for less than 6 years form 40.2% of teachers. The smallest group of teachers at ELSBU have been teaching for more than 10 years (17.6%).

In ELSBU, there are two programmes: Preparatory School (PREP) Programme and Departmental English Courses (DEC) Programme. Teachers at PREP give intensive language courses, with maximum 20 hours of teaching load per week. Two teachers, called 'partners' share a classroom teaching. Preparatory programme starts with two different levels: elementary and pre-intermediate. Elementary level program consists of 26 hours a week class tuition, whereas, pre-intermediate level students receive 24 hours tuition. In addition to teaching, some teachers also work at units at ELSBU like curriculum, testing, self-access and teacher training unit. In PREP, there are altogether 79 teachers, 58 of them teach the elementary level and 18 teach pre-intermediate level.

DEC offers a variety of English language programmes to Başkent University vocational training schools and faculties. 64 teachers at DEC programme teach English for Specific Purposes and teachers' workload differ according to the

number of classes and teaching hours they have. Besides teaching, the instructors who work in curriculum and testing units in DEC are responsible for test preparation and material preparation.

Teachers at ELSBU receive pre-and in-service training. All newly recruited teachers are required to attend pre-service training programme. It continues three weeks and consists of input sessions. Besides, all teachers are expected to participate in continuous INSET programme conducted by Teacher Training and Development Unit (TTDU). The programme includes weekly meetings, workshops, seminars, peer observations and teacher trainer observations and appraisal meetings. Peer observation activity is compulsory. Every teacher is required to observe and be observed by another colleague, who is chosen by TTDU, twice in a semester. Teachers are asked to follow certain stages; pre-observation, observation and post-observation. In the pre-observation stage teachers come together and decide on a focus. During the observation the observer fills in the forms and checklists provided by TTDU. In the post-observation stage teachers come together and the observer gives feedback on the focus of the observation. Finally, the teachers hand in the forms to the administration.

More detailed explanations with regard to data resources' background characteristics are given in Chapter 4.

3.3 Data Collection Instrument

This study employed a questionnaire designed by the researcher to collect data on English language teachers' perceptions towards their professional development

(See Appendix A for the questionnaire). The questionnaire included both close-ended and open-ended questions to reach a wider understanding of the subject. Based on the literature review, a pool of statements reflecting distinct themes of professional development of teachers was developed by the researcher. In the questionnaire, these statements were presented in the form of items for teachers to comment on a five point Likert-type scale ranging from "strongly disagree" to "strongly agree." In addition to that, in the third part of the questionnaire, a range of professional development activities were selected from the literature, and they were presented on a five point Likert-type scale ranging from "never" to "always" to find out how often teachers use these activities.

The questionnaire was composed of four sections and the questions addressed to three research questions. The questions in section 1 were designed to find out the group characteristics of the participants. The second section in the questionnaire included questions about the attitudes of teachers towards their own professional development. The statements in this section of the questionnaire measured teachers' attitudes towards different themes of professional development such as willingness (item 1), initiation of development (items 2, 3, 4), reflection and own evaluation of teachers for their professional development (items 5, 6), collaboration (items 7, 8 and 9), keeping up to date with new ideas and changes (items 10 and 11).

In the third section, teachers were asked about professional development activities to find out how much they give importance to these activities and to what degree they make use of these opportunities. Therefore, the questions were asked in two parts. First, teachers were asked to indicate how important the

activities were and secondly, they were asked to comment on how often they make use of these activities on two five point Likert-type scales. Items 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5 measured teachers' attitudes and use of collaborative activities, while items 6, 7, 8, and 9 measured activities on research, reflection and practice. Professional development through outside resources and opportunities were measured through items 10, 11, and 12. Item 13 was about observation by superiors and the last item referred to training other teachers.

The items in the last section of the questionnaire aimed to uncover some of the constraints on teacher development. For this purpose, teachers were given items related to potential constraints and were asked to rate their importance in the questionnaire.

The questionnaire was submitted to three experts in the field of education for review. Based on their reflection, some items in the questionnaire were changed and several new items were added. After that, an initial pilot testing was conducted with four English language teachers at ELSBU. They were asked to fill out the questionnaire and make comments about the statements. On the basis of their replies and comments, further revisions were made. Statements that were ambiguously stated were re-written. For instance, in the fourth part of the questionnaire, lack of communication and collaboration among colleagues had been an item but it was made into two different items after teachers' feedback. Before the questionnaire was administered to all the teachers, it was administered to two other English language teachers at ELSBU and according to their feed back, further revisions were made on the statements.

3.4 Data Collection Procedures

The data for the study were gathered from English language teachers at ELSBU. After getting written permission from ELSBU (See Appendix B for the letter of permission), the questionnaires were distributed to the teachers on the 7th of January 2003 during the weekly meetings. The weekly meeting of DEC teachers were in the morning and of PREP teachers in the afternoon. The teachers filled in the questionnaires during these meetings. A total of 110 questionnaires were returned on the same day, eight of which were unusable. Therefore, 102 usable questionnaires were received.

3.5 Data Analysis Procedures

The data collected through the questionnaire were analysed descriptively and thematically. All responses to close-ended items were entered for computer analysis and descriptive analyses were made for these items.

Statistical analyses of the data were done according to the research questions. The percentages, means and frequencies of the data were calculated. Inferential analyses were also carried out to test the potential differences between teachers' perceptions of their professional development and their background variables such as, participants' age, gender, experience in teaching, and educational background.

First, frequency distributions and percentages were calculated for all questions and statements. Some demographic variables were grouped. For example, 'age' variable had items from 23 to 64. It was recoded into three groups so that each

group would have meaningful frequencies and percentages. Similarly, teaching experience, teaching experience at the institution and undergraduate area of study were recoded for the same reason, into three groups in order to have meaningful group comparisons.

Second, frequency distributions were calculated for the statements in section 2. The differences among teachers in terms of their attitudes were examined through mean scores, independent samples t-test and analysis of variance (ANOVA) used as a measure of relationship. In addition to ANOVA, Tukey test was used to test the differences between each pair in the whole group. Third, frequency distributions were calculated for all activity variables in terms of how important they are perceived and how often they are made use of in section 3 of the questionnaire. These were also examined through ANOVAs, further Tukey tests or independent samples t-tests to determine whether the differences among teachers according to background factors were significant. In addition to that, to find out if there was significant relationship between the importance given to professional development activities and actual use of these activities, paired-samples t-test were used. Fourth, ANOVAs, Tukey tests or independent samples t-tests were used to test for significant relationships between teachers' perceptions of how important the items that hinder growth and change were and the background variables.

Data collected through open-ended questions were presented along with the responses to close-ended questions. The answers to open-ended questions in the first section of the questionnaire provided further information about the teachers' background knowledge; the field of last degree completed, the field of MA/ MS

degree and the field of additional qualifications. For instance, the data on the field of last degree completed indicated three main groups: ELT, English Language and Literature and others. In addition, further comments of teachers were reached through open-ended section of the questionnaire. A total of 6 respondents stated their opinions or suggestions on various issues regarding professional development.

3.6 Limitations

One of the limitations of the study is that, it is a case study. Therefore, it is limited to the responses of a sample population of 102 English language Teachers at ELSBU. Hence, it cannot be generalized beyond all English language teachers in Ankara or Turkey.

In addition, the data were gathered by a questionnaire. The limitation of the questionnaire was decreased by open-ended items. However, the number of answers for this part of the questionnaire was very low.

Another limitation is that, data were collected at one point in time from the sample through a questionnaire. Therefore, the researcher could not be certain that the results would be the same as those obtained at another time.

In the next chapter, the results of the study are presented. After presenting the demographic characteristics of the sample, the survey findings are presented.

CHAPTER 4

RESULTS

Using survey technique, the purpose of the study is to investigate the perceptions of self-initiated professional development of English language teachers at ELSBU. The findings of the study are presented in seven sections. After describing demographic characteristics of the study participants in the first section, the next six sections address three research questions. The second section discusses teachers' attitudes towards their own professional development. The third section discusses differences in teachers' attitudes by background factors. The fourth section discusses teachers' perceptions of importance given to major professional development activities and actual use of the activities and the fifth section discusses this by background factors. The sixth and seventh sections explore what hinders change and growth in teachers and the differences by background factors. Finally, the last section examines the comments of the survey respondents.

4.1 Demographic Characteristics of the Sample

The questionnaires were given to 110 teachers on 7th of January 2003. A total of 102 usable questionnaires were returned providing a 92.7% return rate. Full

demographic characteristics of the respondents are shown in Table 1. As Table 1 displays, teachers who responded to the questionnaire are predominantly female (87.3%). Most of the teachers are at a young age. The first two age categories (ages below 28 and ages between 29 and 35) are represented by similar percentages of respondents. 41.2% of the teachers' ages are in the first category and 40.2% of the teachers' age range from 29 to 35. Teachers who have 5 –10 years of teaching experience form the largest group of respondents (42.2%) and teachers who have less than 6 years of experience follow them (40.2%). 17.6% of the teachers have 11 or more years of teaching experience. Almost half of the teachers (45.5%) have 3 to 5 years of teaching experience at ELSBU. 37.4% of the teachers have more than 5 years of teaching experience at the institution. The majority of the respondents are ELT graduates (46.1%). 33.3% of the teachers are English Language and Literature graduates. Most of the teachers who responded to the questionnaire are not enrolled in a degree programme (85.3%) and have a BA/BS as last degree (83.3%). The teachers who are already enrolled in a degree programme constitute 14.7% of the sample. 11 of these people are enrolled in an MS programme, 7 of which are in Educational Sciences, 4 of which are in ELT. In addition to these, one teacher is currently doing his/ her PhD in Educational Sciences.

The respondents who have an MA/ MS as last completed degree constitute 16.7%. The field of MA/ MS degree the respondents have are presented in the list below.

- 6   ELT
- 6   English Language and Literature
- 3   Educational Sciences – Curriculum
- 1   Social Psychology

1   American Culture and Literature

The majority of the teachers (62.7%) are currently teaching at PREP and 37.3% of the teachers are at DEC at ELSBU. More than half of the teachers (53.1%) have plans, whereas 46.9% don't have any plans to take additional qualifications in ELT or education. Some of the teachers who have future plans to have additional qualifications stated the field. The fields are presented in the list below.

6   MS in ELT
5   DIPELT (Diploma of English Language Teaching) Programme
5   Courses and/ or seminars on curriculum
4   PhD on ELT
3   PhD on English Language and Literature
3   Any programme
2   Courses and/ or seminars on testing
2   MA in English Language and Literature
2   CERTELT (Certificate of English Language Teaching) Programme
1   PhD on Educational Sciences
1   MS on Educational Sciences
1   PhD on American Culture and Literature
1   Courses and/ or seminars on teaching translation

Table 1 Distribution of Teachers Responding to Survey by Background Variables

		Frequency	Percent
Gender	Female	89	87.3
	Male	13	12.7
		N=102	
Age	28 or lower	42	41.2
	29-35	41	40.2
	36 or higher	19	18.6
		N=102	
Teaching Experience	0-5	41	40.2
	6-10	43	42.2
	11 or higher	18	17.6
		N=102	
Teaching Experience at the Institution	0-2	17	17.2
	3-5	45	45.5
	6 or higher	37	37.4
		N=99	
Undergraduate Area of Study	ELT	47	46.1
	English Language and Literature	34	33.3
	Other	21	20.6
		N=102	
Last Degree Completed	BA/ BS degree	85	83.3
	MA/ MS degree	17	16.7
		N=102	
Current Enrolment in a Degree Programme	Teachers who are enrolled	15	14.7
	Teachers who are not enrolled	87	85.3
		N=102	
Programme Teacher Teaches at	Prep	64	62.7
	DEC	38	37.3
		N=102	
Plans to Take Additional Qualifications in ELT or education	Teachers who have plans	51	53.1
	Teachers who do not have plans	45	46.9
		N=96	

N's vary due to some missing data.

4.2 English Language Teachers' Attitudes Towards Their Own Professional

   Development

The first purpose of this study is to explore English language teachers' attitudes towards their own professional development (research question number 1). Teachers' responses to the statements in the second section of the questionnaire provided data on their attitudes.

As Table 2 indicates, all of the respondents strongly agree/ agree with the statement underlying the importance of willingness as a factor in successful professional development: "Willingness is an important factor in successful professional development" (100%). This result strengthens the agreement on the fact that the best source to start for professional development is the teachers themselves since it would not be meaningful and successful unless the teachers are willing to develop professionally.

Another theme, which underlies teachers' professional development is self-initiation. If teachers feel free to test new ideas or techniques in practice and therefore take the initiative and action for their own development, they will be less dependent on the institution they work for. Hence, their professional development efforts will be more meaningful. Most of the teachers strongly agree/ agree with the statements about this theme: "Teachers should improve their professional skills and knowledge without too much dependence on the institution they work for" (79.4%), "Teachers should take the initiative and action for their own professional development" (98.2%), "A teacher should be free to test any idea or a new technique in teaching" (77.4%).

Reflection and evaluation of self to improve professionally are also favoured by teachers: "Teachers should be involved in the evaluation of their teaching skills and knowledge" (96%), "Teachers should reflect upon their own practices to improve professionally" (97.1%).

Teachers' attitudes towards the idea of collaboration were asked through three statements including peer observation, helping each other as teachers in evaluating teaching and producing solutions to problems. The majority of teachers strongly agree/ agree that teachers should help each other evaluate teaching to identify problems, strengths and weaknesses (85.3%), and produce solutions to solve problems (95.1%). However, respondents seem to be less in agreement with the statement about peer observation. While more than half (60.8%) strongly agree/ agree that peer observation should be used to gather information about teaching performance, 26.5% of the teachers stay uncertain, and 12.7% strongly disagreed/ disagreed with the statement.

Keeping up to date with new ideas and changes is another theme that is explored under the title of professional development. Teachers' attitudes towards this concept seem to be very positive. Almost all the respondents strongly agree/ agree that teachers should be open to new ideas and changes" (97.1%), and they should try to keep themselves up to date with changes and improvements in ELT" (96.1%).

Table 2 Degree of Agreement With Statements About English Language Teachers' Attitudes Towards Their Own Professional Development (in percentages and means)

STRONGLY DISAGREE	DISAGREE	UNCERTAIN	AGREE	STRONGLY AGREE	MEAN	N
Willingness is an important factor in successful professional development.						
-	-	-	10.8	89.2	4.89	102
Teachers should improve their professional skills and knowledge without too much dependence on the institution they work for.						
3.9	6.9	9.8	46.1	33.3	3.98	102
Teachers should take the initiative and action for their own professional development.						
-	-	2.00	51.0	47.1	4.45	102
A teacher should be free to test any idea or a new technique in teaching.						
1.0	7.8	13.7	48.0	29.4	3.97	102
Teachers should be involved in the evaluation of their teaching skills and knowledge.						
1.0	-	4.00	46.5	49.5	4.46	101
Teachers should reflect upon their own practices to improve professionally.						
-	-	2.9	42.2	54.9	4.52	102
Teachers should help each other evaluate teaching to identify problems, strengths, and weaknesses.						
2.0	2.9	9.8	51.0	34.3	4.13	102
Teachers should help each other produce solutions to solve problems.						
1.0	-	4.0	43.6	51.5	4.45	101
Peer observation should be used to gather information about teacher performance.						
4.9	7.8	26.5	41.2	19.6	3.63	102
Teachers should be open to new ideas and changes.						
2.00	-	1.00	27.5	69.6	4.63	102
Teachers should try to keep themselves up to date with changes and improvements in ELT.						
2.0	-	2.0	46.1	50.0	4.42	102

N's vary due to some missing responses.

These results suggest that teachers acknowledge the importance of professional development. They have positive attitude towards the main themes underlying the issue like the necessity of motivation and willingness in teachers, self-initiation, collaboration, reflection and evaluation as well as keeping up to date with new ideas and changes in the field. In spite of all these, some of the respondents seem to have less faith in the idea of peer observation when compared to the other items. Although most of the teachers agree that peer observation should be used to

gather information about teacher performance, more than one third of the teachers stay uncertain or disagree with the item.

4.3 Differences in Attitudes of English Language Teachers Towards Their

  Own Professional Development by Background Factors

  The data on English language teachers' attitudes towards their own professional development were further analyzed to determine if there was a significant relation between teachers' attitudes and selected background factors using independent samples t-test and one way ANOVA as a measure of significance. Here only the significant differences are presented.

4.3.1 Differences in Attitudes by Gender

  Gender appears to be related to the perceptions of teachers only with respond to one variable. An independent samples t-test shows that female teachers differ significantly from male teachers in their perceptions on testing a new idea or a new technique in teaching at the .05 level (see Table 3). As the mean scores indicate, female teachers agree with the statement "A teacher should be free to test any idea or a new technique in teaching, " while male teachers mostly stay uncertain.

Table 3 Mean and Standard Deviation Scores for Attitudes of English Language Teachers Towards Their Own Professional Development by Gender

	MEAN	SD	N
A teacher should be free to test any idea or a new technique in teaching.			
Female	4.04	.84	89
Male	3.46	1.27	13

t (100) =2.18, p=.031

Mean scores are based on a five-point Likert scale where 1=strongly disagree, 2=disagree, 3=uncertain, 4=agree, 5=strongly agree.

This result indicates that female teachers are more in favour of freedom in testing any idea or new technique in teaching when compared with male teachers. This finding may imply that female teachers think more independently and are more open to trying new ideas or techniques in their classrooms.

4.3.2 Differences in Attitudes by Age

Like gender, age is also significantly related to only teachers' perceptions of testing any idea or technique in teaching. One-way ANOVA test shows that teachers at different age groups differ significantly from each other in their attitudes towards freedom to test a new idea or a new technique in teaching at the .05 level (see Table 4). As the mean scores indicate, teachers who are 28 or lower and those between the age of 29 and 35 agree with the statement that a teacher should be free to test any idea or a new technique in teaching. However, teachers who are 35 or over are uncertain about the matter. It should also be noted that teachers who are 28 or lower agree more strongly with this statement than those between 29 and 35 indicating that they are more open to testing any idea or a new technique in teaching. A further Tukey test indicates that within those three

different age groups, all the pairs in the group seem to be significantly different from each other at the .05 level. However, the relation between the teachers who are 28 or lower and 36 or higher seems to be more significant.

This result suggests that younger teachers seem to be more comfortable in being free to test any idea or new technique in teaching when compared with relatively older teachers, especially the ones who are 36 or higher. This difference in need to be free to test ideas or a new technique in teaching may be due to several reasons. Firstly, the reason for young teachers to be open to the idea might be pre-service training they received. Since these teachers are new in their careers, they may be more under the effect of training they received. Secondly, as novice teachers they may be more eager, excited and feel the need to exploit different ideas in their fields to develop their knowledge and skills.

Table 4 Mean and Standard Deviation Scores for Attitudes of English Language Teachers Towards Their Own Professional Development by Age

	MEAN	SD	N
A teacher should be free to test any idea or a new technique in teaching.			
28 or lower	4.17	.76	42
29-35	4.02	.85	41
36 or higher	3.42	1.17	19

$F_{(2,99)} = 4.77$, p=.010
Mean scores are based on a five-point Likert scale where 1=strongly disagree, 2=disagree, 3=uncertain, 4=agree, 5=strongly agree.

4.3.3 Differences in Attitudes by Teaching Experience

Teaching experience is also found to be significantly related to the perception of testing new ideas and techniques in teaching (see Table 5). One-way ANOVA test shows that teachers with varying years of teaching experience differ significantly in their attitudes towards freedom to test a new idea or a new

technique in teaching. Since the background variables of age and teaching experience are parallel to each other, similar findings on this variable are understandable. The mean scores indicate that experienced teachers, who have been teaching more than 10 years are uncertain about whether a teacher should be free to test any idea or a new technique in teaching or not. On the other hand, the teachers who are relatively less experienced agree with the statement. A further Tukey test proves that all three groups are significant when compared in pairs at the .05 level. However, the difference between teachers who have 6 to 10 years and 11 or more years of experience seem to be more significant.

This result may mean that teachers who have less than 10 years of experience are more open to new challenges in teaching than more experienced teachers. This sounds plausible since the data on the background variable age also proves that younger teachers, and therefore less experienced teachers are more in favour of being free to test any idea or a new technique in teaching.

Table 5 Mean and Standard Deviation Scores for Attitudes of English Language Teachers Towards Their Own Professional Development by Teaching Experience

	MEAN	SD	N
A teacher should be free to test any idea or a new technique in teaching.			
0-5	4.02	.79	41
6-10	4.16	.84	43
11 or higher	3.39	1.14	18

$F_{(2,99)} = 5.00$, p=.008
Mean scores are based on a five-point Likert scale where 1=strongly disagree, 2=disagree, 3=uncertain, 4=agree, 5=strongly agree.

4.3.4 Differences in Attitudes by Teaching Experience at the Institution

Teaching experience at ELSBU is significantly related to two attitude variables at the .05 level. One-way ANOVA test shows that teachers with varying years of teaching experience at the institution differ significantly from each other in their attitudes towards the idea that teachers should help each other on certain topics (see Table 6). Mean scores show that the teachers who have been working at the institution for more than 5 years are less in favour of the statement: "Teachers should help each other evaluate teaching to identify problems or strength and weaknesses," whereas the ones who have been working for less than 6 years agree with the statement. A Tukey test shows that only teachers working for 3 to 5 years at ELSBU differ significantly from the ones working for 6 or more years at the .05 level. There is no significant difference between teachers who have no or at most 2 years of experience and the other groups.

All the teachers agree with the statement that teachers should help each other produce solutions to solve problems without much difference, only the teachers who have three to five years of experience seem to agree more on this item. A Tukey test indicates that only teachers with 3 to 5 years of experience at the institution differ significantly from those with 6 or more years of experience (p< .05). These results may imply that teachers who have been working for 3 to 5 years at the institution are more open to collaboration in terms of teachers helping each other to identify problems, strengths, and weaknesses and produce solutions to problems. This difference may be due to the possibility that teachers working

for relatively longer period at the institution are less in need of cooperation with

teachers for their professional development.

Table 6 Mean and Standard Deviation Scores for Attitudes of English Language
Teachers Towards Their Own Professional Development by Teaching Experience
at the Institution

	MEAN	SD	N
Teachers should help each other evaluate teaching to identify problems, strengths, and weaknesses.			
0-2	4.18	.81	17
3-5	4.38	.58	45
6 or higher	3.78	1.06	37
F(2,96) =5.31, p=.006			
Teachers should help each other produce solutions to solve problems.			
0-2	4.47	.51	17
3-5	4.67	.48	45
6 or higher	4.17	.85	36
F(2,95) =6.06, p=.003			

Mean scores are based on a five-point Likert scale where 1=strongly disagree,
2=disagree, 3=uncertain, 4=agree, 5=strongly agree.

4.3.5 Differences in Attitudes by Undergraduate Area of Study

Teachers' undergraduate area of study is significantly related to two attitude

variables at the .05 level (see Table 7). One way ANOVA test shows that teachers

from different undergraduate area of studies differ significantly from each other in

their attitudes towards the idea that teachers should help each other produce

solutions to problems, and that willingness is an important factor in successful

professional development. According to the mean scores, teachers from different

undergraduate areas of study all agree with the statement; "Teachers should help

each other produce solutions to problems" with slight differences. ELT graduates

seem to agree more strongly than English Language and Literature, and American

Culture and Literature graduates. A further Tukey test indicates that only the difference between ELT and English Language and Literature graduates is significant (p< .05).

Teachers whose undergraduate areas of studies are ELT and English Language Literature agree with the statement; "Willingness is an important factor in successful professional development." Teachers whose undergraduate areas of study are other than these two areas also agree with this statement, but more strongly. According to a Tukey test, only the relationship between the graduates of English Language and Literature and graduates other than ELT is significant at the .05 level.

These results indicate that teachers who graduated from ELT departments seem to believe more in collaboration than teachers who graduated from other departments.

Table 7 Mean and Standard Deviation Scores for Attitudes of English Language Teachers Towards Their Own Professional Development by Undergraduate Area of Study

	MEAN	SD	N
Teachers should help each other produce solutions to problems.			
English Language Teaching	4.61	.39	46
English Language and Literature	4.24	.85	34
Others (e.g. American Culture and literature, English Linguistics, etc.)	4.43	.60	21
F(2,98) =3.17, p=.046			
Willingness is an important factor in successful professional development.			
English Language Teaching	4.91	.87	47
English Language and Literature	4.79	.51	34
Others (e.g. American Culture and literature, English Linguistics, etc.)	5.00	.54	21
F(2,99) =3.19, p=.045			

Mean scores are based on a five-point Likert scale where 1=strongly disagree, 2=disagree, 3=uncertain, 4=agree, 5=strongly agree.

4.3.6 Differences in Attitudes by Current Enrolment in a Degree Programme

Significant differences were found among teachers by their current enrolment in a degree programme at the .05 level (see Table 8). An independent samples t-test shows that teachers who are currently enrolled in a degree programme and the ones who aren't differ significantly from each other in their attitudes towards the ideas that teachers should take the initiative for their own professional development and teachers should help each other evaluate teaching to identify problems, strengths, and weaknesses. According to the mean scores, teachers who are currently enrolled in a degree programme agree with the statements: "Teachers should take the initiative for their own professional development" and "Teachers should help each other evaluate teaching to identify problems, strengths, and weaknesses" more strongly than the ones who are not enrolled.

According to these results it may be suggested that teachers who are enrolled in a degree programme believe more in the importance of taking the initiative for their own professional development. Besides, they seem to be more open to collaboration in their professional development.

Table 8 Mean and Standard Deviation Scores for Attitudes of English Language Teachers Towards Their Own Professional Development by Current Enrolment in a Degree Programme

	MEAN	SD	N
Teachers should take the initiative for their own professional development.			
Teachers who are enrolled	4.80	.41	15
Teachers who are not enrolled	4.39	.54	87
t(100) =2.81, p=.006			
Teachers should help each other evaluate teaching to identify problems, strengths, and weaknesses.			
Teachers who are enrolled	4.67	.49	15
Teachers who are not enrolled	4.03	.87	87

t(100) =2.73, p=.007

Mean scores are based on a five-point Likert scale where 1=strongly disagree, 2=disagree, 3=uncertain, 4=agree, 5=strongly agree.

4.3.7 Differences in Attitudes by the Programme Teacher Teaches at

Significant differences were found among teachers at the .05 level by using an independent samples t-test (see Table 9). Teachers teaching at different programmes differ significantly in their attitudes towards freedom to test any idea or a new technique in teaching, being involved in the evaluation of their teaching skills and knowledge and reflection upon their own practices to improve professionally. As the mean scores show, teachers who are teaching at PREP agree with the statement: "Teachers should be free to test any idea or a new technique in teaching," whereas the ones teaching in DEC are uncertain. Both PREP and DEC teachers agree with the statements that teachers should be involved in the evaluation of their teaching skills and knowledge and should reflect upon their own practices to improve professionally. However, PREP teachers seem to be slightly more in agreement with these two statements.

These results indicate that teachers at PREP are more positive towards the idea of freedom to test new ideas or techniques. As well as that, these teachers are more open to the idea of evaluation of teaching skills and reflection on own practices, which are important factors in professional development.

Table 9 Mean and Standard Deviation Scores for Attitudes of English Language Teachers Towards Their Own Professional Development by the Programme They Teach at

	MEAN	SD	N
Teachers should be free to test any idea or a new technique in teaching.			
Preparatory Programme	4.11	.78	64
Departmental English Course	3.74	1.08	38
t(100) =2.01, p=.047			
Teachers should be involved in the evaluation of their teaching skills and knowledge.			
Preparatory Programme	4.55	.53	64
Departmental English Course	4.30	.62	37
t(99) =2.13, p=.035			
Teachers should reflect upon their own practices to improve professionally.			
Preparatory Programme	4.61	.52	64
Departmental English Course	4.37	.59	38

t(100) =2.14, p=.034
Mean scores are based on a five-point Likert scale where 1=strongly disagree, 2=disagree, 3=uncertain, 4=agree, 5=strongly agree.

4.3.8 Differences in Attitudes by Future Plans To Take Additional

    Qualifications in ELT or Education

The relationship between the future plans of teachers to take additional qualifications and certain variables are significant at the .05 level (see Table 10). An independent samples t-test shows that teachers who have future plans and who don't differ significantly from each other in their attitudes towards the idea that peer observation should be used to gather information about teacher performance and teachers should try to keep themselves up to date with changes and

improvements in ELT. The mean scores indicate that both the teachers who have future plans about their professional development and the ones who don't are undecided about the statement; "Peer observation should be used to gather information about teacher performance." However, the teachers who have plans are closer to be in agreement with the statement. Besides, they seem to be more in agreement with the idea that teachers should try to keep themselves up to date with changes and improvements in ELT when compared to the teachers who don't have any future plans for their professional development.

These results imply that the teachers who have plans for further professional development have more positive attitudes towards peer observation used to gather information about teacher performance. In addition to that, they find keeping up to date with changes and improvements in ELT more important for professional development than the teachers who don't have any plans.

Table 10 Mean and Standard Deviation Scores for Attitudes of English Language Teachers Towards Their Own Professional Development by Future Plans to Take Additional Qualifications in ELT or Education

	MEAN	SD	N
Peer observation should be used to gather information about teacher performance.			
Teachers who have plans	3.96	.89	51
Teachers who have no plans	3.29	1.10	45
t(94) =3.30, p=.001			
Teachers should try to keep themselves up to date with changes and improvements in ELT.			
Teachers who have plans	4.59	.50	15
Teachers who have no plans	4.22	.90	87
t(94) =2.50, p=.014			

Mean scores are based on a five-point Likert scale where 1=strongly disagree, 2=disagree, 3=uncertain, 4=agree, 5=strongly agree.

4.4 **Major Professional Development Activities**

The second purpose of this study is to explore English language teachers' perceptions of major professional development activities and to what degree they make use of these activities (research question number 2). Teachers' responses to the statements in the third section of the questionnaire provide data on what major professional development activities they perceive as critical to their development as professionals and to what degree they make use of these activities.

First of all, teachers were asked to rate the given professional development activities to collect data on how important they perceive these activities for development, then teachers were asked to respond how often they make use of them. Table 11 displays the importance given to the activities by teachers, and Table 12 displays how often teachers make use of these activities.

As Table 11 displays, when asked to respond to the first four items, which underlie the theme of collaboration, the majority of respondents agree that the collaborative activities are very important/ important. "Sharing experiences and problems with colleagues" is mostly agreed to be very important/ important (91.2%).

The majority of teachers report that they find asking for professional help from colleagues also very important/ important (85.1%). In addition, working on developing new materials with colleagues is agreed to be very important/ important by 83.3% of teachers. Similarly, most teachers give importance to working developing techniques and activities with colleagues (83.4%).

Interestingly, although teachers agree that all these four collaborative activities are important, the fifth activity, which is peer observation doesn't seem to receive very much attention from some of the teachers. Only half of the teachers (48%) perceive peer observation as critical to their development, the other half of the teachers (48.1%) say peer observation is of little importance or somewhat important.

In addition to collaborative activities, research, reflection and practice are necessary in teachers' professional lives for self-development. Action research, trying out new ideas or suggestions in practice, gathering information about one's own teaching performance and reflection on own teaching were asked to be rated for their importance to teachers. While many teachers find trying out new ideas or suggestions in practice (92.2%) and reflection on own teaching (88.2%) very important/ important, they don't find action research as critically important. Half of the teachers (48.5%) think it is a very important/ important activity, whereas the other half (49.5%) believe it is little/ somewhat important. At the same time more than half of the teachers (68.3%) think gathering information about one's own teaching performance is very important/ important.

There is no doubt that teachers can improve their skills and knowledge by working with or getting help from their colleagues and through research, reflection and practice. As well as these, teachers have many more opportunities to develop professionally. They can make use of outside resources and opportunities. On the issue of whether these opportunities are perceived to be important, most teachers think that INSET (workshops, seminars, etc.) are very important/ important (88.1%). Similarly, the majority also think following

professional development programmes are very important/ important (86.3%). 67.7% of the teachers find following research literature on own field very important/ important, while 31.3% think it is little/ somewhat important.

In addition to getting help from colleagues for development, teachers may benefit from their superiors as an alternative way of improvement in their skills or knowledge. However, most teachers don't think observation of classroom events by heads or administrators is important. Half of the teachers think it as somewhat/ little important (51%), 10.8% think it is not important at all, while 38.2% find it very important/ important.

When asked whether training other teachers is important for their professional development, 63.7% respond that it is very important/ important.

Table 11 Degree of Importance Given to Major Professional Development
Activities by English Language Teachers (in percentages and means)

NOT IMPORTANT AT ALL	OF LITTLE IMPORTANCE	SOMEWHAT IMPORTANT	IMPORTANT	VERY IMPORTANT	MEAN	N
Sharing experiences and problems with colleagues						
-	1.0	7.8	50.0	41.2	4.31	102
Asking for professional help from colleagues						
-	-	14.9	57.4	27.7	4.13	101
Working on developing new materials with colleagues						
-	2.9	13.7	49.0	34.3	4.15	102
Working on developing techniques and activities with colleagues						
-	3.9	12.7	47.1	36.3	4.16	102
Peer observation						
3.9	11.8	36.3	35.3	12.7	3.41	102
Teacher initiated classroom investigation (action research)						
2.0	12.9	36.6	32.7	15.8	3.48	101
Trying out new ideas or suggestions in practice						
-	-	7.8	50.0	42.2	4.34	102
Gathering information about one's own teaching performance (surveys, interviews, etc.)						
2.0	3.0	26.7	41.6	26.7	3.88	101
Reflection on own teaching						
1.0	-	10.8	49.0	39.2	4.25	102
In-service training (workshops, seminars, etc.)						
1.0	-	10.9	48.5	39.6	4.26	101
Following research literature on own field						
1.0	2.9	28.4	41.2	26.5	3.89	102
Following professional development programmes						
1.0	1.0	11.8	52.0	34.3	4.13	102
Observation of classroom events by heads, administrators						
10.8	19.6	31.4	25.5	12.7	3.10	101
Training other teachers						
3.9	7.8	24.5	40.2	23.5	3.72	102

N's vary due to some missing responses.

Table 12 shows how often teachers make use of the major professional development activities. Among collaborative activities, sharing experiences and problems with colleagues are always or often made use of by the majority of teachers (78.4%). Almost half of the respondents (49%) often do this for their professional development. 20.6% sometimes share their experiences and problems, and there are no teachers who don't make use of this opportunity for professional development.

Nearly half of the teachers (43.6%) sometimes ask for professional help from colleagues and the other half (43.5%) of the respondents often or always benefit from their colleagues by asking for help.

When asked if they work on developing new materials with colleagues, about one third of the teachers report they sometimes do it (39.2%), while 26.5% of the teachers often, the minority (16.7%) always do it. When it comes to working on developing new techniques and activities with colleagues the results are similar. 43.1% sometimes, 41.2% often or always, and 13.7% rarely work on developing new techniques and activities with colleagues.

Peer observation is one of the most frequently used activities by the teachers. Close to two thirds of teachers often or always do peer observation (61.4%). Teachers who sometimes peer observe consist of 31.7%, while 5% rarely do it.

Teachers' responses to how often they use the activities for professional development relying on research, reflection and practice show that the majority of teachers rarely or never initiate classroom investigation (action research) (54.6%). There are teachers who sometimes carry out action research (29.3%). The minority of teachers often or always undertake action research in their classes (15.1%). Almost two thirds (60.8%) of the teachers often or always try out new ideas or suggestions in practice. Again one third of the respondents sometimes do this activity (35.3%).

Gathering information about their own teaching performance is sometimes fulfilled by the majority of teachers (39.2%). 28.4% of the respondents rarely do this activity, whereas 27.5% often or always gather information about their own performance.

When it comes to reflecting on own teaching, more than half of the teachers report that they often or always do it (58.8%) and nearly one third of the respondents sometimes reflect on their experiences (31.4%).

INSET (workshops, seminars, etc.), which is an important outside resource and opportunity for professional development, is reported to be often/ always followed by the majority of teachers (88.1%). Only 10.9% of teachers report they sometimes follow these activities.

Although most of the teachers get or attend INSET frequently, they don't seem to follow research literature on their field that often. 45.1% sometimes, 22.5% often, 19.6% rarely and only 9.8% always follow research literature on ELT or education.

Professional development programmes are followed with almost the same frequency as research literature. Again the majority sometimes follow professional development programs (53.9%). 35.3% always or often follow, while 9.8% rarely do that.

When it comes to observation of classroom events by heads, administrators, almost half of the teachers say they are sometimes observed (43%), and 28% say they are rarely observed. The minority report that they are often observed (15%).

Training other teachers as an alternative way of developing professionally is never done by the majority of teachers (60.8%). Only 19.6% report they rarely do it. As the responses indicate, training other teachers is not very much available and applicable for most of the teachers.

Table 12 Degree of Making Use of Major Development Activities by English Language Teachers (in percentages and means)

NEVER	RARELY	SOMETIMES	OFTEN	ALWAYS	MEAN	N
Sharing experiences and problems with colleagues						
-	1.0	20.6	49.0	29.4	4.07	102
Asking for professional help from colleagues						
1.0	11.9	43.6	26.7	16.8	3.47	101
Working on developing new materials with colleagues						
2.9	14.7	39.2	26.5	16.7	3.39	102
Working on developing techniques and activities with colleagues						
2.0	13.7	43.1	26.5	14.7	3.38	102
Peer observation						
2.0	5.0	31.7	28.7	32.7	3.85	101
Teacher initiated classroom investigation (action research)						
16.2	38.4	29.3	12.1	3.0	2.46	99
Trying out new ideas or suggestions in practice						
	3.9	35.3	35.3	25.5	3.82	102
Gathering information about one's own teaching performance (surveys, interviews, etc.)						
4.9	28.4	39.2	16.7	10.8	3.00	102
Reflection on own teaching						
2.0	7.8	31.4	29.4	29.4	3.76	102
In-service training (workshops, seminars, etc.)						
1.0	-	10.9	48.5	39.6	4.26	101
Following research literature on own field						
2.9	19.6	45.1	22.5	9.8	3.17	102
Following professional development programmes						
1.0	9.8	53.9	24.5	10.8	3.34	102
Observation of classroom events by heads, administrators						
9.0	28.0	43.0	15.0	5.0	2.79	102
Training other teachers						
60.8	19.6	9.8	8.8	1.0	1.70	102

N's vary due to some missing responses.

The data on how important teachers perceive professional development activities for their development and how often they make use of these were further analysed to find out how much the responses of teachers differ in importance given to and making use of the major professional activities. In order to see if the mean scores for the items are significantly different from each other, a paired-samples t-test was done. The results, which are presented in Table 13 indicate that the importance given and the use of all the major professional development

activities except INSET are significantly different from each other at the .05 level.
The mean scores of the importance given to the activities are all higher than the
mean scores of making use of the same activities except peer observation. This
indicates that, although teachers give importance or somewhat importance to the
activities, they don't make use of these activities as much as they give importance
to. This may be explained by the factors that hinder their professional growth and
change, which will be discussed in section six of this chapter.

Table 13 Comparison of Teachers' Perceptions of Importance Given to Major
Professional Development Activities and Degree of Making Use of the Activities

	IMPORTANCE		USE		
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	T-test
Sharing experiences and problems with colleagues	4.31	.66	4.07	.73	t(101) =3.42, p=.001
Asking for professional help from colleagues	4.13	.64	3.47	.94	t(100) =8.05, p=.000
Working on developing new materials with colleagues	4.15	.76	3.39	1.03	t(101) =7.70, p=.000
Working on developing techniques and activities with colleagues	4.16	.79	3.38	.97	t(101) =8.03, p=.000
Peer observation.	3.42	.99	3.85	1.00	t(100)=-3.51, p=.001
Teacher initiated classroom observation (action research)	3.47	.98	2.46	1.00	t(98) = 9.71, p=.000
Trying out new ideas or suggestions in practice	4.34	.62	3.82	.86	t(101) = 6.23, p=.000
Gathering information about one's own teaching performance (surveys, interviews, etc.)	3.88	.91	3.00	1.05	t(100) = 9.51, p=.000
Reflection on own teaching	4.25	.73	3.76	1.03	t(101) =5.58, p=.000
Following research literature on own field	3.89	.87	3.17	.96	t(101) = 8.11, p=.000
Following professional development programmes	4.18	.75	3.34	.84	t(101)=10.09, p=.000
Observation of classroom events by heads, administrators	3.10	1.19	2.79	.98	t(99) =2.57, p=.011
Training other teachers	3.72	.96	1.73	1.04	t(101)=15.03, p=.000

Mean scores are based on a five-point Likert scale where 1= not important at all/ never, 2= of little importance/ rarely, 3= somewhat important/ sometimes, 4= important/ often, 5= very important/ always.

4.5 Differences in Teachers' Perceptions of Importance Given to Major Professional Development Activities and Actual Use of the Activities by Background Factors

The data collected from the third section of the questionnaire were further analysed to determine if there is a significant relation between teachers' perceptions and selected background factors using independent samples t-test and one-way ANOVA as a measure of significance.

4.5.1 Differences in Teachers' Perceptions of Importance Given to Major Professional Development Activities and Actual Use of the Activities by Gender

The relationship between gender and the importance given to certain professional development activities is significant at the .05 level. As Table 14 displays, female teachers find working on developing new materials with colleagues important, whereas male teachers find it somewhat important. This may suggest that female teachers are more open to this kind of a collaborative activity when compared to the male teachers. In addition, although both male and female teachers find it important, female teachers seem to give more importance to trying out new ideas or suggestions in practice.

When it comes to observation of classroom events by heads, administrators, both female and male teachers don't seem to find it important. Female teachers

say it is somewhat important and male teachers find it of little importance. Thus, it can be said that, female teachers are a little more positive towards observation by heads and administrators.

These results might indicate that female teachers are more open to certain professional development activities than male teachers are. They seem to have a more positive attitude towards collaboration with colleagues, supervision and taking risks by trying out new ideas or suggestions in practice.

Table 14 Mean and Standard Deviation Scores for Importance Given to Major Professional Development Activities by Gender

	MEAN	SD	N
Working on developing new materials with colleagues			
Female	4.21	.75	89
Male	3.69	.75	13
t (100) =2.35, p=.021			
Trying out new ideas or suggestions in practice			
Female	4.39	.60	89
Male	4.00	.71	13
t (100) =2.17, p=.032			
Observation of classroom events by heads, administrators			
Female	3.20	1.13	89
Male	2.38	1.33	13
t (100) =2.38, p=.019			

Mean scores are based on a five-point Likert type scale where 1=not important at all, 2= of little importance, 3= somewhat important, 4= important, 5= very important.

English language teachers' gender is also significantly related with the use of certain activities. As presented in Table 15, female teachers more often make use of the collaborative activities like sharing experiences, problems, and working on developing new materials with colleagues as well as peer observation. They often share their experiences and problems with colleagues, sometimes work on

developing new materials and do peer observation, whereas male teachers do these activities less frequently. As already seen in Table 14, it was again female teachers who give more importance to one of the collaborative activities. Hence, the results seem consistent.

Another activity that male teachers make use of less is trying out new ideas or suggestions in practice. It is also given less importance by them. Moreover, reflection on own teaching is another opportunity for professional development, which is more often used by female teachers. It is similar for observation of classroom events by heads, administrators. Even though both parties are rarely observed by their heads, male teachers seem to be observed less frequently.

Table 15 Mean and Standard Deviation Scores for Making Use of the Activities by Gender

	<u>MEAN</u>	<u>SD</u>	<u>N</u>
Sharing experiences and problems with colleagues			
Female	4.13	.74	89
Male	3.62	.51	13
t (100) =2.43, p=.016			
Working on developing new materials with colleagues			
Female	3.48	1.03	89
Male	2.77	.73	13
t (100) =2.39, p=.018			
Peer observation			
Female	3.98	.96	88
Male	3.00	.91	13
t (99) =3.45, p=.001			
Trying out new ideas or suggestions in practice			
Female	3.90	.87	89
Male	3.31	.63	13
t (100) =2.36, p=.020			
Reflection on own teaching			
Female	3.84	1.02	89
Male	3.23	.93	13
t (100) =2.04, p=.044			
Observation of classroom events by heads, administrators			
Female	2.89	.96	87
Male	2.15	.90	13
t (98) =2.58, p=.011			

Mean scores are based on a five-point Likert scale where 1=never, 2=rarely, 3=sometimes, 4= often, 5= always

4.5.2 Differences in Teachers' Perceptions of Importance Given to Major

Professional Development Activities and Actual Use of the Activities by

Age

Another background variable found to be significantly related with the importance given to certain professional development activities is age (see Table 16). For

teachers who are 28 or lower, and 36 or higher, it is more important to work on developing techniques and activities with colleagues than teachers who are between 29 and 35. A further Tukey test indicates that the only significant relationship at the .05 level is between teachers who are 28 or lower and the ones aged between 29 and 35. This might mean that younger teachers and teachers of older age are more open to collaboration in professional development activities than middle-aged teachers.

As well as that, young teachers (28 or lower age group) say action research is somewhat important, however, older teachers (36 or higher age group) think it is of little importance and teachers who are in between 29 and 35 stay in between the two groups. According to a Tukey test, teachers aged 28 or lower, and the ones who are 36 or higher differ significantly. There is no significant difference between teachers who are in between 29 and 35, and 36 or higher (p > .05).

As the mean scores indicate, again younger teachers, who are aged 28 or lower, consider it more important to try out new ideas or suggestions in practice with a slight difference when compared to teachers of other ages. However, a Tukey test proves that this difference is not significant at the .05 level.

Although INSET (workshops, seminars, etc.) is found to be important as a professional development activity by all teachers, young teachers (28 or lower) and teachers who are 36 or higher give it more importance than the teachers aged between 29 and 35. When we compare three groups in pairs with a Tukey test, only the difference between teachers who are 28 or lower, and the ones who are between 29 and 35 seems significant. (p< .05)

Table 16 Mean and Standard Deviation Scores for Importance Given to Major
Professional Development Activities by Age

	MEAN	SD	N
Working on developing techniques and activities with colleagues			
28 or lower	4.36	.69	42
29-35	3.93	.88	41
36 or higher	4.21	.71	19
F(99) =3.24, p=.043			
Teacher initiated classroom investigation (action research)			
28 or lower	3.79	1.02	42
29-35	3.39	.83	41
36 or higher	2.94	.94	18
F(98) =5.37, p=.006			
Trying out new ideas or suggestions in practice			
28 or lower	4.52	.55	42
29-35	4.22	.61	41
36 or higher	4.21	.71	19
F(99) =3.14, p=.047			
In-service training (workshops, seminars, etc.)			
28 or lower	4.46	.60	41
29-35	4.00	.84	41
36 or higher	4.37	.60	19

F(98) =4.72, p=.011
Mean scores are based on a five-point Likert scale where 1= not important at all,
2= of little importance, 3= somewhat important, 4= important, 5= very important.

On the issue of whether professional development activities are made use of,
there is significant relationship between age and some activities at the .05 level
(see Table 17). Peer observation is often done by young teachers. Teachers
between 29 and 35 and those who are 36 or higher sometimes peer coach. When
the groups are compared in pairs with a Tukey test, the difference between
teachers who are 28 or lower and 36 or higher seem to be significantly different
(p< .05). Similarly, young teachers seem to reflect more on their own teaching
than older teachers and the same age groups are significantly different from each

other according to a Tukey test. According to the mean scores, professional development programmes seem to be followed more by younger teachers. As Tukey test indicates, there is a significant difference between young teachers (28 or lower) and teachers who are in between 29 and 35. Young teachers' classrooms are sometimes observed by heads or administrators, but it is rare for 29 – 35 years old teachers and it is rarer for older teachers. A further Tukey test shows that there is significant difference between all the pairs in this group at .05 level but the difference between teachers who are 28 or lower and the ones aged 36 or higher is significant.

These results suggest that overall, teachers who are younger make more use of some professional development activities than the teachers of other age groups.

Table 17 Mean and Standard Deviation Scores for Making Use of the Activities by Age

	MEAN	SD	N
Peer observation			
28 or lower	4.05	.88	42
29-35	3.90	.94	41
36 or higher	3.28	1.23	18
$F(98) = 4.02, p = .021$			
Reflection on own teaching			
28 or lower	3.93	.92	42
29-35	3.85	.96	41
36 or higher	3.21	1.23	19
$F(99) = 3.64, p = .030$			
Following professional development programmes			
28 or lower	3.60	.94	42
29-35	3.15	.79	41
36 or higher	3.21	.54	19
$F(99) = 3.42, p = .037$			
Observation of classroom events by heads, administrators			

28 or lower	3.05	.86	41
29-35	2.88	.99	40
36 or higher	2.05	.85	19

F(97) =7.98, p=.001

Mean scores are based on a five-point Likert scale where 1=never, 2=rarely, 3=sometimes, 4= often, 5= always.

4.5.3 Differences in Teachers' Perceptions of Importance Given to Major Professional Development Activities and Actual Use of the Activities by Teaching Experience

Teaching experience is another background variable that is significantly related to importance given to many professional development activities and how often they are made use of at the .05 level (see Table 18). Teachers who have less than 6 and 11 or higher years of experience think working on developing techniques and activities with colleagues is important. However, teachers who have less than 6 years of experience find it slightly more important. Respondents who have 6 - 10 years of teaching experience think it is somewhat important. A Tukey test proves that the difference between the teachers who have 11 or more years of teaching experience and the other two groups is not significant but the difference between teachers who have less than 6 years and between 6 - 10 years of experience is significant at the .05 level.

Peer observation, which is another collaborative activity, is found to be somewhat important by all teachers but for new teachers who have less than 6 years of experience, it seems to be slightly more important.

Action research doesn't seem to be very popular among teachers as experienced teachers who have more than 11 years of experience think it is of

little importance and the others find it somewhat important. When compared in pairs with a Tukey test, all the pairs in three groups seem to be significantly different (p< .05) but the difference between teachers who have less than 6 years and 6-10 years of experience of experience seems more significant.

Of professional development activities, trying out new ideas or suggestions in practice, reflection on own teaching and INSET are found to be important by all teachers with slight differences. Among different teaching experience groups, new teachers who have less than 6 years of experience give a bit more importance to these activities than the other groups. However, a Tukey test proves that there is no significant difference in trying out new ideas or suggestions in practice (p> .05). The only difference is between teachers who have less than 6 years and 6-10 years of experience regarding INSET.

While observation of classroom events by heads and administrators are found to be somewhat important by less experienced teachers who have less than 6 years of experience, it is found even less important by more experienced teachers. A Tukey test indicates a significant difference between two groups; teachers who have less than 6 years of experience and teachers who have at least 11 years of experience.

Thus, when the responses to the importance of professional development activities are taken into consideration, it can be said that less experienced teachers tend to give more importance to some of the professional development activities than more experienced teachers.

Table 18 Mean and Standard Deviation Scores for Importance Given to Major Professional Development Activities by Teaching Experience

	MEAN	SD	N
Working on developing techniques and activities with colleagues			
0-5 years	4.39	.63	41
6-10 years	3.91	.92	43
11 or higher	4.22	.65	18
F(99) =4.22, p=.017			
Peer observation			
0-5 years	3.76	.89	41
6-10 years	3.21	.97	43
11 or higher	3.11	1.08	18
F(99) =4.51, p=.013			
Teacher initiated classroom investigation (action research)			
0-5 years	3.76	.99	41
6-10 years	3.47	.88	43
11 or higher	2.82	.88	17
F(98) =6.04, p=.003			
Trying out new ideas or suggestions in practice			
0-5 years	4.54	.55	41
6-10 years	4.23	.61	43
11 or higher	4.17	.71	18
F(99) =3.56, p=.032			
Reflection on own teaching			
0-5 years	4.49	.60	41
6-10 years	4.09	.81	43
11 or higher	4.11	.68	18
F(99) =3.71, p=.028			
In-service training (workshops, seminars, etc.)			
0-5 years	4.46	.55	41
6-10 years	4.05	.85	42
11 or higher	4.28	.67	18
F(98) =3.54, p=.033			
Observation of classroom events by heads, administrators			
0-5 years	3.51	1.10	41
6-10 years	2.98	1.12	43
11 or higher	2.44	1.20	18
F(99) =6.04, p=.003			

Mean scores are based on a five-point Likert scale where 1= not important at all, 2= of little importance, 3= somewhat important, 4= important, 5= very important.

Table 19 shows the significant relationship between making use of certain activities and teaching experience at .05 level. One of the activities that is significantly related to teaching experience is a collaborative one: working on developing techniques and activities with colleagues. According to the results, teachers who have been teaching less than 6 years and 6- 10 years make use of this activity more. They report that they sometimes do this, whereas, the more experienced teachers rarely work on developing techniques and activities with colleagues. A further Tukey test shows that a significant difference is present between the least experienced (0-5 years) and the most experienced (11 or higher) groups among the three groups at the .05 level.

Another collaborative activity, which is peer observation, is again more frequently made use of by new teachers. Teachers who have less than 6 years of experience report to peer coach often, teachers working for 6-10 years sometimes peer observe like the teachers working for 11 or more years. When three groups are compared in pairs with a Tukey test, significant difference is found within the pairs in the group.

If teachers want to develop professionally, research, reflection and practice are some of the basic themes that need to be considered and worked upon. Taking this fact into consideration, a question can be asked; how much do the teachers make use of the activities that lead them do research, reflect and practice? When asked, teachers who have less than 6 years of teaching experience report that they sometimes gather information about their own teaching performance. However, teachers working for 6-10 years or 11 years or higher rarely make use of this

activity. Similarly, reflection on own teaching is often done by teachers who are teaching for less than 6 years. Other respondents report to seldom reflect on their teaching. A further Tukey test proves a significant difference at the .05 level for both gathering information about own teaching and reflection on own teaching between teachers who have less than 6 years of teaching experience and 11 or more years. A significant difference is not found between teachers who have 6-10 years of experience and the other groups.

Observation of classroom events by superiors is sometimes fulfilled by teachers having less than 6 years of experience and it is rarely done by the other teachers who have more years of teaching experience. According to a Tukey test, all the pairs in three groups are significantly different at the .05 level.

These results might indicate that new teachers more often yield to research, reflection, and practise to develop professionally when compared to more experienced teachers.

Table 19 Mean and Standard Deviation Scores for Making Use of the Activities by Teaching Experience

	<u>MEAN</u>	<u>SD</u>	<u>N</u>
Working on developing techniques and activities with colleagues			
0-5 years	3.54	.92	41
6-10 years	3.44	.98	43
11 or higher	2.89	.90	18
F(99) =3.08, p=.050			
Peer observation			
0-5 years	4.00	.87	41
6-10 years	3.98	.96	43
11 or higher	3.18	1.19	17
F(98) =4.99, p=.009			
Gathering information about own teaching performance			
0-5 years	3.29	1.08	41
6-10 years	2.93	1.01	43
11 or higher	2.50	.86	18
F(99) =3.99, p=.021			
Reflection on own teaching			
0-5 years	4.05	.95	41
6-10 years	3.70	.94	43
11 or higher	3.28	1.23	18
F(99) =3.90, p=.023			
Observation of classroom events by heads, administrators			
0-5 years	3.18	.84	40
6-10 years	2.79	.95	42
11 or higher	1.94	.80	18
F(97) =12.03, p=.000			

Mean scores are based on a five-point Likert scale where 1=never, 2=rarely, 3=sometimes, 4= often, 5= always

4.5.4 Differences in Teachers' Perceptions of Importance Given to Major

Professional Development by Teaching Experience at the Institution

Teaching experience at ELSBU is another background variable that is found to be significantly related to certain professional development activities in terms of

importance given to them at .05 level. Table 20 reveals that three of the collaborative professional development activities are significantly related to teaching experience at the institution. Teachers who have less than 3 years of experience find working on developing new materials, techniques and activities with colleagues important. Although not as much, teachers who have been working for six or more years at the institution seem to give less importance to these activities saying they are somewhat important. However, a Tukey test proves that these differences are not significant at the .05 level.

The third activity underlying collaboration is peer observation. All the teachers find this activity somewhat important with slight differences. Peer observation seems to lose its importance for teachers as they have more experience of working at the institution. This interpretation is true for the other professional development activities like reflection on own teaching and INSET. All the teachers find these activities important with slight differences between the groups who have different years of teaching experience. These activities seem to be perceived as less important as teachers have more teaching experience at the institution. According to a Tukey test, in regard to both peer observation and reflection on own teaching, only the difference between teachers who have the least experience in the institution (0 –2 years) and the most experienced (6 or higher) is significantly different (p< .05). When it comes to INSET, all the pairs in three groups seem to differ significantly from each other but the difference between the least experienced and the most experienced ones seems to be more significant.

Professional development through outside resources, such as following professional development programmes is another important alternative for

teachers to improve their skills and knowledge. Teachers' perceptions of this activity differ; while the ones who have been working less than 6 years find it important, the ones who have been working for 6 years or more perceive it somewhat important. However, a Tukey test doesn't show any significant difference between the pairs in three groups at the .05 level.

The differences in teachers' responses according to the background variable of teacher experience at the institution suggest that newer teachers at the institution give much more importance to a number of professional development activities.

Table 20 Mean and Standard Deviation Scores for Importance Given to Major Professional Development Activities by Teaching Experience at the Institution

	MEAN	SD	N
Working on developing new materials with colleagues			
0-2 years	4.47	.72	17
3-5 years	4.20	.63	45
6 or higher	3.92	.86	37
F(96) =3.52, p=.033			
Working on developing techniques and activities with colleagues			
0-2 years	4.65	.49	17
3-5 years	4.29	.63	45
6 or higher	3.76	.93	37
F(96) =9.97, p=.000			
Peer observation			
0-2 years	3.88	.86	17
3-5 years	3.51	.89	45
6 or higher	3.05	1.05	37
F(96) =4.93, p=.009			
Reflection on own teaching			
0-2 years	4.59	.62	17
3-5 years	4.33	.60	45
6 or higher	4.00	.85	37
F(96) =4.55, p=.013			
In-service training (workshops, seminars, etc.)			
0-2 years	4.71	.47	17
3-5 years	4.22	.64	45
6 or higher	4.06	.86	36
F(95) =4.95, p=.009			
Following professional development programmes			
0-2 years	4.41	.51	17
3-5 years	4.29	.66	45
6 or higher	3.92	.89	37
F(96) =3.64, p=.030			

Mean scores are based on a five-point Likert scale where 1= not important at all, 2= of little importance, 3= somewhat important, 4= important, 5= very important.

4.5.5 Differences in Teachers' Perceptions of Importance Given to Major

Professional Development Activities by Undergraduate Area of Study

The relationship between the background variable; teachers' undergraduate area of study and the importance given to a couple of professional development activities is significant at the .05 level (see Table 21). All teachers graduated from different areas of study think that sharing experiences and problems with colleagues is important. However, ELT and other graduates such as American Culture and Literature and English Linguistics believe this is more important than English Language and Literature graduates think. Despite the results of mean scores, a Tukey test proves no significant difference between the pairs in this group at the .05 level.

Another activity, which is significantly related to the teachers' undergraduate area of studies, is following literature on own field. While ELT and English Language and Literature graduates consider this activity from outside resources as somewhat important, graduates of other fields find it important. According to a Tukey test, only the difference between graduates of English Language and Literature and other fields looks significant at the .05 level.

Table 21 Mean and Standard Deviation Scores for Importance Given to Major Professional Development Activities by Undergraduate Area of Study

	MEAN	SD	N
Sharing experiences and problems with colleagues			
English Language Teaching	4.43	.65	47
English Language and Literature	4.09	.71	34
Others (e.g. American Culture and literature, English Linguistics, etc.)	4.43	.51	21
F(99) =3.10, p=.049			
Following research literature on own field			
English Language Teaching	3.85	.86	47
English Language and Literature	3.71	.91	34
Others (e.g. American Culture and literature, English Linguistics, etc.)	4.29	.72	21
F(99) =3.13, p=.048			

Mean scores are based on a five-point Likert scale where 1= not important at all, 2= of little importance, 3= somewhat important, 4= important, 5= very important.

4.5.6 Differences in Teachers' Perceptions of Importance Given to Major Professional Development Activities and Actual Use of the Activities by Last Degree Completed

The last degree English language teachers completed is another background variable which is found significantly related to the importance given and how often these activities are made use of at the .05 level.

The only professional development activity that differs by the last degree completed is action research (see Table 22). An independent t-test shows that there is slight difference between teachers who have MA/ MS degree and BA/ BS degree. Both parties believe that this activity is somewhat important, but teachers who have MA/ MS degree seem to give it a little more importance.

Table 22 Mean and Standard Deviation Scores for Importance Given to Major Professional Development Activities by Last Degree Completed

	MEAN	SD	N
Teacher initiated classroom investigation (action research)			
BA/ BS degree	3.39	.94	85
MA/ MS degree	3.94	1.06	16

t(99) =-2.10, p=.038
Mean scores are based on a five-point Likert scale where 1= not important at all, 2= of little importance, 3= somewhat important, 4= important, 5= very important.

As Table 23 indicates, there is a difference between teachers in making use of training other teachers by the last degree they have completed. Respondents who have BA/ BS degree almost never train other teachers, whereas teachers having MA/ MS degrees rarely train other teachers.

Table 23 Mean and Standard Deviation Scores for Making Use of the Activities by English Language Teachers by Last Degree Completed

	MEAN	SD	N
Training other teachers			
BA/ BS degree	1.60	.98	85
MA/ MS degree	2.18	1.19	17

t(100) =-2.13, p=.035
Mean scores are based on a five-point Likert scale where 1=never, 2=rarely, 3=sometimes, 4= often, 5= always

4.5.7 Differences in Teachers' Actual Use of Major Professional Development Activities by Current Enrolment in a Degree Programme

Another background variable is current enrolment of teachers in a degree programme. This is significantly related to making use of only one activity, which is an example of professional development from outside resources; following research literature on own field. As Table 24 shows, teachers who are enrolled in a programme make use of this activity more when compared to teachers who are not.

Table 24 Mean and Standard Deviation Scores for Making Use of the Activities by Current Enrolment in a Degree Programme

	MEAN	SD	N
Following research literature on own field			
Teachers who are enrolled	3.73	1.03	15
Teachers who are not enrolled	3.07	.91	87

t(100) =-2.55, p=.012

Mean scores are based on a five-point Likert scale where 1=never, 2=rarely, 3=sometimes, 4= often, 5= always

4.5.8 Differences in Teachers' Perceptions of Importance Given to Major Professional Development Activities and Actual Use of the Activities by Programme They Teach at

Table 25 shows that significant relationship is found between programme the teacher teaches at and four professional development activities in terms of giving importance and making use of the activities. The two collaborative activities are significantly related. These are asking for professional help from colleagues and working on developing techniques and activities with colleagues. Both of the activities are found to be important by the teachers working at PREP, whereas teachers in DEC think they are somewhat important.

The third variable, which is trying out new ideas or suggestions in practice is considered to be important by all teachers, but PREP teachers seem to give it more importance.

The last activity for professional development is training other teachers. Again according to the independent samples t-test results, while PREP teachers find it important, DEC teachers believe it is somewhat important.

Table 25 Mean and Standard Deviation Scores for Importance Given to Major Professional Development Activities by Programme Teacher Teaches at

	MEAN	SD	N
Asking for professional help from colleagues			
Preparatory Programme	4.24	.69	63
Departmental English Course	3.95	.52	38
t(99) =-2.24, p=.027			
Working on developing techniques and activities with colleagues			
Preparatory Programme	4.34	.78	64
Departmental English Course	3.84	.72	38
t(100) =-3.23, p=.002			
Trying out new ideas or suggestions in practice			
Preparatory Programme	4.45	.62	64
Departmental English Course	4.16	.59	38
t(100) =-2.37, p=.020			
Training other teachers			
Preparatory Programme	4.24	.69	63
Departmental English Course	3.95	.52	38

t(100) =-2.25, p=.026
Mean scores are based on a five-point Likert scale where 1= not important at all, 2= of little importance, 3= somewhat important, 4= important, 5= very important.

An expected significant relationship is also found between making use of the activities and the same background variable (see Table 26). Parallel to the results on the importance given to the activities, two collaborative activities; asking for professional help from colleagues and working on developing new techniques and activities with colleagues, are found to be significantly related to the background variable. Both activities are sometimes used by all the teachers with a slight difference; PREP teachers make use of these activities more. The results seem consistent since the activities are also given more importance by the same group of teachers.

Research doesn't seem to receive much attention from the teachers. All the teachers report that action research is rarely made use of in their careers, but again PREP teachers seem to undertake action research more. When it comes to practice, trying out new ideas or suggestions in practice receive more attention from PREP teachers as Table 25 indicated. Similarly, the same activity is also done by PREP teachers slightly more often than DEC teachers. Moreover, PREP teachers sometimes gather information on their teaching to reflect upon, while the other group of teachers rarely do this for their own development.

In addition to these, PREP teachers often follow INSET activities like workshops, seminars, but the other group of teachers sometimes follow these kinds of activities.

Finally, both parties report to be rarely observed by heads, administrators, but still according to the results, PREP teachers are observed more with a slight difference.

What do these results mean? When both the importance given to and the actualisation of a number of professional development activities are taken into consideration, teachers working at PREP programme not only give more importance, but also make more use of the stated activities in their careers when compared to the teachers working at DEC programme.

Table 26 Mean and Standard Deviation Scores for Making Use of Activities by Programme Teacher Teaches at

	MEAN	SD	N
Asking for professional help from colleagues			
Preparatory Programme	3.70	.84	63
Departmental English Course	3.08	1.00	38
t(99) =3.35, p=.001			
Working on developing techniques and activities with colleagues			
Preparatory Programme	3.56	1.01	64
Departmental English Course	3.08	.82	38
t(100) =2.51, p=.014			
Teacher initiated classroom investigation (action research)			
Preparatory Programme	2.62	1.04	61
Departmental English Course	2.21	.91	38
t(97) =2.02, p=.046			
Trying out new ideas or suggestions in practice			
Preparatory Programme	3.95	.86	64
Departmental English Course	3.61	.82	38
t(100) =2.00, p=.048			
Gathering information about own teaching			
Preparatory Programme	3.23	1.05	64
Departmental English Course	2.61	.92	38
t(100) =3.06, p=.003			
In-service training (workshops, seminars, etc.)			
Preparatory Programme	4.30	.76	61
Departmental English Course	3.95	.74	37
t(96) =2.22, p=.029			
Observation of classroom events by heads, administrators			
Preparatory Programme	2.98	.95	62
Departmental English Course	2.47	.95	38
t(98) =2.60, p=.011			

Mean scores are based on a five-point Likert scale where 1=never, 2=rarely, 3=sometimes, 4= often, 5= always

4.5.9 Differences in Teachers' Perceptions of Importance Given to Major

   Professional Development Activities by Future Plans to Take Additional

   Qualifications in ELT or Education

As Table 27 shows, independent samples t-test reveal a significant relationship between future plans to take additional qualifications in ELT or education and the importance given to a number of professional development activities by teachers.

For teachers who don't have future plans to take additional qualifications, peer observation and action research are somewhat important, but for teachers who have plans it seems a bit more important than the ones who don't.

Despite the fact that all teachers find trying out new ideas or suggestions in practice and reflection on own teaching important, teachers who have future plans seem to favour these activities a bit more. Similarly, INSET is considered to be important for teachers who plan their future in terms of their professional development, for the others it is somewhat important. Plus, for teachers who have plans, observation of classroom events by heads and

administrators is somewhat important, whereas, for the others it is of little importance.

These results could be interpreted as teachers who plan their future for their professional development are more in favour of professional development activities. However, teachers who don't have plans, stay more on the neutral side. Presumably, as a result of their staying rather indifferent, they are not close to planning to develop further.

Table 27 Mean and Standard Deviation Scores for Importance Given to Major Professional Development Activities by Future Plans to Take Additional Qualifications in ELT or Education

	MEAN	SD	N
Peer observation			
Teachers who have plans	3.73	.92	51
Teachers who have no plans	3.04	.98	45
t(94) =3.52, p=.001			
Teacher initiated classroom investigation (action research)			
Teachers who have plans	3.84	.84	50
Teachers who have no plans	3.16	1.00	45
t(93) =3.62, p=.000			
Trying out new ideas or suggestions in practice			
Teachers who have plans	4.47	.64	51
Teachers who have no plans	4.20	.59	45
t(94) =2.14, p=.035			
Reflection on own teaching			
Teachers who have plans	4.43	.70	51
Teachers who have no plans	4.07	.75	45
t(94) =2.46 p=.016			
In-service training (workshops, seminars, etc.)			
Teachers who have plans	4.49	.62	51
Teachers who have no plans	4.02	.79	44
t(93) =3.24 p=.002			
Following professional development programmes			
Teachers who have plans	4.37	.66	51
Teachers who have no plans	3.91	.79	45
t(94) =3.10 p=.002			
Observation of classroom events by heads, administrators			
Teachers who have plans	3.43	1.17	51
Teachers who have no plans	2.71	1.14	45
t(94) =3.04 p=.003			

Mean scores are based on a five-point Likert scale where 1= not important at all, 2= of little importance, 3= somewhat important, 4= important, 5= very important.

4.6 Impediments to Change and Growth

The third purpose of this study is to explore what hinders change and growth in English language teachers (research question number 3). Teachers' responses to the statements in the fourth section of the questionnaire provided data on how important teachers perceive some factors that hinder change and growth.

As Table 28 reveals, personal financial problems as a drawback in professional development efforts is seen to be very important/ important by the two thirds of teachers (71.6%). The minority of the teachers find this problem somewhat important (18.6%). Excessive workload is received as a more important constraint to their professional development by the majority of teachers (88.1%). A small number of teachers perceive this problem as somewhat important (9.9%).

Furthermore, the majority of teachers (73.6%) report that strict working hours is a very important/ important drawback in their professional development efforts. Nevertheless, there is a small proportion (15.7%) who believe it is somewhat important and even 10.8% consider it little or not important at all. The issue of excessive workload brings into mind teachers' working hours. Workload and strict working hours as a drawback to teachers' professional development efforts may bring the danger of communication and collaboration into discussion.

Lack of communication among colleagues is found to be a very important/ important factor hindering change and growth in teachers by two thirds of the teachers (70.6%) and the minority think this is somewhat important (20.6%). Similarly, lack of collaboration is considered to be very important/ important by 73.5% of teachers and 16.7% consider it to be somewhat important.

Among all the factors that hinder change and growth in English language teachers, lack of institutional support for professional development and lack of self-motivation is received to be the most important two factors the majority of teachers agree upon. 83.3% of the teachers find lack of institutional support as a very important/ important hindrance to their growth. Understandably, lack of self-motivation is considered to be very important/ important by most of the teachers (89.2%).

Furthermore, another factor that hinders growth in teachers is educational background. Two thirds of the teachers find it very important/ important (71.6%) and 15.7% consider it somewhat important. 12.7% find it little important and or not important at all.

According to the results, about half of the teachers (53%) report difficulty in reaching literature in the field as a very important/ important constraint and close to one third of teachers (29.4%) think it is somewhat important, while 17.7% believe it is not important at all or of little importance. Although these results imply English language teachers' perceptions of the factors that hinder them in their professional development, essentially this issue needs to be studied to find out why this is the case.

These results suggest that all the listed factors that hinder change and growth in teachers are perceived to be very important/ important by the teachers with slight differences. Obviously, the most important factors seem to be excessive workload, lack of self-motivation, and institutional support for professional development.

Table 28 Degree of Importance Given to Some Factors that Hinder Change and Growth (in percentages and means)

NOT IMPORTANT AT ALL	OF LITTLE IMPORTANCE	SOMEWHAT IMPORTANT	IMPORTANT	VERY IMPORTANT	<u>ME</u> <u>AN</u>	<u>N</u>
Personal financial problems						
4.9	4.9	18.6	32.4	39.2	3.96	102
Excessive workload						
1.0	1.0	9.9	30.7	57.4	4.43	101
Strict working hours						
2.0	8.8	15.7	42.2	31.4	3.92	102
Lack of communication among colleagues						
3.9	4.9	20.6	39.2	31.4	3.89	102
Lack of collaboration among colleagues						
2.9	6.9	16.7	40.2	33.3	3.94	102
Lack of institutional support for professional development						
4.9	4.9	6.9	38.2	45.1	4.14	102
Lack of self-motivation						
2.0	1.0	7.8	25.5	63.7	4.48	102
Educational background						
3.9	8.8	15.7	34.3	37.3	3.92	102
Difficulty in reaching literature in the field						
6.9	10.8	29.4	36.3	16.7	3.45	102

<u>N</u>'s vary due to some missing responses.

4.7 Differences in Teachers' Perceptions of Importance Given to Some Factors that Hinder Change and Growth by Background Factors

The data collated from the fourth section of the questionnaire were further analysed to determine if there was a significant relation between the importance given to some factors that hinder change and growth in teachers and selected background factors using independent t-test and one-way ANOVA as measures of significance.

4.7.1 Differences in Teachers' Perceptions of Importance Given to Some

Factors that Hinder Change and Growth by Age

As indicated in Table 29, for teachers whose ages differ from 29 to 35, strict working hours is an important drawback in their professional development efforts, whereas for the other age groups it seems somewhat important. A further Tukey test indicates that the only significant difference is between the teachers who are 29-35 and 36 or higher at the .05 level.

Table 29 Mean and Standard Deviation Scores for Importance Given to Some Factors that Hinder Change and Growth by Age

	MEAN	SD	N
Strict working hours			
28 or lower	3.83	1.12	42
29-35	4.20	.81	41
36 or higher	3.53	.96	19

F(99) =3.31, p=.040
Mean scores are based on a five-point Likert scale where 1= not important at all, 2= of little importance, 3= somewhat important, 4= important, 5= very important.

4.7.2 Differences in Teachers' Perceptions of Importance Given to Some

Factors that Hinder Change and Growth by Last Degree Completed

As Table 30 shows, while teachers with BA/ BS degree think personal financial problems is an important impediment to professional growth, for teachers who have MA/ MS degree it is somewhat important.

Table 30 Mean and Standard Deviation Scores for Importance Given to Some Factors that Hinder Change and Growth by Last Degree Completed

	MEAN	SD	N
Personal financial problems			
BA/ BS degree	4.08	1.04	85
MA/ MS degree	3.35	1.27	17

t(100) =2.54, p=.012

Mean scores are based on a five-point Likert scale where 1= not important at all, 2= of little importance, 3= somewhat important, 4= important, 5= very important.

4.7.3 Differences in Teachers' Perceptions of Importance Given to Some Factors that Hinder Change and Growth by Programme They Teach at

Teachers at PREP attach more importance to personal financial problems as a hindrance than DEC teachers who find it somewhat important. This difference is significant at the .05 level (see Table 31).

Table 31 Mean and Standard Deviation Scores for Importance Given to Some Factors that Hinder Change and Growth by Programme Teacher Teaches at

	MEAN	SD	N
Personal financial problems			
Preparatory Programme	4.17	1.00	64
Departmental English Course	3.61	1.20	38

$t(100) = 2.56$, $p = .012$

Mean scores are based on a five-point Likert scale where 1= not important at all, 2= of little importance, 3= somewhat important, 4= important, 5= very important.

4.8 Comments of Survey Respondents

At the end of the questionnaire through an open-ended question teachers were asked to state their opinions and suggestions regarding various aspects of professional development activities and problems faced during professional development. A total of six respondents (0.58%) provided their opinions or suggestions on various issues in terms of professional development.

Four teachers commented on how teachers' attitudes should be in terms of their own professional development. One noted that teachers should be open to criticism, and another stated that they should have a learner's attitude toward life in general and therefore towards teaching in particular. Another comment made is

that, teachers should never feel satisfied with their ways of teaching. These teachers underlined the necessity of life-long learning and the attitude that needs to be adapted when this necessity is taken into consideration.

In this never-ending journey for professional development, one of the teachers indicated the importance of guidance. He/ she reported that teachers should be guided if they ask for it. Besides, new developments in the field should be informed to the teachers.

Two teachers commented on peer observation. One of the teachers stated that she has concerns regarding this issue. He/ she explained that; "It is highly important to be observed by a peer who is experienced and professional enough to evaluate his/ her teaching in a useful and polite way."

The other comment on peer observation was similar and carried out similar concerns. The teacher got into more specifics as to how observations should be carried out:

> Peer observation is mainly a beneficial activity and I am for it. However, there should be a motivation, need, and time to do it. I would like somebody to observe my lesson and then discuss, reflect on it but everybody cannot do it. Peer observation should not aim different things other than development and should add to my development.

Finally, the teacher who expressed his/ her opinions points out an important theme in professional development, which is self-motivation.

> Professional development highly rests on self-motivation. The way a teacher perceives his profession and the extent to which he/she believes in the necessity and the benefit of growth are the important motives of a teacher before he/ she takes initiation for his/ her own professional development. The training provided by the institution will not achieve its aim unless the teachers lack the motives mentioned above.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

This final chapter presents conclusions of the study, implications for future practice and implications for future research.

5.1 Conclusions

Before suggesting implications for practice and future research, findings concerning English language teachers' perceptions of self-initiated professional development, major development activities, and making use of these activities are presented.

5.1.1 English Language Teachers' Attitudes Towards Their Own Professional Development

One of the main purposes of this study is to find out English language teachers' attitudes towards their own professional development. The survey results indicate that almost all the teachers who participated in this study strongly agree or agree with the statements that reflect some of the major ideas about professional development. All the teachers strongly support the idea that willingness is an important factor in successful professional development.

The majority of teachers are also positive towards the idea of taking the initiation for professional development rather than dependence on the institution they work for and freedom to test new ideas or techniques in practice during development efforts. Other important themes, which are reflection and evaluation of oneself in order to improve teaching skills are favoured by an overwhelmingly large proportion of teachers. They give importance to being involved in the evaluation of their teaching and to reflecting upon their practices to improve professionally. Furthermore, the majority of teachers are enthusiastic about collaboration during professional development efforts. They think teachers should help each other evaluate teaching to identify problems, strengths, and weaknesses, and produce solutions to solve problems. When it comes to another collaborative activity; peer observation, more than half of the teachers believe it should be used to gather information about teaching performance. Almost all the teachers believe that they should be open to new ideas and changes, and try to keep themselves up to date with changes and improvements in ELT.

As a result, questionnaire data suggest that teachers predominantly agree with the ideas that reflect some of the major and accepted conceptions about professional development. This suggests that teachers accept that they need to show certain attitudes in order to improve professionally.

Teachers show significant differences in their attitudes towards their own professional development on certain topics by gender, age, teaching experience, teaching experience at the institution, undergraduate area of study, enrolment in a degree programme, programme teacher is teaching in, and future plans to take additional qualifications in ELT or education.

Male and female teachers differ in their attitudes towards the idea that a teacher should be free to test any idea or a new technique in teaching. According to the results, female teachers are more in favour of the idea when compared to male teachers. Therefore, it can be implied that female teachers are more open to trying out new ideas or techniques in teaching. The same statement is perceived differently by teachers of different ages. Young teachers are more enthusiastic about freedom to test any idea or new technique when compared to relatively older teachers. This may imply that younger teachers are more courageous to try out new things in their teaching. In addition to that, teachers who have less than 10 years of teaching experience are more positive towards the idea than the ones who have 11 or more years of teaching experience.

These results show that female teachers, young teachers and the ones who have been teaching for at most 10 years are more open to the idea of freedom to test any idea or a new technique in teaching. Hence, they are more willing to take risks in their professional lives in order to improve their practices. On the other hand, older and more experienced teachers seem to be more conventional and less willing to change their ways in their professional lives. This result may be explained by the stages teachers go through in their professional lives. For teachers who are older or who have more than 10 years of experience, as stated by Day (1999), it is possible to go through a monotony and disenchantment in their professions, whereas, younger and less experienced teachers may be committed to and enthusiastic about developing further and therefore, they are more open to new ideas or changes.

Teachers who have 3 to 5 years of teaching experience at the institution seem to believe more in the necessity of teachers helping each other evaluate teaching to identify problems, strengths, and weaknesses and produce solutions to solve problems. In other words, teachers who have been working for longer time (6 or more years) at the institution are less open to collaboration in the work place when compared to others. Experienced teachers may have lost enthusiasm about or faith in the fact that collaboration is necessary for professional development and only individual effort for development is not adequate, help and support are essential.

Understandably, teachers who are enrolled in a degree programme support taking the initiative for their development more since they are the ones who are devoted and motivated enough to start a programme for their development. They also believe more in helping each other as teachers to evaluate teaching in order to identify problems, strengths, and weaknesses.

Teachers working in PREP are more enthusiastic about testing new ideas or techniques than DEC teachers. As well as that, they are more positive towards the evaluation of teaching skills and reflection on own practices. This may be because teaching in PREP requires more variety in terms of teaching skills or there is a more supportive environment in Preparatory department in terms of development for teachers.

Keeping up to date with changes and improvements in ELT is regarded as very important by teachers who have plans for further professional development. Besides, they are more positive towards peer observation. Undoubtedly, because these teachers have this vision, they have future plans for their own development.

The conclusions reached through the first section of the questionnaire on teachers' perceptions of professional development is parallel to a couple of teachers' comments in the open-ended section. Three of the teachers add to the qualifications that a teacher should have in order to develop professionally; a teacher should be open to criticism and should have a learner's attitude toward life in general and toward teaching in particular. Besides, a teacher should never feel satisfied with their ways of teaching. These comments emphasize the importance of life-long learning and the attitudes teachers should adapt in order to improve. The need to be informed about the new developments in the field is expressed by one of the teachers. This implies the need to be guided during the development. However, it is also emphasized that teachers should be guided if they ask for it. Another teacher underlines the importance of self-motivation and taking the initiation for professional development. It is added that training from the institution will not achieve its aim unless teachers lack the motives. Similarly, according to Bailey et al. (1998), all professional development is a matter of self-development. Just as teachers cannot do the learning for learners, teacher educators cannot do the learning for pre- or in-service teachers.

5.1.2 Major Professional Development Activities

English language teachers' perceptions of major professional development activities and to what degree they make use of these activities are examined. The collaborative activities like sharing experiences, problems with colleagues, asking for professional help from them, and working on developing new materials, techniques and activities with colleagues are received to be important by almost

all the teachers. However, one of the collaborative activities; peer observation isn't perceived as critical to their development by half of the teachers. There may be a couple of reasons for this reaction towards peer observation. First of all, peer observation may be seen as an activity, which is done to evaluate and therefore, it could provoke negative feelings and reactions among teachers. As Cosh (1999) underlines, teachers may even become defensive and resistant to any future suggestions. Although only two teachers commented on peer observation in open-ended questions, the data reveal the fact that teachers are prone to see this activity as judgemental rather than developmental. One of the teachers used the word 'evaluate', while the other said peer observation shouldn't aim things other than development like evaluation and should add to teachers' development. These expressions may indicate that teachers carry the feeling of being evaluated through peer observation.

Another reason for the unpopularity of peer observation among teachers may be the discomfort felt by being observed by a peer who is not competent enough to reflect upon the lesson being observed. One of the teachers notes that it is highly important to be observed by a peer who is experienced and professional enough to evaluate her teaching in a useful and polite way. Another teacher comments that she or he would like to be observed but not every person can do it. Contradictory enough, it is found that peer observation is one of the most frequently used activities by teachers although it is not valued by half of them.

Everybody in the school peer observes and most of them often or always do this activity. This is due to the regulations followed in the institution as a part of teacher training and development programme. This may imply that peer

observation is not initiated by teachers themselves but by the institution, which brings the danger of unwillingness or a reaction by the teachers to "a top down" (Hargreaves and Fullan, 1992, p.3), imposed improvement on teachers.

In addition to peer observation, all the other collaborative activities are often made use of by most of the teachers. They sometimes or often share experiences, problems with colleagues, and ask for professional help from them. Working on developing new materials, techniques, and activities with colleagues are also sometimes or often made use of by the majority.

Trying out new ideas or suggestions in practice, reflection on own teaching, and gathering information about one's own teaching are all developmental practices that rely on research and practice. Although the majority find these practices important for their development, action research, which is also a reflective activity, doesn't receive much attention from the teachers. This activity is found to be important by half of the teachers, whereas the other half don't find it critically important to their development. Expectedly, the majority of teachers rarely or never undertake action research. Only a minority of teachers sometimes or often initiate classroom investigation. This result may be due to a couple of reasons. Teachers may not have any or enough knowledge about action research and how to conduct it. Besides, they may be lacking the incentive, time, and available resources to conduct a research in their classes.

Most of the teachers always or often try out new ideas and suggestions in practice. Gathering information about own teaching performance is less frequently done by the teachers. Information about teaching performance is sometimes gathered about own teaching performance by most of the teachers.

According to the survey results, more than half of the teachers often or always reflect on their own teaching. This implies that teachers put effort in understanding the events that occur in the classroom deeply by thinking about the experiences they had.

Professional development through outside resources like attending INSET, following research literature on own field, and professional development programmes are received to be important by the majority of teachers. According to the results, many teachers attend INSET programmes but not as many teachers follow research literature on own field and professional development programmes. Most of them report they sometimes make use of these activities. A possible reason is not having formed the habit of following the outside resources, like following professional development programmes or research literature in addition to the training they receive as teachers. Furthermore, teachers may not be encouraged enough to continue their development through outside resources as well as INSET, which implies the underestimation of extended learning. However, as Hiep (2001) states, extended learning is important since education should be viewed as a long term process.

Observation by heads or administrators as an alternative way for development is not favoured by the majority of teachers. This result may be due to the possibility that administrative observations are judgemental and compulsory. Teachers may see the procedure as a threat and be unwilling or resistant to accept observers who aim to evaluate their practices. Cosh (1999) states that observation done for the purpose of evaluation can be detrimental both to teacher confidence and to a supportive environment.

Although favoured by many, training other teachers is never done by many teachers because it is possible that teachers do not have the opportunity to be involved in such an activity.

As a result, by and large, most of the teachers consider the major professional development activities as important. As well as that, most of the activities are made use of with varying frequencies. However, they don't make use of those activities as much as they give importance to. Despite the fact that this study doesn't answer the reasons behind this issue as it wasn't aimed at, several reasons may be attributed to why this is the case. Teachers may be lacking the motivation to start the activities or they may hardly find time to devote for their development because of excessive workload or their private lives. Another reason may be assumed as lack of institutional support for the teachers to initiate, direct, and keep hold of their professional development.

Teachers show significant differences in importance given to major activities and making use of those by many background variables. One of them is gender. Female teachers seem to give more importance to collaborative activities like working on developing new materials with colleagues than male teachers. They are also more positive towards the idea of trying out new ideas or suggestions in practice, and observation of classroom events by heads, administrators. In addition to the importance given to certain activities, female teachers make use of them more often than male teachers. Collaborative activities like sharing experiences, problems, and working on developing new materials with colleagues as well as peer observation are more often made use of by female teachers. In addition to these collaborative activities, trying out new ideas or suggestions in

practice, and reflection on own teaching are the activities that are fulfilled more by female teachers.

These results suggest that female teachers are more open to certain professional development activities and quite a lot of these activities including collaborative and reflective ones are more often made use of. They are also more ready to take risks by trying out new ideas or suggestions in practice. It may be inferred that female teachers not only give more importance to their professional development but also are more active in putting effort for their professional development by actualizing certain activities. On the other hand, male teachers stay a bit more passive in making use of the activities.

Teachers also differ in their view and use of the activities by their age. Among three age groups, the youngest group (28 or lower age) give more importance to one of the collaborative activities; working on developing techniques and activities with colleagues than older age groups. The same is true for action research and INSET. Teachers who are 28 or lower seem to find these activities more critical to their development.

Parallel to these results, peer observation, reflection on own teaching, following professional development programmes, observation by heads or administrators are the activities that are more often benefited by the teachers who are in the youngest age group.

In view of these, it could be said that younger teachers who are in the first stages of their careers show more interest in major professional development activities in terms of giving importance and actualization. This may be explained that as they are in their first stages of their careers, they present initial

commitment and enthusiasm (Day, 1999). However, teachers who are in further stages of their careers may get into monotony and disenchantment, which can make them stay away from development efforts. Older teachers may even show resistance to innovations and new challenges. Besides, they may feel themselves secure with their practices as they are experienced. They may be less in need of improving their skills or knowledge despite the fact that being an effective foreign language teacher requires a commitment to keep up with the developments in the field and a willingness to engage in continuous professional development (Pachier and Field, 1997).

The type of activities young teachers find critical and make use of gives an idea on these teachers' needs. As they are in their beginning or first stages of their careers, they may be more prone to working with colleagues to get help and guidance. Therefore, they find collaborative activities important for their development and they benefit from these activities. Since they are in search of improving their knowledge and skills, INSET and following professional development programmes are more important and more frequently made use of. Logically, classroom research is considered critical as they may be in need of evaluating their practices.

Teachers who have less than 6 years of teaching experience and the ones who have been working for 6 to 10 years differ in importance they give to working on developing techniques and activities with colleagues. According to the survey results, novice teachers give more importance to this collaborative activity and they also make use of it more when compared to teachers who have 11 or more years of teaching experience. Similarly, they give more importance to action

research and INSET when compared to teachers who have 6-10 years of teaching experience. Observation by heads and administrators is found to be little important by teachers who have 11 or more years of teaching experience while new teachers find it somewhat important.

Peer observation is more valued by teachers who have at most 5 years of teaching experience when compared to more experienced teachers. As well as that, this activity is more often made use of by the least experienced teachers like observation by heads and administrators. Besides, reflection on own teaching is often done by new teachers, whereas, teachers who have at least 11 years of experience seldom reflect.

These differences by teaching experience can be explained with parallel to the differences by age. Like younger teachers, teachers who have the least experience when compared to others seem to be more enthusiastic about professional development activities. They not only give importance to some of the major activities but also make more use of these activities when compared with more experienced teachers. The same reason given for background variable age may be valid for teaching experience; different stages teachers go through in their professional lives. In the first stages of their careers, teachers are more willing to develop further. This may be because of the need they feel to be more competent in their classroom practices and apply their theoretical knowledge they got from pre-, in-service trainings or university education.

In addition, new teachers may feel the need to collaborate more with other teachers through peer observation, working on developing techniques and activities. Since they are novices in the field of teaching, they may be in need of

sharing and consulting with other teachers and also furthering their skills and knowledge and practice through INSET, action research, and reflection on own teaching. On the other hand, as teachers get older in the job, they seem to lose interest in these activities. According to the results, it looks obvious that they don't feel the same interest and enthusiasm as newer teachers.

Teaching experience at the institution is another background variable that is found to be significantly related to certain professional development activities in terms of importance given to them. Peer observation, reflection on own teaching, and INSET are regarded as more important by teachers who have been working for less than 3 years at the institution than the ones who have been working 6 or more years. This may suggest that new teachers at the institution are in search of learning and adapting to their environment through observing their peers, INSET, peer-observation, and reflection on own teaching when compared to the other teachers.

Teachers show differences by their undergraduate area of studies in importance given to following literature on own field. English Language and Literature graduates seem to give more importance to this activity than graduates of other fields, such as American Culture and Literature, English Linguistics, etc. This may be due to different learning experiences or habits teachers have in terms of their undergraduate area of studies.

Two groups that differ significantly from each other in giving importance and making use of a couple of activities are teachers who completed an MA/ MS and a BA/ BS as last degrees. Action research is favoured more by teachers who have an MA/ MS degree than the ones who have a BA/ BS degree. Besides, they report

to train other teachers a bit more than the others. This result may be explained by the contribution of higher degrees to the teachers in terms of broadening their perspectives.

Logically, teachers who are enrolled in a degree programme and who aren't differ from each other in terms of following research literature on own field. The ones who attend a programme make more use of this means of development. This looks meaningful since following a professional development programme requires following research literature.

The programme respondents teach at (PREP or DEC) is another background variable that teachers differ. Collaborative activities, which are asking for professional help and working on developing techniques and activities with colleagues are given more importance and actualized more by PREP teachers. Besides, trying out new ideas or suggestions in practice is favoured and fulfilled more by PREP teachers. They value training other teachers as an alternative means of professional development more than DEC teachers. Action research, gathering information on teaching to reflect, and INSET as means of professional development are more often made use of by PREP than DEC teachers.

The results suggest that PREP teachers are more open to development than DEC teachers. They favour and actualize collaboration more in their professional lives. Besides, they are more positive to INSET and trying new ideas and suggestions in practice when compared to the other group. In addition, reflection and research seem to be favoured more by them. This study doesn't explain why PREP teachers are more in favour of their professional development and actualize development activities more as it wasn't planned to be analyzed. However, it may

be assumed that, since PREP and DEC programme contents, syllabus, and requirements of the courses are different, the skills needed to be performed by the teachers,

their needs, and interests are not the same. Therefore, teachers may approach differently to professional development. Besides, as both programme teachers receive the same training, INSET and professional development activities in the school may not be appealing to DEC teachers as it does to PREP teachers.

Finally, future plans to take additional qualifications in ELT or education is another variable teachers differ significantly from each other. Peer observation, action research, trying out new ideas or suggestions in practice, reflection on own teaching, INSET, and observation of classroom events by heads and administrators are all favoured more by teachers who have future plans to take additional qualifications when compared to the ones who don't. This may imply that teachers who have plans are more aware of the benefit of certain activities for their professional development and they seek to develop more since they have plans for future development already.

5.1.3 Impediments to Change and Growth

All the listed factors that hinder growth and change in teachers are found to be important by the majority of teachers. Financial problems, strict working hours and therefore excessive workload are perceived to be important. Excessive work load and strict working hours may lead to lack of collaboration and communication among teachers, which is also stated to be an important drawback

by the majority. The most agreed upon factors that are graded as important by most of the teachers in addition to workload are lack of self-motivation and institutional support for professional development. This shows that teachers are aware of the fact that the best sources for professional development are themselves. In addition, they are aware that in order to take charge of their development and end with success in their efforts, motivation and willingness are crucial. Teachers need these so as to start and continue their professional development. Alternatively, teachers may be feeling unmotivated to put effort to improve themselves. Lack of institutional support is considered to be an important hindrance by the majority. This may indicate teachers' dissatisfaction. They may feel that their expectations and needs aren't satisfied enough and that they are not supported enough for their professional development by the institution.

Educational background is another factor that is considered to be an important hindrance to professional development by most of the teachers. It appears that teachers may not able to improve their weaknesses that come from their educational background. In addition, about half of the teachers think that difficulty in reaching literature in the field is an important drawback.

Significant differences between teachers by age indicate that for teachers who are in between the age of 29 and 35, strict working hours is an important problem that hinder their development when compared to teachers who are 36 or higher. Furthermore, personal financial problems is considered to be important by teachers who have a BA/ BS degree than MA/ MS degree and by PREP teachers than DEC teachers.

This study didn't examine the reasons why teachers find some of the problems more important than the others because the research question didn't address this issue and analysis of this issue was not planned in the study.

5.2 Implications for Practice

In this section, based on major findings of the study, suggestions are offered regarding teacher development, teacher professional development, teacher training, and school environment.

One of the major findings of this study is that, even though all the collaborative professional development activities are found to be important by many teachers, peer observation doesn't receive much attention from the teachers. Half of the teachers don't find this activity critical to their development. The results from the questionnaire and comments in the open-ended section suggest that teachers are sensitive to and concerned about the way they are observed, the reasons for observation and by whom they are observed.

On the other hand, the results show that, among all the activities peer observation is the most frequently used one even though it is the least favoured one. It is a fact that peer observation activity is a part of INSET and regulations and therefore it is compulsory. This is particularly important since there are a considerable number of teachers who don't favour this activity much. This brings motivation of teachers and the benefit of the activity into question. As Reece and Walker (1997) put forward, attempts to change other people will be unsuccessful unless they want to.

An important implication of this result might be that peer observation shouldn't be carried out in order to judge the teaching of others, but to encourage self-awareness of teaching. The focus should be on teachers' own development rather than developing or evaluating one's peers or colleagues. Believing that peer observation is a tool for development not for evaluation in the school and making this a policy could bring a supportive environment in which observation is linked with growth, not assessment. This could be established in the school mostly by administrators. First of all, they should believe in this attitude and approach and take peer observation as an individually guided activity. Therefore, to develop "a climate of mutual support" (Nunan and Lamb, 1996, p. 210) and build trust with teachers by allowing them to participate voluntarily in this activity and leaving them free to choose their partners, even letting them observe the classes of administrators and teacher trainers could be a suggestion. This may lead to the understanding that "work a teacher starts by himself, driven by his own will to improve tends to have a stronger effect and be more long lasting" (Freeman, 1993, p. 98). Besides, it may eliminate teacher reaction to peer observation, which is seen as an initiative from administration and contribute to building a non-threatening atmosphere. In this context, administrators would want to learn about what is being done for teacher development, and whether this activity is being benefited, then they could ask teachers to share their experiences with other colleagues, teacher trainers. However, it should be noted that the reason behind the efforts of establishing such an attitude for professional development and the benefits of the activity should be made clear to the teachers by means of pre- and in-service training.

Since the results suggest that teachers want to be observed by professionals who give useful feedback in a polite way, it may be implied that educators in the school might consider including seminars on giving constructive feedback to each other on the lesson observed. Teacher trainers themselves could be a model both in building rapport with colleagues and giving proper feedback.

Similar to peer observation, observation by heads and administrators is not favoured by the majority of teachers. The reason for teachers' unwillingness may be because the observation is mainly done to evaluate teachers' performances and to be observed or not is not left for their choice.

An important implication of this result is parallel to what is implied for peer observation: to create a supportive and collaborative environment where observations are done to share ideas for the purpose of development, not evaluation. However, supportive and collaborative school culture does not occur without any plan. Managerial guidance to create opportunities for teachers to work together by encouraging teamwork may be a solution to build up such a culture in the school.

Another finding of this study points to a significant relationship between the importance given to some major concepts, professional development activities and actualization of the activities, and teachers' ages, and experiences. The results of the survey findings indicate that young, less experienced, and new teachers at the institution give more importance to freedom on testing new ideas or techniques in practice and believe more in the necessity of helping each other evaluate teaching to identify weaknesses or strengths and produce solutions to problems as teachers. In addition, these teachers give more importance and actualize some major

professional development activities more than older and more experienced teachers. The activities found to be critical for professional improvement are action research, INSET, peer observation, reflection on own teaching, and following professional development activities. These results suggest that experienced teachers who are working for more years at the institution seem to have lost interest in these activities when compared to these teachers. Although this study hasn't addressed why this is the case, the result may be due to the stages they go through in their professional lives. As teachers got older or more experienced in their job, they may not be in search of innovations, get into monotony, and be willing to stick their old ways. Besides, the reason for not collaborating enough may be loss of faith or not feeling the need to collaborate. However, it can be inferred that young and novice teachers need to collaborate more since they may be more in need of getting help from experienced teachers to improve their skills.

Therefore, it may be implied that educators, teacher trainers in the school should be sensitive to the experiences and needs of teachers in terms of their professional development and stages they go through in their professional lives. In other words, they should be aware of the principles of adult development and changing teacher needs in different stages of their careers. In order to support continuing professional development, these ought to be identified and related to the training service in the school. Burden (cited in Raths and Katz, 1986) states that knowing teachers' professional developmental changes can help teacher educators understand the needs and abilities of teachers at different points in their careers and can serve as a basis for planning interventions to promote

developmental growth. As well as the school administrators and educators, individual teachers also need to be informed about their developmental changes to raise their awareness and take hold of their development since as Curtis (2001) indicates, teachers develop as professionals if, only if, they choose to.

After identifying the needs, teachers may be provided with a variety of developmental courses, programmes addressing to different needs, levels, skills and interests to choose from. Especially experienced teachers could be encouraged to willingly take part in some of the activities.

In addition, to promote collaboration and team work in the school, novice and experienced teachers could be encouraged to work together on developing new techniques, activities, solving problems, or team teaching.

Gender is another variable that is found to be significantly related to giving importance and actualization of some professional development activities. Female teachers give more importance and make more use of some collaborative activities like peer observation, sharing experiences and problems with colleagues in addition to reflection on own teaching. It seems that male teachers are more passive in making use of some activities and putting effort for their development. An implication of this result may be including an awareness raising programme in INSET for male teachers and trying to include these teachers in some professional development projects or activities on voluntary basis in the school.

As well as female teachers, teachers who have future plans to take additional qualifications in ELT or education favour some professional development activities more than the ones who don't. This may imply that these teachers are motivated and they are more aware of the necessity of professional development.

Therefore, it could be a good idea for the school to encourage teachers to make future plans for their professional development.

This study shows another significant relationship between the programme teachers are in and importance given to testing any idea or a new technique and involvement in the evaluation of teaching skills and knowledge by teachers themselves. According to the results, PREP teachers give more importance to these concepts than DEC teachers. Furthermore, they favour more and are more enthusiastic about working on developing techniques and activities with colleagues, INSET, and trying out new ideas. It seems the needs and interests are not the same depending on the difference in content, syllabus and requirements of the courses in PREP and DEC. Therefore, approaches to professional development may differ but two groups are provided with the same professional development opportunities and activities. Therefore, an implication of this result might be that the needs and interests of teachers in these two programmes should be identified by the school and the reasons why DEC teachers stay away from professional development should be spotted. Hence, development programmes could be planned differently for these groups by taking the results into consideration.

Another finding of this study is that, although trying out new ideas or suggestions in practice, reflection on own teaching, and gathering information about own teaching are viewed as important by the majority of teachers, action research doesn't receive much attention. This is contradictory because action research is also a reflective activity in which teachers gather information about

their teaching, find an intervention, and try out new suggestions in their classrooms.

This result may indicate that teachers are not fully aware of what action research means, how it is undertaken and its benefits. Therefore, it could be a good idea to inform teachers about action research as a means of self-initiated development and encourage teachers to undertake action research and learn from their experiences with guidance provided in pre- and in-service trainings. In addition, teachers should be encouraged to start a classroom investigation by their institution. Afterwards, teachers could reflect on and share their experiences with colleagues. The institution can start a voluntary action research project among teachers and provide them with the necessary resources and flexibility in their working hours. Encouraging teachers to become their own classroom researchers can have a beneficial effect in all areas of the curriculum. It has potential for self-development and renewal (Nunan, cited in Richards and Nunan, 1990). Besides, as Richert (cited in Lieberman and Miller, 1991) states, action research generates genuine and sustained improvements in schools.

This study puts forward another finding, which is about INSET and following professional development programmes, and research literature on own field. Although many teachers attend INSET programmes, they don't seek for development through outside resources as often. The reasons may be due to the absence of the habit of continuing development through outside resources or lack of encouragement to do that.

An implication of this result may be to raise teachers' awareness on extended learning during pre- and in-service training and support teachers not to be limited

with INSET but initiate and continue with their development. Similarly, Hiep (2001) claims that along with the teacher training, teacher development must be a vital component in teacher education to gain insight into teaching experiences and deal with change and divergence.

An activity, which is never done by teachers as an alternative professional development activity is training other teachers. This may be because of the lack of opportunity for this kind of activity in the school. Therefore, it may be implied that teachers should be provided with a variety of development activities in the school, which can give the teachers a chance to share their experiences and knowledge.

One of the important findings of the study is that, although most teachers give importance to major professional development activities, they don't make use of those as much as they give importance to. Despite the fact that this study doesn't answer the reasons behind this issue as it wasn't aimed at, several reasons may be attributed to why this is the case. Teachers may be lacking the motivation to initiate an activity or they may not have enough time due to the workload, or institutional support for teachers may be lacking. The implication of this conclusion might be that teachers should be encouraged to view education as a long-term process and take hold of their development. They should be encouraged to practise the training they got in pre- and in-service training through engaging in some activities. This could be done by carefully planned INSET that gives importance to extensive learning, contributes to creating a positive atmosphere, and enhances teachers' capacity over the longer period. This could be done by

giving teachers follow-up support to continue their practices for professional growth and improvement.

Another possibility is to have voluntary teachers start, organize and take part in developmental projects, design web pages, prepare workshops. These activities may be carried out by special interest groups among teachers and the other teachers may be reinforced to contribute by this group. By this way, there may be a variety of development programmes and a lively and motivating atmosphere.

As a matter of fact, the reasons behind these results or problems could be explained by any of the hindering factors listed in the fourth section of the questionnaire. However, this study doesn't aim to answer this issue and therefore, offers no conclusions. On the other hand, this study offers some findings on the importance given to some hindering factors to change and growth in teachers. All the factors are found to be important by most of the teachers. Strict working hours and excessive workload are perceived to be important impediments to professional development by the teachers. Therefore, it could be a good idea to provide teachers with some flexibility in working hours on certain days to spare time for their professional development. By this way, teachers may have time to collaborate more with their peers through actualizing some activities like peer observation, working on developing new techniques and activities because they also report lack of collaboration and communication among colleagues as an important factor that hinder their growth.

However, the most agreed upon factors, which are found to be important are lack of self-motivation and institutional support for teachers. This result suggests that teachers are aware of the fact that self-motivation is an important factor in

professional growth. The importance given to lack of institutional support as an inhibiting factor suggests teachers' dissatisfaction with the support they get and also shows their need and expectation to be encouraged further. These results imply that building a supportive, non-threatening school culture is crucial for continuing professional development of teachers. The school should offer a wide range of activities, establish organized ways to support development of teachers and to make them benefit from the resources they have in their own hands.

5.3 Implications for Further Research

Some important questions this study arises for future research are presented here.

This study uses some statements reflecting major themes of professional development for teachers to state their agreements. The results indicate that teachers predominantly agree with the ideas but more research is needed to understand the teachers' attitudes towards their development. Teachers could be interviewed in order to have a more in-depth understanding of their attitudes. By this way, the reasons behind the differences in agreeing with some concepts between younger and older, experienced and less experienced, new teachers at the institution and the ones working for longer, PREP and DEC teachers could be explained clearly by teachers' comments during the interview.

In this study, how important teachers conceive and how often they make use of major professional development activities are investigated through a Likert type scale. The results indicate that peer observation is not valued enough although it is

very often actualized. A few reasons for this result could be attributed relying on some teachers' comments in the open-ended section of the survey and the regulations carried out in the school. However, the reasons behind this problem could be better analyzed through in-depth questions asked to the teachers in an interview. As well as that, another questionnaire and interview could be organized for administrators and teacher trainers for better analysis and wider picture of the issue.

This study also indicates that action research is not favoured and undertaken enough by the teachers, despite the importance given to some other reflective activities. The reasons behind this contradiction could be better explained again through the data from an interview with teachers and teacher trainers and administrators.

In general, the results show that teachers don't make use of the activities as much as they give importance to. Although some reasons for this result can be attributed, more reliable results could be reached through interviews and observations. Interviews and observations could be conducted to understand teachers' rationale in giving importance to the activities and to see whether there are any contradictions in their perceptions and why they don't make use of the activities as much as they give importance to.

The frequency of using some of the activities significantly differ from each other by some background factors like age, experience, experience at the institution. These are explained presumably in the results and conclusions part depending on literature. However, further investigation on why this is the case is needed.

This study also provides results on how important teachers view some of the major hindering factors on change and growth. Teachers find all the factors important but a couple of them are perceived as more important. Besides, importance given to some of the factors significantly differ by some background factors. However, this study doesn't explain the reasons behind these results and raises important questions to be answered: Why do most teachers find excessive workload, lack of self-motivation and institutional support as more important impediments to their growth? What problems do the hindering factors cause? Can these factors be reasons for not giving importance to some of the major professional development activities and not making use of those? If not, what are the reasons behind these problems?

These issues need to be studied further. For example, in a study focusing on problems teachers face during their professional development efforts, the reasons for the problems encountered could be explored.

In future research in this field, data collection in regard to training could be improved by getting data from administrators, teacher trainers as well through the use of surveys, interviews and observations in order to get more data on this issue and to view the issue in a broad perspective.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

SELF-INITIATED PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT QUESTIONNAIRE

Dear Colleague,

I am an MSc student at Middle East Technical University, Department of Educational Sciences. This questionnaire is designed to investigate teachers' perception of self-initiated professional development. Your cooperation will be highly appreciated. Your responses will only be used for this research and be kept confidential.

Thank you for your cooperation
A. Dilşad Karaaslan

Section I: Background Questions

1. Gender? ☐ Female ☐ Male

2. Your age? _____

3. How many years of English language teaching experience do you have? _____

4. How long have you been working at this institution? _____

5. Your undergraduate area of study?

a) Teaching English as a Foreign Language

b) English Language and Literature

c) American Language and Literature

d) Other (Please specify): _____

6. a. The last degree you have completed?

☐ BA/ BS Degree ☐ MA/ MSc Degree ☐ PhD

b. In what field? (ELT, Education, etc.) _____

7. Are you currently enrolled in a degree programme? (MA/ MSc, PhD, etc.)

☐ Yes (Please indicate field and degree: ☐ No

_____)

8. How many hours of workload a week do you have? _____

9. Which programme are you teaching in currently?

a) PREP (Preparatory School) Programme

b) DEC (Departmental English Courses) Programme

10. Do you have any plans to take additional qualifications in ELT or education in the future?

☐ Yes (Please indicate) _____ ☐ No

Section II

The items in this section are designed in order to explore English language teachers' attitudes towards their own   professional development. Please read each statement and put a check mark (✓) to the column that most closely reflects your idea.

SD   Strongly Disagree   = 1

D   Disagree   = 2
U   Uncertain   = 3
A   Agree   = 4
SA   Strongly Agree   = 5

	SD 1	D 2	U 3	A 4	SA 5
1. Teachers should improve their professional skills and knowledge without too much dependence on the institution they work for.					
2. Teachers should take the initiative and action for their own professional development.					
3. A teacher should be free to test any idea or a new technique in teaching.					
4. Teachers should be involved in the evaluation of their teaching skills and knowledge.					
5. Teachers should help each other evaluate teaching to identify problems, strengths, and weaknesses.					
6. Teachers should help each other produce solutions to solve problems.					
7. Willingness is an important factor in successful professional development.					

	SD 1	D 2	U 3	A 4	SA 5
8. Teachers should be open to new ideas and changes.					
9. Teachers should reflect (consider and evaluate) upon their own practices to improve professionally.					
10. Peer observation should be used to gather information about teacher performance.					
11. Teachers should try to keep themselves up to date with changes and improvements in ELT.					

If you have further comments on teachers' attitudes toward professional development, please write in below.

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Section III

The items in this section are designed in order to find out what major professional development activities do English language teachers perceive as critical to their development and to what degree they make use of these opportunities. Please read each statement and put a check mark (✓) to the column that most closely reflects your idea.

Teacher Development Activities	How important					How often you do it				
	Not import ant at all (1)	Of little import ance (2)	Somew hat import ant (3)	Import ant (4)	Very import ant (5)	never	rarely	someti mes	often	always
1. Sharing experiences and problems with colleagues										
2. Asking for professional help from colleagues										
3. Working on developing new materials with colleagues										
4. Working on developing techniques and activities with colleagues										
5. Peer observation										

Teacher Development Activities	How important					How often you do it				
	Not import ant at all (1)	Of little import ance (2)	Somew hat import ant (3)	Import ant (4)	Very import ant (5)	never	rarely	someti mes	often	always
6. Observation of classroom events by heads, administrators										
7. Teacher initiated classroom investigation (action research)										
8. In-service training (workshops, seminars, etc.)										
9. Trying out new ideas or suggestions in practice										
10.Gathering information about one's own teaching performance (surveys, interviews, etc.)										
11. Reflection on own teaching										
12. Following research literature on own field										

Teacher Development Activities	How important					How often you do it				
	Not important at all (1)	Of little importance (2)	Somewhat important (3)	Important (4)	Very important (5)	never	rarely	sometimes	often	always
13. Training other teachers										
14. Following professional development programs										
15. Other activities (please indicate below and rate):										

Section IV

In this section there are some factors that hinder professional development of
teachers. Please read each statement and put a check mark (✓) to the column that
most closely reflects your idea.

	Not important at all (1)	Of little importance (2)	Somewhat important (3)	Important (4)	Very important (5)
1.Personal financial problems					
2. Excessive work load					
3. Lack of communication among colleagues					
4. Lack of collaboration among colleagues					
5. Strict working hours					
6. Lack of institutional support for professional development					
7. Lack of self- motivation					
8. Educational background					
9. Difficulty in reaching literature in the field					
10. Other problems (Please indicate below and rate):					

If you have any further opinions and suggestions regarding various aspects of professional

development activities and problems faced in professional development, please write in below:

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

APPENDIX B

LETTER TO ELSBU

Başkent Üniversitesi İngilizce Hazırlık Okulu Bölüm Başkanlığı'na,

Ankara

ODTÜ Eğitim Fakültesi Eğitim Bilimleri Bölümü'nde Yüksek Lisans yapmaktayım. Prof. Dr. Ali Yıldırım danışmanlığında yürütmekte olduğum "Teachers' Perceptions of Self-Initiated Professional Development: A Case Study on Başkent University English Language Teachers" konulu yüksek lisans tezi kapsamında Başkent Ünivesitesi Hazırlık Bölümü'nde görev yapmakta olan İngilizce okutmanlarından ekte sunulan ölçegi kullanarak veri toplamak istiyorum. Halen İngilizce Hazırlık Okulu'nda çalışmakta olan İngilizce okutmanlarına veri toplama aracının 07.01.2003 Salı günü sabah ve ögleden sonra yapılacak haftalık toplantılarda PREP. ve DEC. okutmanlarına uygulanabilmesi için gerekli iznin verilmesini saygılarımla bilgilerinize arz ederim.

16. 12. 2002

A. Dilşad Karaaslan

Başkent Üniversitesi İngilizce Okutmanı