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## EFL Teachers' Professional Development Efforts: A view from Turkey<sup>1</sup>

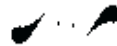
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### Abstract

Although professional development is assumed to be of value and considered as an essential component of quality teaching, there has been little research on how and why teachers engage themselves in continuous learning and whether professional development affects teaching or student learning. In tandem with this, despite the ongoing pursuit to expand the knowledge and skills of EFL teachers in Turkey and regardless of the innovative language policy reforms that have been put into practice in the country, the learners are yet to achieve the desirable language proficiency levels. Though increasingly more research has been in progress for examining the effectiveness of the professional development activities, they usually tend to disregard the primary needs of teachers. With respect to this issue, the present study aimed to investigate how EFL (English as a Foreign Language) teachers in Turkey perceive professional development and which factors facilitate/hinder their professional development efforts. For this purpose, the researcher explored the professional development efforts of three in-service Turkish EFL teachers throughout their career by means of semi-structured interviews. Follow-up observation notes, analytic memos and graphic elicitations were also utilized to supplement the results and to detect the perspectives of in-service teachers about professional development in terms of conditions in their lives and institutions. Qualitative data indicated that EFL teachers in Turkey appreciate the importance of professional development and they are willing to improve themselves. However, only to the extent that they are encouraged and fostered by institutional support, could they most likely be genuinely motivated to reflect upon their own practices, share their experiences and problems with colleagues and move forward in their professional lives.

**Keywords:** Professional development, English as a foreign language, quality teaching, teacher growth.



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## **1.1 Introduction**

There has been a growing interest in foreign language teaching in view of the significant changes that it has gone through in recent years particularly in terms of professional development activities (Nunan, 2001). Therefore, the teachers feel themselves more obliged to improve professionally in order to satisfy the increasing demand emerging from the institutions and the learners themselves (Murray, 2010). In fact, many countries, including Turkey have been updating their ELT curriculum continuously to cope with the latest developments in the field and to increase the quality of English language teachers by attaching more importance on their professional development efforts (OECD, 2013).

Despite the ongoing pursuit to expand the knowledge and skills of EFL teachers in Turkey and despite the innovative language policy reforms that have been put into practice in the country, the learners are yet to achieve the desirable language proficiency levels (Çelik, 2011; Özmusul 2011). In tandem with this, increasingly more research has been in progress for examining the effectiveness of the professional development activities which disregard the primary needs of teachers (Daloğlu, 2004; Turhan & Arıkan, 2009).

Many factors might be responsible for the unsatisfactory competence in English language proficiency levels including the linguistic and communicative ones. However, there is currently a consensus among scholars as regards to the inefficacy of professional development programmes as well as the meager opportunities provided for attending them as the most prominent factors which delay the professional development of EFL teachers (Mann, 2005; Ferguson, 2006; Whitcomb, Borko & Liston, 2009).

Good quality in education requires a constant development in teaching (Tedick, 2005). As the teachers are considered to be role models for their learners, they are not supposed to neglect their own professional development. Accordingly, it is of prime importance that they renew their knowledge and update their skills in order to keep pace with the latest developments in their field. In this regard, professional training is the unique solution which plays a pivotal role in enhancing the professional development efforts of teachers.

## **1.2 Literature Review**

Modern definitions of professional development involve any career-building endeavours covering the period which starts at the university and continues at the workplace (Ball & Cohen, 1999; Borko & Putnam, 2000; Feiman-Nemser, 2001). Thus, professional development has a substantial role in strengthening teachers' self-identity and improving their perception of teaching all through their career thereby helping them to become highly cognitive and competent individuals in their profession (Kumaravadivelu, 2001).

When literature regarding the professional development practices of EFL teachers is compared and analyzed in terms of their initiatives, a discrepancy could be observed pertaining to the areas that the related studies have been mainly focusing on. While many studies investigate the principles and benefits of the INSET or PD programs in detail (Atay, 2004, 2008; Borko, 2004; Kennedy, 2007; Küçükşüleymanoğlu, 2006; Mohanraj, 2009; Ünal, 2010), relatively little research has addressed personal factors that pave the way for teachers' own professional development efforts (Davis & Priston, 2002; İyidoğan, 2011). By and large, the individual differences are not scrutinized but just mentioned superficially. In this sense, the Turkish context is not an exception where external factors are often the only component that is blamed. For instance, as regards to the study aimed at finding the professional development practices of Turkish teachers (Karaaslan, 2003), excessive workload and lack of institutional support were found to be the main obstacles that prevented teachers from participating into PDs. In connection with this, Kwakman (2003) conducted a study with the objective to identify the aspects that influence the participation of teachers to professional learning activities. The results indicated a distinction between theory and

practice as regards to the opportunities to take part in the activities. Even though both studies are robust with their findings, it would not be wrong to assert that they are possibly far from responding to the changing necessities of the year 2016. Furthermore, some researchers (Atay, 2008; Ünal, 2010) looked at the effectiveness of INSET and PD programmes only to find different needs of novice and experienced teachers albeit they did not take into account the personal factors. Correspondingly, a favourable opinion was promoted for professional development practices in order to prepare teachers for the challenges of the forthcoming century as reported by the results of the studies of Whitcomb (2009) and Turhan and Arıkan (2009) respectively.

On the whole, even though the importance of professional development practices are highlighted and praised in most of the studies, there are yet few studies which have investigated the individual factors that motivate or discourage the professional efforts of teachers to participating them.

It is naive to expect teachers to improve themselves by simply doing their jobs. As Gu (2005) reiterated, the teachers might survive for a lesson just by learning a new technique but if they learn how to adapt it into different contexts, they could make use of it all through their professional lives.

It is apparent that professional development programmes are playing a key role in equipping the teachers with the necessary techniques to reflect on their practices through which they manage to become multitaskers. However, in case of Turkish context, there seems to be various personal reasons that withhold them from achieving their goals.

Keeping all these in mind, the aim of this study is to determine how EFL teachers perceive professional development and to specify the factors which influence EFL teachers' decision to pursue their professional development efforts. For this purpose, this study undertakes the investigation of how EFL teachers in Turkey make sense of professional development and which factors facilitate/hinder their professional development efforts. Accordingly, the research questions driving the study are:

*How do EFL teachers perceive professional development?*

*Which factors influence EFL teachers' decision to pursue their professional development efforts?*

## **2. Methodology**

### **2.1 Participants**

Three English language instructors who are graduates of ELT departments working in a vocational school in Yalova participated in the study. Since the power of sampling rests on selecting information-rich cases for in-depth analysis in qualitative studies (Patton, 1990), the instructors who were eager to share their ideas and experiences were purposefully preferred for the interview. Their teaching career varies from three to 19 years which is considered to assist positively to the study in getting a wider understanding of the professional development efforts of multi-generational individuals. The first participant (ES, hereafter) has been teaching for 19 years. She is a graduate student in English literature department of a State University. The second participant (AS) is also a graduate student in Institute of Educational Sciences and has been teaching for three years. The last participant (ZS) has been teaching for 9 years with a B.A degree in English language teaching from a university in Muğla.

### **2.2 Instruments**

For the study, data were collected by means of semi-structured interviews and graphic elicitations.

#### *Interviews*

Semi-structured interviews were conducted with three participants with the intent of analyzing the factors which led teachers to concern themselves with professional development activities. Marshall and Rossman (2006) attest that interviews have an invaluable role in uncovering the participants' views on changing situations and developing insights accordingly. In that sense, it is assumed that the interviews proved to be very efficient in encouraging the participants to get more involved in the study and voice their opinions freely. Every interview protocol included ten queries particularly framed from general to specific (Appendix C). The first three questions (e.g., how long have you been working as an ELT teacher?) served as a warm-up to comfort and refresh the interviewee. The next six questions were specifically utilized to get a deeper understanding of the factors that affect teachers' decision to engage themselves in professional development practices. In addition to interview questions, alternative probes also facilitated the intercommunication between the researcher and the interviewee.

On the whole, in each interview, the researcher deliberately steered the flow of the conversation to create an ambiance where the participants felt themselves willing to deliver their opinions. Each three interviews lasted approximately 30 minutes and were audio recorded and transcribed. Afterwards, the data was coded in order to reach conclusions.

#### *Graphic elicitations*

Graphic elicitations (Bagnoli, 2009) were included in order to reveal the perceptions of the teachers regarding their professional development efforts in their lives and to contribute additional topics of concern that may not have been covered in the interviews.

Lastly, before the data analysis, the script of both the interview transcripts and the graphic elicitations were shared with the participants to improve the accuracy and the credibility of the study.

### **2.3 Data coding and Analysis**

Coding is regarded as a crucial aspect of analysis (Basil, 2003). In connection with this argument, I analyzed the interview transcripts and observation notes about graphic elicitations by means of descriptive coding and content analysis (Schreier, 2012, Wilkinson & Birmingham, 2003). There are two main reasons why I used descriptive coding during the analysis. First of all, since description is the foundation for qualitative inquiry (Wolcott, 1994), I assumed that the descriptive codes in that respect might prove valuable in getting a general understanding of the phenomenon rather than focusing on the details of the communication of participants in their social lives. Secondly, as Saldaña (2003) suggests, descriptive codes collected from data in different time periods are one of the best precursors in detecting participant change. In that respect, descriptive codes assisted me to further analyze the basic topics (Turner, 1994) and thereby provided me to understand the organizational grasp of the study.

Coding is not a stable but a cyclical act (Saldaña, 2013). For this reason, as proposed by Creswell (2012), I first read the whole portion of data to have a general idea and to start developing codes during the first cycle coding processes. In the second cycle coding processes (Appendix A), I identified and grouped the salient features of the data and then regrouped and relinked them (Grbich, 2012), in order to consolidate meaning and reach themes. In the third cycle, I reconfigured all the units and arranged them in a systematic order upon revising.

Lapadat and Lindsay (1999) profess that analysis begins with transcription since it is an essential part in qualitative analysis. Bearing this in mind to meet the demands for rigor in the study, I pursued greater reflectivity in representing the correct interpretation of the interviews. Accordingly, I created particular conventions to narrate the exact utterances of the participants in the transcriptions.

I used square brackets for clarification/editorial comments and I developed the convention of [delay] to display break in speech. Following excerpts signify some examples for conventions:

1. *Most things [institutional support] remain as theory.*
2. *As much as I find....[delay] any opportunity to go...[delay] I always go.*

All the conventions used for analytic choices are included at the end of interview transcripts.

In case of interview analysis process, using a codebook is considered as one of the pivotal steps (Fereday & Muir-Cochrane, 2006). For the purpose of developing a codebook, I examined the data repeatedly, and assigned related codes to raw data (Appendix A). Based on this, I focused more on the level of meaning. Afterwards, I analyzed the data through the process of axial coding (Corbin & Strauss, 2008) to identify any connections that may exist between codes. Some clumping of the texts (MacQueen et al., 2008) inevitably occurred at different locations during this process which required me to apply inclusion/exclusion criteria in order to make the definitions more clear and comprehensible. After developing the preliminary codebook, I reread the codebook multiple times to identify and eliminate any overlapping codes across the participants. Following table displays two of the codes from the preliminary codebook:

Code	Definition	Inclusion/Exclusion Criteria	Example from Text
<b>1. Being Free</b>	The importance of teachers' being free to test any idea or a new technique in teaching.	Includes classroom settings Excludes being free outside the school context.	<b>E.S:</b> <i>Yes. I should be free in the classroom.I should be free with the schedule. I should be free with the materials."</i>
<b>2. Professional Development Activities</b>	Teacher states the significance of attending and making use of in-service trainings.	Excludes institutional meetings or parent-teacher conferences.	<b>E.S:</b> <i>They [professional development activities] play an important role in personal development of teachers. If my institution lets me to go, I go. As much as I find - any opportunity to go - I always go and listen."</i>

As the final step, I categorized the codes to reach themes. Desire for self-improvement, willingness to share experiences and lack of motivational support emerged as prominent themes.

Reflection can also contribute meaningfully to the development of knowledge and understanding (Kezar, 2000). Besides, there is a "reciprocal relationship between the development of a coding system and the evolution of understanding a phenomenon" (Weston et al., 2001). For this reason, I also took notice of the analytic memos (Appendices C & D) that included my reflections throughout the process and I classified and categorized them to document the entire enterprise and to shed further light on the coding processes.

## **2.4 Subjectivity**

We each perceive and interpret social life from different points of view (Saldaña, 2013). Hence, the act of coding naturally requires our personal involvement thus we bring our predispositions and our subjectivities to the process (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009, Sipe & Ghiso, 2004). Being conscious of this, I assured the issues of reliability and validity by using certain techniques in this study.

First of all, I used individual interviews to ensure that the narrative is strong (Rossman & Rallis, 2012). In addition, I shared the transcripts with the participants in order to clarify any misinterpretations. And furthermore, in tandem with the suggestion of Glesne (1999), I shared and finalized the rough drafts with fellow colleagues so as to ensure trustworthiness.

The final thing I did to mitigate subjectivity and increase the rigor of the study was bracketing. While interviews provide a unique opportunity to get a deeper understanding of

the phenomenon related to the research, they also serve as a common tool for the interviewees to bring their preconceptions (Crotty, Willis & Neville 1996). Since I was working in the same institution with one of the participants with whom I conducted the interview, I tried to bracket myself at least to a considerable degree (Tufford & Newman, 2010) in order not to direct the participant to the answers that I would have otherwise wished to hear.

### **3. Findings**

The aim of this study was to investigate (1) how EFL teachers in Turkey perceive professional development and (2) which factors determine their professional development efforts. For this purpose, the data were coded and as a result of the categorization of codes, three main themes were identified as main factors influencing the professional development practices of teachers. They were;

1. Desire for self-improvement
2. Willingness to share experiences
3. Lack of motivational support

First, the perceptions of EFL teachers in reference to professional development are explained. Next, the themes are examined and addressed in detail.

#### ***EFL teachers' perceptions about professional development***

In terms of how EFL teachers in Turkey perceive professional development, all three participants provided more or less similar definitions. In this context, ES, as being the most experienced teacher, defined professional development by maintaining clear and concise explanation;

ES: In a simple way, it's just being better and better in a classroom. And it is a very simple sentence but I think it briefly explains what it is. If I am better in the classroom, it means that I am a better teacher.

From her definition, it can be inferred that she perceives the professional development limited to classroom practices. I repeated the word 'classroom' twice with the intention of confirming her answer and she iterated that the term professional development included classroom practices.

Contrary to the explanation of ES, AS came up with more comprehensive but again a limitative interpretation;

AS: [delay] Firstly, I am a graduate of English literature program. So, I think I am not that efficient in ELT. In English language teaching. So, it means to me just self-development or self-improvement in this especially in teaching methods. So, I think that I should, I must learn more than my colleagues because I think I am not efficient in this field so, just self-improvement and self-development.

Since she did not see herself that proficient in language pedagogies, it is likely that A.S defined professional development solely as self-development.

When I asked the same question to ZS, it was interestingly enough that she gave an inclusive, straight answer;

ZS: Actually, it means that I should always follow new developments in ELT. I should read about articles, approaches and hmmm new methods, methods that emerged newly or the techniques that instructors use effectively in their classes. It's all about the instructors who try to meet their learners' demands. If you want to be accepted and as accepted as a beneficial teacher, you should always keep on developing yourself.



It could be concluded from these quotations that all three teachers perceived and defined professional development from the point of their weaknesses. ES argued that it was related to classroom settings; AS on the other hand perceived it as self-development and excluded classroom practices. And despite being not very experienced in teaching, ZS was able to provide more comprehensive interpretation.

***1<sup>st</sup> theme: Desire for self-improvement***

One of the most striking findings of the study was that despite their different years of experience, all three participants were very enthusiastic to improve themselves professionally. In this regard, being the least experienced teacher, ZS highlighted her wish to improve herself many times during the interview. When asked to evaluate her teaching skills and knowledge relative to others, she reiterated that she was improving;

ZS: Others are generally working for long periods of time when I compare. But, I think I am catching them. Day by day, I see my improvement. When I first came here, I was not that kind of relaxed in classes, I felt sometimes nervous and excited. Sometimes it happens you know. But, day by day, I overcome these situations and improve myself.

As regards to her intentions in the future, she was likewise determined for her professional development;

ZS: First of all, I am eager to continue my professional development. I might as well pursue a PhD degree in educational sciences. But, I haven't decided it yet. I will shape it soon.

Due to the fact that she holds a B.A. degree in English literature, AS similarly indicated that she was trying her best to improve herself in teaching methodologies;

AS: I am very poor in this field so I turn to myself. Sorry, try to improve myself. I believe I am a teacher, based on my experiences. I am not teaching based on my undergraduate education. So, I think I have to try hard maybe more than my colleagues. ....In that way, I need to catch up with them. Apart from that, I think that I am just inferior to them just about teaching methods and techniques. ....I am trying to improve myself about the teaching methods. That's all (heh).

Additionally, she specified that she read a lot to compensate for her lack of pedagogical content knowledge;

AS: .... So, I try to read a lot not about the new technologies but about new teaching methods. By this way, I want to improve myself especially in English language teaching.

As the most experienced and the busiest teacher in terms of workload, ES did not lag behind the others in her desire to improve herself as she underlined the value of professional development by these lines;

ES: Average. Average but I think nobody is perfect. Everybody should improve so [delay] I don't stop. I don't just say average and stop. I should know and experience more I think to be perfect.

It can clearly be observed from the excerpts that there was a strong determination on the part of EFL teachers to improve themselves in order to fulfill their desires. What is noteworthy here is the variance in their years of experience or the workload does not seem to have much effect in curbing their enthusiasm and withholding them from improving professionally.

**2<sup>nd</sup> theme: Willingness to share experiences**

Another interesting finding is that regardless of their different positions within the institution, all three participants verbalized that they did not hesitate to come together, talk about their classroom practices and thus share their experiences.

When I asked ES whether she was able to find time in her tight schedule to share her classroom experiences, she gave me illustrative examples;

ES: I never hesitate to share my experiences. ....We generally share our experiences by talking. I find it very beneficial and useful. ....Coffee breaks, for example. We share and I love to listen to others. It doesn't matter how old he or she is. Or how much he is experienced or not. ....No. Never. In my teaching, there is no hierarchy. I believe.

Correspondingly, AS pointed out that even if she somewhat felt obliged to consult her colleagues occasionally for her classroom practices; she stated she was pleased with that;

AS: Yes. I have to share them because sometimes I can't see my faults by myself so I need someone to show me my faults and with sharing I believe I have a chance to change my ways and techniques. Most of them have language teaching backgrounds so I have chance to share my ideas, learn something about methods from them in class breaks or any gathering. For example, sometimes, I teach and explain a language point too many times and I realize that some of them [students] still have difficulty in understanding. Then I ask mates, my colleagues and some of them have different, invaluable ideas for teaching it in the best way, so I apply this in my classrooms and most of the time they work well.

Besides sharing her experiences with her colleagues, AS pointed out that she sometimes shared her ideas with the students and let them direct her.

AS: .... I have to try and find the best ways or techniques. Sometimes, I share my ideas with the students and let them to direct me.

Unlike the other two participants who shared their experiences willingly to settle differences and learn new techniques, ZS's remarks seem to indicate that sharing experiences is essential for her in a way not to suffer;

ZS: Yes. It seems that many things happen in classrooms. I am telling them [colleagues] today that thing happened in my class and I don't know how to react sometimes people don't know what to do. The situation instantly emerges and we can fail sometimes. And as a new teacher-(heh).

She also mentioned that she frequently communicated with her friends for that aim;

ZS: Yes. I am always talking with my friends that are working in public schools. I am continuously comparing myself with them. We have lots of differences resulting from different contexts. .... We are always talking about these things. And we are always sharing our experiences in the classes.

Having just three years of experience, it seems plausible that she is keen on learning and clinging to the reflective practices of her colleagues.

These quotes demonstrate us that whether they are experienced or novice, sharing experiences constitutes an indispensable part of Turkish EFL teachers' venture while they are seeking to improve themselves professionally.

**3<sup>rd</sup> theme: Lack of motivational support**

After the categorization of codes, the third theme emerged as lack of institutional support in terms of motivation. This theme is prominent since it stood out as the sole factor that



hindered the professional development efforts of EFL teachers in Turkey. During the interviews, all three participants asserted the value of institutional support as the prime motive that incited them to continue their professional development practices. However, two of them argued that their institutions were practically not welcoming the idea of professional development. In view of the institution's stance with respect to professional development, ES narrated her discouraging memories;

ES: My institution, (Hx) when we have a meeting and when they talk to us, they seem to support but indeed they don't care about it. They generally try to impose us what they know the best.

She also complained that the managers supported their professional development efforts insincerely and they didn't really care about it;

ES: They seldom realize what they already said. Most things remain a theory. They say yes, I support. You should go. You should do something. But in reality, it does not happen like this.

In the same vein, AS reported that her institution did not sympathize with the notion of professional development and further stated that in a sense, they were just paying lip service;

AS: In the aspect of further education, it supports us but as I said, just making us attend the seminars and workshops but in a limited way. They just support it, I think for the sake of supporting it. It occurs to me that they are doing it because they are forced to do it. I don't think they are doing it willingly (heh).

ZS, perhaps due to her short teaching experience, behaved rather timidly in expressing her thoughts on this subject. She indicated that the institution wanted them to improve themselves;

ZS: Ok. (heh). There is extrinsic and intrinsic motivation. And, my institution and the senior instructors, I can name them as extrinsic motivation. They always want us to improve ourselves.

When asked to elaborate, she avoided to comment further on the details;

ZS: Till now, I haven't seen any negative stance. That's totally positive, I think. But, I don't know (heh), what will happen in the future.

From her comments and body language during the interview, I had the impression that she was somewhat defensive, and not very comfortable about voicing her opinions explicitly.

These excerpts clearly demonstrate that lack of institutional support in terms of motivation plays a great role in disheartening the Turkish EFL teachers from proceeding their on-going professional development efforts. Even though the exact specific factors resulting from the institutions and leading to the demotivation of teachers had yet to be discovered during the interviews, it is assumed that some institutions somehow managed to devise some ways, as kinds of deterrents, to withhold teachers from their professional development efforts.

#### **4. Discussion**

One of the aims of this study was to find out how EFL teachers in Turkey perceive professional development. With respect to the findings, it is evident that there is no consensus among the participants as regards to the common definition of the term. Both ES and AS showed a tendency to define the term as they would wish to see it. As Seferoğlu (2004) argues, "without sufficient professional training, teachers have nothing to do but fall back on alternative routes which leaves them impotent and desperate in the classroom" (p.154). This move by the teachers could well be attributed to Seferoğlu's argument in that these teachers might also have resorted to an alternative route in interpreting the term which probably made them feel incompetent during the interviews. It might as well be considered

as manifestation of their keen interest and motivation to improve themselves since Smith, Hofer, Gillespie, Solomon and Rowe (2006) affirm that motivation is a key factor in teachers' decision to continue their professional development efforts.

In addition, regardless of their teaching experience, all three participants clearly demonstrated their wish to engage in professional development activities and thus improve themselves professionally. The literature also supports this result by pointing out that desire and interest are the core motives which encourage teachers for professional development (Nasser & Shabti, 2010). During the interview, as the most experienced teacher, ES emphasized several times that she would not just say average and stop. Accordingly, she showed her determination to learn more to be perfect. Apropos of that, Richardson and Watt (2005) argue that long lasting interest in teaching end up becoming a talented teacher.

It is an undeniable fact that a quality in education necessitates a continuous development in teaching (Tedick, 2005). As it were put forward by Auhl and Daniel (2014), professional development activities also empower teachers with reflective skills required in the profession. Therefore, it might not be wrong to assert that the persistent efforts of ES to improve herself professionally is not in vain and will most likely pay off in the long run.

In terms of the findings related to the second theme, all three teachers highlighted that they were eager to come together in coffee breaks or lunches which they found time to have a chat and share their experiences. It is obvious that teachers benefit a lot from these collaborative and friendly ambiances which is in line with the suggestions of Joyce and Calhoun (2010) as they too argue that social occasions and activities contribute a lot to the professional development of teachers.

Having been employed just three years ago, ZS was highly concerned about meeting her students' needs hence she stated that she was oftentimes consulting her friends about her classroom practices. In relation to that, Rosenholtz (1989) argues that only when teachers share their views of learning, can the learning needs of learners be fully accomplished. In that respect, as Darling-Hammond & McLaughlin (1995) claim, there are hardly ever any alternatives exist for a teacher to improve herself other than cooperating with other teachers.

With respect to the third theme, all three participants were of the opinion that the institution they worked was doing little to support them in their professional development efforts. In relation to this, the comments of ES about the attitudes of administrators were remarkable;

ES: Additionally, I can say that administrators should be open-minded. Some of them are just not open-minded.

It could well be inferred from this quote that let alone supporting teachers in that way, most of the administrators are not very knowledgeable about the importance of professional development. As Goddard, Hoy and Woolfolk Hoy (2004) state, friendly school atmosphere with cooperative relationships between colleagues and administrators has a determining role on the motivation and happiness of teachers. Most of the time, even motivation might not be enough as teachers need continuous support in processing their knowledge and make use of it in the teaching context (Dana & Yendol-Hoppey, 2008). In that respect, as Çelik (2011) contends, not only the teachers but also the administrators should be informed and enlightened regarding the benefits of professional development activities.

Furthermore, the interviews also revealed that teachers, to some extent, lack sense of belonging. When we consider there is a positive relationship between motivation and sense of belonging (Day & Gu, 2010), the administrators once again seem to have the utmost responsibility to motivate their staff members both intellectually and emotionally in order to increase their self-belonging.

Another important point with reference to this is all teachers except ZS reported that they suffer from lack of motivational support to continue their professional development efforts. It should be kept in mind that highly valued and happy teachers are sine qua non for

promoting successful and quality teaching environment (Leitwood, et al., 2006). Only to the extent that teachers are fostered and genuinely motivated to move further in their professional lives, are they able to effectively meet their students' different needs (Day & Gu, 2010).

On the whole, the findings of the study demonstrated that even though some of them are not fully aware of the professional development activities (Borko, 2004), EFL teachers in Turkey appreciate the importance of professional development and they are willing to improve themselves.

As a result, as Tedick (2005) reiterates, quality teaching is not a one-shot process. On the contrary, it requires constant learning and development. For this reason, if we really aspire after genuine Turkish reform in education within all aspects, it would be better we first start by cherishing the professional development efforts of our teachers.

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*Coded Transcript 1*

**ES - Interview 1, Monday, 07/03/16 10:00**

R: Welcome ES.

ES: Thank you

R: How are you today?

ES: Fine. And you?

R: I am fine, thank you. Thank you for agreeing on participating in this study. As I mentioned earlier, my study is about the professional development efforts of EFL teachers and I'd like to have an interview with you about this subject. And as the head of English department in this institution, I think that you are one of the most suitable persons to conduct this interview. Can we just start with the description of the concept? What does professional development in English language teaching mean to you?

ES: In a simple way, it's just being better and better in a classroom. And it is a very simple sentence but I think it briefly explains what it is. If I am better in the classroom, it means that I am a better teacher.

R: So, you see the professional development as a-

ES: As-

R: to better yourself, to improve yourself.

ES: Yes. In a classroom.

R: In a classroom?

ES: Hihı..

R: Ok. Thank you. And how long have you been teaching ES?

ES: Twenty.

R: Twenty years? Twenty years is such a long time.

ES: Yes. Since nineteen ninety six.

R: I see. What courses do you teach?

ES: [delay] I am. I generally teach General English courses to like beginners and pre-intermediate classes.

R: I see. And how do you keep yourself up to date with changes and improvements in English Language teaching? Do you do any special things to improve, to better yourself?

ES: [delay]. Generally, I don't do anything because of my position, [delay], but my classes are like my experiences.

R: Hihı...

ES: But, if I find something to read; I read it; if I find something to attend, I attend.

R: Is that because of the workload?

ES: Exactly. I don't just teach. I have other responsibilities. So, generally I can't find time to keep pace with the others and also because the place I work is not so, how can I say, it's like a close place. Well, also preparing unnecessary bureaucratic documents takes up most of my free time. After I am done with my classes, I need to deal with the administrative stuff. **(workload)**



R: So, do you mean the workload at the workplace hinders your professional development, generally?

ES: Exactly. This is a confined school. So (Hx) generally, we don't have a lot of changes and they don't want a lot of changes so I don't feel the need to keep up with the others.

R: Ok. So, do you reflect upon your practices? I mean-

ES: Exactly, exactly. Each class is my experience.

R: How does reflection on your own teaching play a role on your teaching let's say you do something and then you reflect upon your practices. Does it improve you or does it have any effect on your professional development or your reflection?

ES: Sure, it helps me. After each class, I have to list what I should do and what I shouldn't do and I can call this a reflection and it improves myself in teaching. **(reflecting on practices)**

R: Can you see the benefits of these reflections on your students?

ES: Exactly. Yes, I do see. In other classrooms, I know what to do and what not to do.

R: Sure. About sharing experiences with your colleagues. Do you share experiences with your colleagues?

ES: Yes. I never hesitate to share my experiences. **(2<sup>nd</sup> theme)**

R: How do you share your experiences?

ES: By talking. We generally share our experiences by talking. I find it very beneficial and useful. **(willingness to share experiences/2<sup>nd</sup> theme)**

R: Are there any other ways that you share your experiences apart from talking?

ES: Coffee breaks, for example. We share and I love to listen to others. It doesn't matter how old he or she is. Or how much he is experienced or not. **(2<sup>nd</sup> theme)**

R: Do you follow hierarchy in your sharing?

ES: No. Never. In my teaching, there is no hierarchy. I believe.

R: Yeah. Sure. Regarding the things that facilitate or hinder your professional development. I am sure that there might be some factors, some things that facilitate or hinder your professional development. Is there any specific factor that prevents or facilitates your professional development?

ES: Control. I hate control. I am quite sure. And it prevents my experiences and it hinders my teaching. And I love freedom. I have to, I love to be free in the classroom. Apart from that, there are also some personal factors that prevents professional development efforts of teachers. Personal conflicts, jealousy (heh). Participating conferences and seminars should not be seen as a way of escaping from the school or the classes. **(obstacles)**

R: Ok. So, we can consider control as the prime factor which prevents your personal professional development efforts. Are there things that facilitates, that helps or eases your professional development efforts?

ES: To be free.

R: Just this one?

ES: Yes. I should be free in the classroom. I should be free with the schedule. I should be free with the material. Additionally, I can say that administrators should be open-minded. Some of them are just not open-minded. **(being free)**

R: Ok. How does ELT literature, with ELT literature, I mean the articles, the seminars or the brochures or any written material that's related with the field. In that sense, how does ELT literature play a role in your career? Or does it play a role?

ES: [delay]. It doesn't play a role but I am sure, it, it should play a role. But as I said before, I rarely have time to follow them. I have no time to read them. So, (Hx), generally, (Hx), I can't follow them.

R: I understand.

ES: But, when I was young. I read a lot of articles. I tried to follow the seminars, etc. But now, as I get older and I get more experienced, unfortunately it's not a good thing to say. But, unfortunately, I can't follow them.

R: Is that the same for professional development activities? What about the professional development activities? Do you find any time, any opportunity to attend let's say ELT seminars, conferences or workshops, for example offered in your institution?

ES: They play an important role in personal development of teachers. If my institution lets me to go, I go. As much as I find hmmm any opportunity to go [delay] I always go and listen. **(professional development activities)**

R: So, How do you feel yourself to attend these kinds of activities?

ES: Exactly I do enjoy participating conferences but I rarely attend. **(desire for self-improvement/1<sup>st</sup> theme)**

R: Is that again related to workload, you mean?

ES: Workload, yes. Hıhı...

R: Considering attending professional development activities again. What is your institution's stance with respect to your professional development? Does it let's say, does it force you or does it help you to improve your professional development efforts or does it in a sense, stop your professional development efforts?

ES: My institution, (Hx) when we have a meeting and when they talk to us, they seem to support but indeed they don't care about it. They generally try to impose us what they know the best. **(lack of motivational support/3<sup>rd</sup> theme)**

R: How do they take a step with respect to your professional development?

ES: They seldom realize what they already said. Most things remain a theory. They say yes. I support. You should go. You should do something. But in reality, it doesn't happen like this. **(3<sup>rd</sup> theme)**

R: In practicality, you mean, things are not the way as it was said. By the way, I think you are a graduate student. You continue your M.A education in English literature.

ES: Hıhı. This also affects ELT.

R: Yes. I was going to ask about this. How does it affect your professional development? In terms of your M.A education. How do you see your M.A education specifically in English literature. Does it help or does it have any specific place in your professional development?

ES: Indeed, they are not related. My M.A is not related with my teaching. But. Yes, it helps me especially in improving my vocabulary and my reading skills. But it's not related to English teaching. That's why I am not following ELT articles. I rather to follow English literature articles for example. But, before I started my M.A, I had even difficulty in reading and understanding the articles in English literature let alone the ones in ELT.

R: So, do you intend to continue your academic career after you finish with your M.A? How are you going to continue with your professional development efforts?

ES: I wish. Yes. I maybe stop teaching English for the students and maybe teach English literature for the other students in other universities.

R: I see. And as a last question. How would you evaluate your teaching skills and knowledge relative to others in your position? I mean by comparing the other teachers working there. How would you evaluate your overall teaching and teaching skills?

ES: Average. Average but I think nobody is perfect. Everybody should improve so [delay] I don't stop. I don't just say average and stop. I should know and experience more I think to be perfect. (1<sup>st</sup> theme)

R: I see.

ES: As long- If I look as an experience, I am the most experienced teacher in this institution. But, as knowledge, I can't say, I am the perfect.

R: But you are improving yourself constantly and it seems you are dedicated to improving yourself. I am sure that you will be much better in the following years. Thank you very much.

ES: Your welcome.

**ZS Int 2**

**Coded Transcript 2**

**ZS – Interview 2, Tuesday, 22/03/16 10:00**

R: Welcome Sally. How are you doing today?

ZS: I am fine. What about you?

R: I am fine. Thank you. Thank you for taking part in my study. As I mentioned earlier, my study is about the professional development efforts of EFL teachers and I'd like to have an interview with you about this subject. I hope that this small scale inquiry would hearten the other teachers, practitioners and researchers in our country to replicate. Perhaps the results might give an insight to our researchers in our country to get a hint of an idea about the professional development of ELT teachers and to continue their on-going studies. Ok. So, can you give us a brief information about yourself?

First of all, how long have you been teaching English?

ZS: For 2 years in this institution.

R: Which university did you graduate from?

ZS: Balıkesir university. Necatibey educational faculty, ELT department.

R: Then you joined Naval forces?

ZS: Yes

R: What were your first impressions about taking a part in a military institution?

ZS: I've always had positive views about naval forces. And I've always wanted to be a member and worked as a teacher in this institution. When I was accepted, I feel very happy about it. When I came here, I always felt that I had to work hard to improve myself in ELT in language teaching. So, I am trying to develop myself, improve myself.

R: Very well. And are you familiar with the term professional development before?

ZS: Yes. I've already known this term and read couple of things about it.

R: How do you perceive it? What can you say about it regarding the English Language Teaching. I am well aware that professional development is a broad concept

ZS: Yes.

R: It applies to many things but shortly in ELT context, what do you understand from it?

ZS: Actually, it means that I should always follow new developments in ELT. I should read about articles, approaches and hmmm new methods, methods that emerged newly or the techniques that instructors use effectively in their classes. It's all about the instructors who try to meet their learners' demands. If you want to be accepted and as accepted as a beneficial teacher, you should always keep on developing yourself.

R: And I think that you also teach General English, right?

ZS: Yes.

R: Are there any courses that you give other than General English?

ZS: No, just General English. It's like a main course. We have Prime Time series. And, it's, we have also downloaded it to the computers so students can follow it from the main screen in our lessons. It's just General English lessons.

R: You mentioned that you read articles you try to follow the literature as regards to your field.

ZS: Yes.

R: Are there any extra things that you do to keep yourself up to date with changes and improvements in English Language teaching apart from the things that you mentioned?

ZS: Sometimes, attending seminars and conferences but generally I am using internet for that. I am looking for published articles, essays and materials to keep myself up to date. Generally falling on internet. I have no other choice. Not a lot of choice. So [delay] I am using that way. (heh) It's much easier.

R: Sure. In today's global world internet is the easiest way to follow or to make a good use of while conducting your research. And, we have another term maybe it is familiar to you but I am going to define it anyhow. Reflection. Do you know what it means.

ZS: No.

R: Reflection, in its simplest definition is gaining experience from your practices. You reflect on your practices. Suppose you apply a new technique in your class and you gain experience. Next time, you use it, you use it much better and efficiently. You learn from your experience. That's reflection. So, regarding this, how does reflection if at all play a role on your own teaching within your English language classes?

ZS: [delay]. When I go back to my university years we learned lots of things. And, now a teacher, i graduated, I have a chance to use all my learnings in my classes so ehhe when i was in the university, I learned lots of methods and techniques so now I am trying to use them in my classes. I am newly graduated so I haven't got a lot of choice for using them just 2 years and for one year with I was training. I am just trying to adapt all the things that I already learnt into my classes. I am trying now. But it's going better day by day.

R: Then - Is reflection, gaining from your experiences different in military context than it is in civilian context? I mean when you compare these two, is it different? Are there any difficulties specific to the military context?

ZS: The books are General English books, main course books. So, there isn't any difficulty but it is difficult for just students. We have to approach students in different ways because they are military students. They are not civilian students so we have sometimes barriers between our students and me. The lessons are same. Not so difficult and different but we have normal books not naval or military books.

R: Even though it's a military context, you do many things to improve yourself, to reflect on your practices and learn from your experiences which is nice. Then what about sharing your experiences with your colleagues? And if you share, how do you do it?

ZS: Yes. I am always talking with my friends that are working in public schools. I am continuously comparing myself with them. We have lots of differences resulting from different contexts. [delay] (2<sup>nd</sup> theme)

R: It's nice that you share your experiences.

ZS: Yes. It seems that many things happen in classrooms. I am telling them [colleagues] today that thing happened in my class and I don't know how to react sometimes people don't know what to do. The situation instantly emerges and we can fail sometimes. And as a new teacher – (heh). (2<sup>nd</sup> theme)

R: Sure.

ZS: We are always talking about these things. And (Hx) we are always sharing our experiences in the classes. (2<sup>nd</sup> theme)

R: For sharing, do you arrange any meetings or you talk about your experiences during the breaks?

ZS: During the break time not specifically any arranged time. Sometimes we talk on the phone, sometimes when we get together outside or somewhere else. We talk about the students or exams and other things.

R: Are there any factors that facilitate or hinder your professional development? if you will, you can start with the things if any things that facilitate your professional development and then move on to the barriers.

ZS: Ok. (heh). There is extrinsic and intrinsic motivation. And, my institution and the senior instructors, I can name them as extrinsic motivation. They always support us and want us to improve ourselves. They motivate us, they support us our personal development. They always encourage us to continue our further education.

R: That's a great encouragement actually.

ZS: [delay]. And They are all positive motivations for my personal development. The negative ones I can call them intrinsic motivations. Sometimes people feel depressed or upset or something like that. So when I feel like that, I don't want to do anything.

R: Therefore, you mean the barriers are not from the institution?

ZS: They are not from the people or the institution. It's all about myself.

R: Ok. Bear in mind that not everybody is as lucky as you in this respect laughing.

ZS: (heh). Yes, Maybe.

R: I am sure that you have a busy schedule but in your busy schedule, do you have any chance, any opportunity to follow ELT literature. I mean the research, the papers, the seminars that you can follow on the internet? Do you specifically follow ELT literature? And, if you happen to follow, how does it play a role on your teaching career?

ZS: First of all, (H) I would say that I am not good at literature all the time but sometimes as I say for, just looking for essays or [delay] articles not all the time following the literature. I have to follow but (heh) I am not...

R: I think you are also a graduate student in educational sciences, right? In Kocaeli university?

ZS: Yes.

R: Do you specifically follow the research papers on educational sciences or English language teaching?

ZS: I am doing my masters degree on curriculum and instructuon so I am following in that field of the books or articles or literature in that field not in English language teaching. But

of course there is a connection between these two fields and in that sense I make a good use of my English language teacher background. For example, when I want to give some examples, I am always looking for the international journals and articles to write my projects. We have math teachers, hmmm Turkish teachers in our department. Each of us looking for our fields. So, I am always looking for the articles about ELT. It's like an umbrella kind of thing for me. It helps me. Because of my language teacher background, I am way ahead of them.

R: Since you have a busy schedule both as a teacher and a graduate student, do you find any opportunities to attend ELT seminars, conferences, workshops offered in your institution or elsewhere?

ZS: My institution allows me, it supports me for to go seminars and conferences and arranges some conferences and seminars. So, I can attend seminars and conferences when they are available.

R: Are you benefiting from these?

ZS: Yes. They are very effective indeed. But, some of them, not all of them. Some of them that are related to our [delay] our field..

R: Do you particularly use any method or technique that you learnt in those seminars?

ZS: Yes. Mostly I adapt some of them to my classroom practices. Or talk with my fellow colleagues and tell them about the new approaches or methods that I learnt. But, some of them are not related to my taste. Like, distance learning (heh). It's not suitable for me. I don't need to integrate it into my syllabus.

R: You briefly mentioned your institution's stance towards the professional development efforts of teachers in general? Are there any additional things that you want to add regarding that issue?

ZS: Till now, I haven't seen any negative stance. That's totally positive I think. But I don't know (heh) what will happen in the future. It is supportive. I think my institution is also of the opinion that teachers should improve themselves and continue their professional development efforts in that regard. Sometimes even the lucky ones go to the United States for to get education there. I think that's all but it has to be more.

R: Well.. As you said there are intrinsic and extrinsic motivators which come around and help things go straight. I know that you don't have many years of experience but still up to the present time, how would you evaluate your teaching skills and knowledge relative to others in your position?

ZS: Others are generally working for long periods of time when I compare. But, I think I am catching them. Day by day, I see my improvement. When I first came here, I was not that kind of relaxed in classes, I felt sometimes nervous and excited sometimes it happens you know. But, day by day, I overcome these situations and improve myself. To attract students' attention you should change your techniques whenever it's needed, because they are young and they can easily get distracted during the lessons. Therefore, as you mentioned I reflect on my practices and try new things. **(desire for self-improvement/1<sup>st</sup> theme)**

R: In which position do you see yourself in terms of your professional development efforts in 5 years time from now on? As regards to your aims and intentions.

ZS: First of all, I am eager to continue my professional development. I might as well pursue a PhD degree in educational sciences. But, I haven't decided it yet. I will shape it soon. **(1<sup>st</sup> theme)**

R: I see. Thank you Sule and Good luck with your professional development efforts.



**Coded Transcript 3**

**AS – Interview 3, Tuesday, 29/03/16 10:00**

R: Welcome Simge. How are you doing today?

AS: Fine. A little bit tired. Sleepy. It has been pretty busy this week with exams.

R: I guess you are dealing with midterm exams in the institution.

AS: Hihı.

R: I see. The purpose of my research is the professional development efforts of English language teachers-

AS: Hihı.

R: And I am conducting a research regarding this (professional development efforts of English language teachers) purposefully in Turkish context. So, first of all I'd like to start with the general question. I mean, in your own opinion, what does professional development in English language teaching mean to you? Generally, what do you understand from this term?

AS: [delay] Firstly, I am a graduate of English Literature program. So, I think I am not that efficient in ELT. In English language teaching. So, it means to me just self-development or self-improvement in this especially in teaching methods. So, I think that I should, I must learn more than my colleagues because I think I am not efficient in this field so, just self-improvement and self-development.

R: Very well. By the way, from which university did you graduate from?

AS: Ege university. English language and literature department.

R: So, in your university years, you didn't take any pedagogical course regarding English language teaching. Right?

AS: Just two terms. I took two courses related with pedagogical issues. But they were not totally related with teaching.

R: And, when you started teaching, did you have any difficulties?

AS: Of course, because we always as English literature graduates in fact the students are at the same level. So, when you try to teach something, they understand something in different ways.

R: Sure, yes.

AS: I understand that, I have to find the best way, the appropriate way according to class levels. So, because I don't have many ideas about teaching methods, I have to try and choose the best way teaching way.

R: What I understand is that you gain from your experiences. Is that right?

AS: Sure.

R: Try and and error type like you do something and if it works you continue, if it does not work, you change it.

AS: Exactly. That's my way. (heh).

R: What course do you teach here?

AS: General English. This semester, I have 21 hours a week.

R: How long have you been working as an EFL teacher?

AS: For 8 years. 1 year in a private course and 7 years in this institution.

R: You know that in our field, in English language teaching, many developments take place. I mean for example technological developments and new techniques emerge mainly as by products of new technology and many EFL teachers try to make good use of this new technology. What I want to indicate is how do you keep yourself up to date with changes and improvements in language teaching? If you can, of course.

AS: As I said before, language teaching is not the field that I graduated from. Teaching is not my major area I mean. And I have always thought about the English language from literature perspective. So, hmmm I must confess that I generally focus on the literature aspect of English not the pedagogical perspective or teaching.

R: In that sense, how do you integrate the literature aspect of English language to your General English classes, if it's possible?

AS: [delay] I could integrate them previously but I cannot now because as time passes I cannot remember somethings. And the context is not always appropriate aswell as the proficiency levels of students. So, I try to read a lot not about the new technologies but about new teaching methods. By this way, I want to improve myself especially in English language teaching. Sometimes, I feel myself not competent enough in ELT. To tell the truth, being a teacher was not my real wish. laughs. I am still not sure, if I want to continue in that field. I try to improve myself not my teaching. (heh). I try to share my knowledge, my memories in the classroom in English and I won't need to keep up with the technological advantages. Just reading and trying to find the best ways. But I am eager to improve myself.

R: I would like to talk about reflection in your teaching. But let me first define reflection as you are graduate of literature perhaps you are not familiar with this term. Reflection for classroom context like you did in your first teaching years as a novice teacher is you do something in the classroom then if it fails you change it, you change your teaching method and try something else and in every experience, in every attempt you learn something, you reflect on your own practices and develop the ones that work well. And for the appropriate teaching contexts, you make a good use of your reflections which you developed and automatized in advance. As a matter of fact, experience teachers are very good at it since as you expect even after 5 years of experience, they gain much from their practices, they are able to find and apply the most suitable technique related to that specific context. In that sense, how does reflection play a role in your own teaching?

AS: [delay]. I am learning while teaching therefore as you say I think this is an experience.

R: Yes.

AS: As time passes in the classroom, you learn what students' behaviors mean. So, I change my ways, techniques according to behaviours of students. I think, day by day, I am getting better. Because I get more experienced. If it fails, I stop it and try to find a new way. I cannot try the methods since I have little knowledge about teaching methods surely. I have to try and find the best ways or techniques. Sometimes, I share my ideas with the students and let them to direct me. **(2<sup>nd</sup> theme)**

R: That's a good way of reflection. As I understand from your ideas, being a literature graduate does not prevent you to learn the techniques. you are very good at improving yourself.

AS: Yes. Because it's my job. So, I try to do my best. And, I have to be a good one. This is my way.

R: You mentioned that you share your experiences with the students. What about with your colleagues? How do you share your experiences with your colleagues?

AS: Yes. I have to share them because sometimes I can't see my faults by myself so I need someone to show me my faults and with sharing I believe I have a chance to change my ways and techniques. Most of them have language teaching backgrounds so I have chance to share my ideas learn something about methods from them in class breaks or any gathering. For example, sometimes, I teach and explain a language point too many times and I realize that some of them [students] still have difficulty in understanding. Then I ask my mates, my colleagues and some of them have different, invaluable ideas for teaching it in the best way, so I apply this in my classrooms and most of the time they work well. (2<sup>nd</sup> theme)

R: And I also want to talk about you know that there are some factors. There are many external and internal factors that affect us. Which factors if any at all facilitate or hinder your professional development?

AS: First of all, we have to behave, we have to teach in the direction of our knowledge not in the direction of the ones who do not have any idea about teaching.

R: That's correct, (heh).

AS: [delay]. So, students especially make my job harder because in their tight schedule, they claim that they have no time, no chance to do their homeworks let alone improve themselves. They have always excuses.

R: I think these are the factors that curb maybe your enthusiasm and thereby hinder your professional development. What are your opinions about the good ones that make your professional development easy?

AS: It's harder for me. I cannot think about any good ones.

R: And, I would like to talk about the literature. But that's not the English language literature that you graduated from but the literature about the English language teaching. I mean the studies, papers, articles, journals which introduce latest developments related to ELT. Do you have time to follow ELT literature? Do you have time to read articles or papers whether in print or via internet?

AS: I try to follow them as I have a chance and I read articles and some news on the internet. But, as I said being a teacher was not my real wish but I do my best so being a teacher now has a leading role in my career but it would change, I hope.

R: I see. It 's best for you to follow your dreams. Do you have time to attend professional development activities like ELT seminars, conferences, and workshops offered in our school or outside?

AS: Yes. I love attending these professional development activities but I think that that's not sufficient and efficient. We should have the chance to share our experiences, our own ideas around the world not just in Turkey. But, as civilians in a military institution, I do not have this chance. I hope in the future, things would change hopefully.

R: How do you integrate these new developments you learn from these professional development activities into your classroom? Are they beneficial for your classroom practices?

AS: Yes. Sometimes I am not aware of my faults. By the help of these seminars and workshops, I try to remember my classroom experiences and what I talked about sometimes does not conform to my classroom techniques. I try to shift my techniques and ways accordingly. What is told in these seminars, conferences and workshops. Because they are more experienced ones so there are a lot of things to learn from them.

R: What is your institution's stance with respect to professional development? Does it support or prevent your professional development efforts? How do you evaluate their stance?

AS: In the aspect of further education, it supports us but as I said, just making us attend the seminars and workshops but in a limited way. They just support it, I think for the sake of supporting it. It occurs to me that they are doing it because they are forced to do it. I don't think they are doing it willingly (heh). (3<sup>rd</sup> theme)

R: How would you evaluate your teaching skills and knowledge? I know that you are a literature programme graduate but as you have 8 years of experience, that means something. A significant time period. How would you evaluate your teaching skills and knowledge relative to others, the other colleagues in your position?

AS: I am very poor in this field so I turn to myself. Sorry, I try to improve myself. I believe I am a teacher, based on my experiences. I am not teaching based on my undergraduate education. So, I think I have to try hard maybe more than my colleagues. Some of them are better than me because they have more experience and knowledge. In that way, I need to catch up with them. Apart from that, I think that I am just inferior to them just about teaching methods and techniques. I can understand what students mean by just looking at their behaviours and this is a very important skill. So, I can make them understand me better by changing my techniques. In that sense, I am more experienced than novice teachers. I am trying to improve myself about the teaching methods. That's all (heh). (1<sup>st</sup> theme)

R: And also thank you for your drawing, the graphic elicitation which depicts your professional development. Could you please explain what was in your mind while drawing this?

AS: When I was at the university, I didn't think of being a teacher. Because at the university, they always told us being a teacher was not our goal. It was a big change for me so I drew it from that direction. They advised us not to be a teacher. They told us that we are not a teacher. laughs. So, I always studied in this aspect but conditions, situations took me to teaching. I always thought about being a soldier, but this way is much better now I think. I think I have a respectable career. And, I hope I continue my good relations with my colleagues. Getting a master's degree would be much more better for me. I want to fulfill my dreams. I don't want to have sorries and regrets in my life. This is not my way of life that I really want. I want to live my real wish. So, I have to draw my way in this direction. I also want to do something for myself not for money. I think I will try to follow my dream. I am not sure about in which field I have a chance for master's degree in teaching or literature. Hopefully literature.

R: Thank you Simge for this nice interview.

AS: I tried to be helpful. Thank you.

## APPENDIX B

### Interview Protocol

1. The purpose of my research is on-going professional development of EFL teachers in Turkey. What does professional development in English language teaching mean to you?
2. How long have you been working as an English language teacher?
3. What courses do you teach?
4. How do you keep yourself up to date with changes and improvements in ELT?
5. How does reflection on your own teaching play a role in your teaching?
6. Do you share experiences with your colleagues? If so, how?
7. Which factors facilitate or hinder your professional development?
8. How does ELT literature play a role in your career?
9. Do you attend ELT seminars, conferences and workshops offered in your school?
10. What is your institution's stance with respect to professional development?
11. How would you evaluate your teaching skills and knowledge relative to others in your position?
12. Optional wrap up question: Do you have any plans to take additional qualifications in English Language Teaching or education in the future?

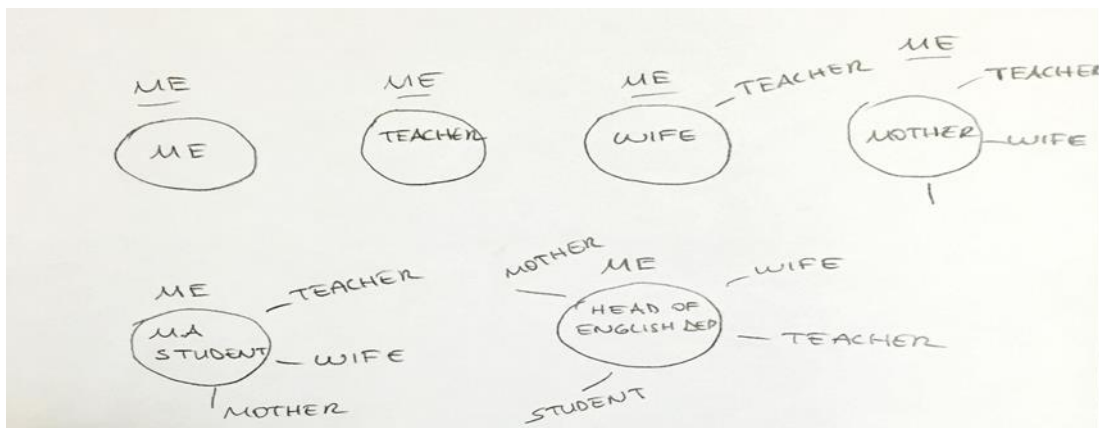
### Graphic Elicitation

Can you please draw an illustration which best depicts your personal professional growth over the last 10 years?

## APPENDIX C

### Graphic Elicitation 1

07.03.2016



**Analytic Memo 1**

**07.03.2016**

**EMMY'S LIFE**

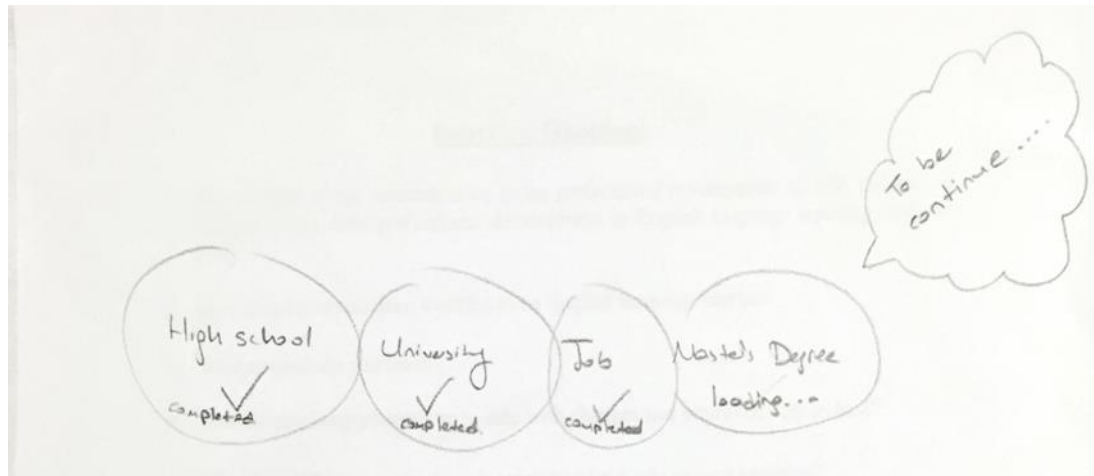
In the event of teaching, there is no such thing as a blank slate. Previous knowledge and the teaching context, all contribute to teacher's perception of teaching and her reflectivity (Lee, 2005). Taking this into consideration, Emmy followed the same path by first focusing on her personality, in a way rediscovering her identity by which she associated "teaching" with herself and transferred it to the next stage as Emmy the teacher (illustration 2). Teaching is a dynamic and a changing activity. Testifying this fact, Emmy got married, had two wonderful kids but never gave up and continued her walk of life (illustrations 3 and 4).

As she reiterated during the interview, there used to be times when she struggled to overcome various obstacles for continuing her professional growth. Excessive workload, the lack of institutional support, taking the little loved one to the speech therapies and being affectionate to the significant other at the same time were just some of them. After all, she was obstinate. Perhaps, more than Helen Keller was. Nothing prevented (her) fulfilling her dreams. Even if she started off her post graduate journey long time ago, she is now on the verge of finalizing her much-awaited thesis and adding another dimension to her career-building attempts (illustration 5).

She thought that she would be more comfortable after 19 years of teaching experience in the same institution. However, as the head of English department, preparing unnecessary bureaucratic documents are taking up most of her free time these days (illustration 6). She never complains, she is joyful and determined to move up the career ladder for her future endeavours in line with her professional development. Life is full of surprises, she says. Well... Yes, it is....

**Graphic Elicitation 2**

**22.03.2016**





**Analytic Memo 2**

22.03.2016

**GAME IS NOT OVER, YET.**

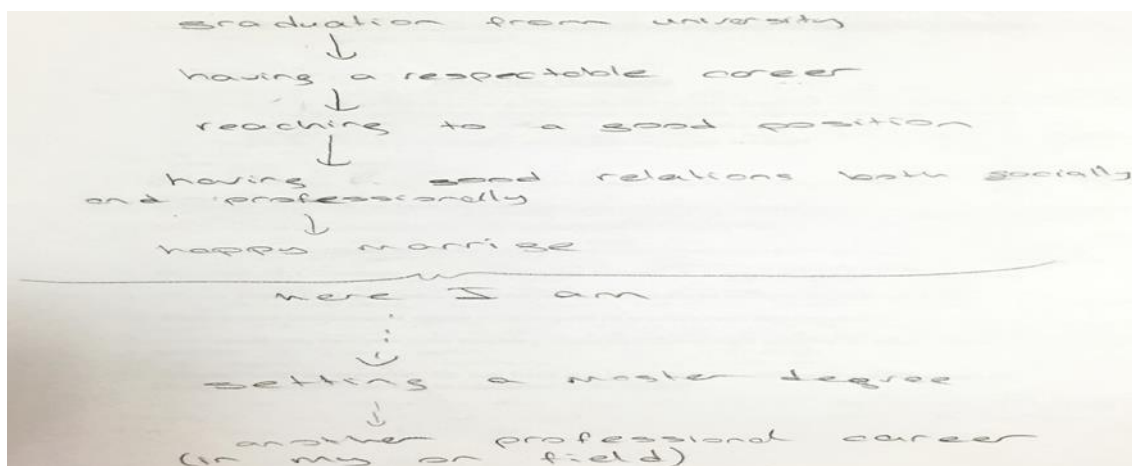
ZS was the youngest teacher in my study. It has been just 3 years since she started teaching. But, nonetheless; it turned out that she was the most willing to improve herself professionally. She, in a way, stood out as an ideal example of the motto “good teaching requires successful learning” (Leitwood, Day, Sammons, Haris & Hopkins, 2006). Her graphic elicitation, in this regard is a great descriptor of her ambition as well.

I kind of cannot help but draw an analogy between her graphic elicitation and a computer game. The ellipses in her drawing somewhat reflect her determination to improve herself. They are like steps in her life.

If we envision her life as a computer game, these ellipses would most probably be levels or stages in that game. After you become successful in one level, you proceed to the next one. It is totally ZS's ‘professional development game’.

It is evident from the ellipses that she already completed first 3 levels. Namely, she successfully graduated from high school. She holds a B.A degree in English language teaching and she is currently working as a military instructor (as an ensign) in Turkish Naval Forces. Yet, it seems that the game is not over. Right now, she is pursuing a master's degree as it can clearly be inferred from her depiction that “master's degree is loading”.

Since there is a speech balloon that reads ‘to be continued...’. From this, I assume that she also wants to crown herself with a PhD degree, finish the game and win the trophy. Well...Good luck ZS. Turkey, more than ever, needs successful, secular, and liberal women.



**Graphic Elicitation 3**

29.03.2016

**Analytic Memo 3**

29.03.2016

**I HAVE A DREAM**

AS is, so to speak, a woman of letters. She holds a B.A degree in English philology and she is a fervent follower of belles-lettres. During the whole interview, she, many times, made references to her philology degree.

As it can be inferred from her graphic elicitation, English language teaching which is a garden of Eden for me, does not mean much for her. Comprised of simple and straight lines, hardly can it be called a graphic elicitation indeed.

Since I know (from the interview) how she is discontented about teaching English but not literature, I am well aware what these imprecisely drawn arrows mean for her.

For sure, she has a respectable career (she works as a lecturer in Turkish Naval Forces). For sure, she has a happy marriage with two kids. And for sure, she has good relations with her colleagues both socially and professionally. However, it is apparent that she is not happy inside. She has a dream. As she indicated in the last line of her carelessly drawn graphic elicitation, she wants to get an M.A and PhD degrees in philology and teach English literature. I do not feel sorry for AS as I know, in the way Martin Luther King defends, if she can't walk, she will crawl but she will keep moving forward to reach her aim. She is very determined. Go for your dreams AS. Life is too short to wait...

## **APPENDIX D**

### **Analytic Memo for Interview 1**

**07.03.2016**

#### **PRELUDE**

It's March 7, 2016 Monday, half past 9 a.m. I am getting ready to conduct my first interview with ES, the head of English department in the institution. I am positive that it would be a very enlightening experience because it's totally a new experience for me. I have never had that experience before whether as an interviewer or an interviewee. Yikes! I am really excited and tense.

I attentively prepared and revised my interview protocol according to the feedbacks. Will they work well? Will I be able to make her speak and maintain the flow of the conversation? We will see.

I wrote the methodology part of my M.A thesis based on quantitative analyses. I am good at running SPSS program, making analyses and interpreting them. However, qualitative is like an exoplanet for me. Distant and mysterious. Waiting to be explored.

I made an appointment with ES a week ago. Another good thing is I have been too lazy and constantly delaying to clean my office room but it is spotlessly clean right now. Even my office room is ready for the big day☺

I realized that my phone has an integrated, voice memo program by default. But, I did not want to leave anything by chance. For this reason, I searched and bought the most popular voice recorder application from the apple store yesterday.

Last time I remember I got that excited was years ago while I was being interviewed for being commissioned officer. Well, not a good *deja vu*, you can be sure. I know she likes drinking French press. Coffee is ready. Phone's battery is %90 full. Let the game begin....

### **Analytic Memo for Interview 2**

**23.03.2016**

#### **AWAKENING**

Everything was fine. Well...Almost..If we do not take into account three intrusion attempts; one from our office soldier insisting on to bring me tea, one military student begging me to accept his overdue book summary and one from our department secretary notifying me about a ceremony next week. I should also add that my office telephone rang 6 times consecutively.

Actually, first, I thought about locking the door before I started the interview. Then, I gave up that idea. Since I was conducting an interview with the head of the English language department, the people would be curious what I was doing. Lessons well learned.

Next time, before I started the interview, I will stick a paper onto the door of my room indicating I am busy doing an interview. I will mute the telephone and tell the students to visit me after the working hours.

Regarding the content of the interview; it lasted shorter than I expected (22 minutes). I ran out of my prompts and the participant tended to give short answers. I am going to add, so to say, some emergency prompts to my interview observation notes and try to elicit more answers.

It was not that bad yet I didn't expect it to be that tiring. Perhaps, because of the interruptions that I mentioned, I lost the control and could not steer the flow of the conversation. All in all, it was a nice experience for me. By taking the necessary security measures, (additional emergency prompts, and deployments [I forgot the sugar for her coffee]), I will embark on a new campaign.

**Analytic Memo for Interview 3**

**04.04.2016**

### **SATISFACTION**

Having completed and transcribed all three interviews, I was able to breath a sigh of relief finally. The last one which I conducted with AS was kind of my masterpiece. All my techniques worked well. In addition, I was more confident, comfortable and professional. I was able to steer the conversation however I want. It was also the longest one with 32 minutes.

I now really know the value of experience. It does really matter more in qualitative studies compared to quantitative ones.

Transcribing was the most difficult process for me. It was really a headache for me. I cannot believe I spent my whole weekend for the first one as I did not want to miss any single word or an utterance.

When I look back to my first interview; all the preparations I made, all the hustle and bustle, I cannot help but feel contented, happy and satisfied.

<b>Preliminary Codebook</b>		<b>APPENDIX E</b>	
<b>Code</b>	<b>Definition</b>	<b>Inclusion/Exclusion Criteria</b>	<b>Example from Text</b>
<b>1. Being Free</b>	<i>The importance of teachers' being free to test any idea or a new technique in teaching.</i>	<i>Includes classroom settings Excludes being free outside the school context.</i>	<i>"Yes. I should be free in the classroom. I should be free with the schedule. I should be free with the materials."</i>
<b>2. Sharing Experiences</b>	<i>Sharing experiences and problems with colleagues are important for professional development efforts of EFL teachers.</i>	<i>Includes experiences with colleagues. Excludes sharing experiences with students, supervisors, and administrators.</i>	<i>"By talking. We generally share our experiences by talking. I find it [sharing experiences] beneficial and useful." "Coffee breaks, for example. We share and I love to listen to others. It doesn't matter how old he or she is. Or how much he is experienced or not."</i>
<b>3. Professional Development Activities</b>	<i>Teacher states the significance of attending and making use of in-service trainings.</i>	<i>Includes conferences, seminars, workshops. Excludes institutional meetings or parent-teacher conferences.</i>	<i>"They [professional development activities] play an important role in personal development of teachers. If my institution lets me to go, I go. As much as I find - any opportunity to go - I always go and listen."</i>
<b>4. Workload</b>	<i>excessive workload hindering the professional development efforts of teachers</i>	<i>Includes workload resulting from the institution. Excludes class hours or the hours allocated to students for make-up.</i>	<i>"Well, also preparing unnecessary bureaucratic documents takes up most of my free time. After I am done with my classes, I need to deal with the administrative stuff."</i>
<b>5. Lack of Institutional Support</b>	<i>Lack of institutional support demotivates the teachers and impedes their professional development efforts</i>	<i>Includes lack of support from the institution. Excludes lack of support from colleagues and students.</i>	<i>".....when we have a meeting and when they talk to us, they seem to support but indeed they don't care about it. They generally try to impose us what they know the best." "They seldom realize what they already said. Most things remain a theory. They say yes, I support. You should go. You should do something. But in reality, it doesn't happen like this."</i>
<b>6. Educational Background</b>	<i>Educational background is a decisive factor which facilitates following the literature related to ELT</i>	<i>Includes educational background of EFL teachers. Excludes administrators and students.</i>	<i>"But, before I started my M.A, I had even difficulty in reading and understanding the articles in English literature let alone the ones in ELT."</i>
<b>7. Desire for Self-Improvement</b>	<i>When given support and the opportunity, teachers are willing to improve themselves</i>	<i>Includes institutional support and opportunities for EFL teachers, intrinsic motivators like praise and appreciation. Excludes external motivating factors like family support or opportunities that the teachers achieve by themselves.</i>	<i>"Exactly I do enjoy participating conferences but I rarely attend." "I wish. Yes. I maybe stop teaching English for the students and maybe teach English literature for the other students in other universities."</i>
<b>8. Reflecting on Practices</b>	<i>Teacher makes a good use of their reflections and learn from their experiences.</i>	<i>Includes reflective practices in the classrooms. Excludes reflections on the workshops or seminars.</i>	<i>"Sure, it helps me. After each class, I have to list what I should do and what I shouldn't do and I can call this a reflection and it improves myself in teaching. "In other classrooms, I know what to do and what not to do."</i>
<b>9. Obstacles Affecting Professional Development</b>	<i>Teacher expresses the factors that hinders her career development efforts.</i>	<i>Includes hurdles stemming from the administration. Excludes personal and family troubles.</i>	<i>"Control. I hate control. I am quite sure. And it prevents my experiences and it hinders my teaching."</i>
<b>10. Obstacles Affecting Professional Development</b>	<i>Teacher expresses the factors that hinders her career development efforts.</i>	<i>Includes hurdles related with personal and family issues. Excludes obstacles stemming from the administration.</i>	<i>"Personal conflicts, jealousy (heh). Participating conferences and seminars should not be seen as a way of escaping from the school or the classes."</i>

## Final Codebook

<b>Code</b>	<b>Definition</b>	<b>Inclusion/Exclusion Criteria</b>	<b>Example from Text</b>
<b>1. Being Free</b>	<i>The importance of teachers' being free to test any idea or a new technique in teaching.</i>	<i>Includes classroom settings Excludes being free outside the school context.</i>	<i>Yes. I should be free in the classroom. I should be free with the schedule. I should be free with the materials</i>
<b>2. Willingness to Share Experiences</b>	<i>Sharing experiences and problems with colleagues are important for professional development efforts of EFL teachers.</i>	<i>Includes experiences with colleagues. Excludes sharing experiences with students, supervisors, and administrators.</i>	<i>By talking. We generally share our experiences by talking. I find it [sharing experiences] beneficial and useful." "Coffee breaks, for example. We share and I love to listen to others. It doesn't matter how old he or she is. Or how much he is experienced or not</i>
<b>3. Professional Development Activities</b>	<i>Teacher states the significance of attending and making use of in-service trainings.</i>	<i>Excludes institutional meetings or parent-teacher conferences.</i>	<i>They [professional development activities] play an important role in personal development of teachers. If my institution lets me to go, I go. As much as I find - any opportunity to go - I always go and listen</i>
<b>4. Workload</b>	<i>Excessive workload hindering the professional development efforts of teachers</i>	<i>Includes workload resulting from the institution. Excludes class hours or the hours allocated to students for make-up.</i>	<i>Well, also preparing unnecessary bureaucratic documents takes up most of my free time. After I am done with my classes, I need to deal with the administrative stuff.</i>
<b>5. Lack of Motivational Support</b>	<i>Lack of institutional support demotivates the teachers and impedes their professional development efforts</i>	<i>Includes lack of support from the institution. Excludes lack of support from colleagues and students.</i>	<i>.....when we have a meeting and when they talk to us, they seem to support but indeed they don't care about it. They generally try to impose us what they know the best." "They seldom realize what they already said. Most things remain a theory. They say yes, I support. You should go. You should do something. But in reality, it doesn't happen like this</i>
<b>6. Desire for Self-Improvement</b>	<i>When given support and the opportunity, teachers are willing to improve themselves</i>	<i>Includes institutional support and opportunities for EFL teachers. Excludes external motivating factors like family support or opportunities that the teachers achieve by themselves.</i>	<i>Exactly I do enjoy participating conferences but I rarely attend." "I wish. Yes. I maybe stop teaching English for the students and maybe teach English literature for the other students in other universities.</i>
<b>7. Reflecting on Practices</b>	<i>Teacher makes a good use of their reflections and learn from their experiences.</i>	<i>Includes reflective practices in the classrooms. Excludes reflections on the workshops or seminars.</i>	<i>Sure, it helps me. After each class, I have to list what I should do and what I shouldn't do and I can call this a reflection and it improves myself in teaching." "In other classrooms, I know what to do and what not to do.</i>