

The Current System of Teacher Training Programs in One-Year Preparatory Schools of Foundation Universities in Ankara*

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Abstract

Teacher Training Programs (TTPs) are very essential for the professional development of language instructors since they are referred as a series of planned events or as extended programs of accredited or non-accredited learning and help instructors keep up with the recent developments in their field and remember their previous knowledge while upgrading it. Most of the English language instructors working at preparatory schools of universities receive some forms of teacher training for their professional development. On the other hand, little is offered in spite of the great changes in approaches, methods and techniques in language teaching. In order to investigate the system of current teacher training programs (TTPs) in preparatory schools of four foundation universities in Ankara, this descriptive study was designed and conducted with 348 EFL instructors and four teacher trainers working at the preparatory schools of four foundation universities in Ankara. The study was conducted in 2015-2016 academic year. The related literature was reviewed and three research instruments that would be used to collect the data were chosen accordingly. These instruments including a questionnaire, interviews with four teacher trainers and interviews with four EFL instructors were used to investigate the current system of teacher training programs. The quantitative and qualitative analysis of the data revealed that TTPs conducted at the preparatory schools of four Foundation universities in Ankara were not systematic.

Keywords: Professional Development, Teacher Training Programs, Teacher Training, Preparatory Schools.

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Ankara'daki Özel Üniversitelerin Bir Yıllık Hazırlık Okullarındaki Mesleki Gelişim Programlarının Mevcut Sistemi

Öz

Mesleki Gelişim Programları, yabancı dil okutmanlarının mesleki gelişimleri için çok önemlidir, çünkü bu programlar, mesleki gelişim için planlanmış etkinlikler dizisi veya akredite / akredite olmayan öğrenmenin genişletilmiş programları olarak anılırlar. Bu programlar, okutmanların alanlarındaki son gelişmelere ayak uydurmasına ve önceki bilgilerini hatırlamasına yardımcı olur. Üniversitelerin hazırlık okullarında çalışan İngilizce Okutmanlarının çoğu mesleki gelişimleri için bu programlara katılmaktadır. Ancak, yaklaşımlarda, metotlarda ve tekniklerdeki değişimlere rağmen, mesleki gelişim programları yetersiz kalmaktadır. Bu betimsel çalışmanın amacı, Ankara'daki dört özel üniversitenin hazırlık okullarında çalışan İngilizce okutmanlarına yönelik düzenlenen mesleki gelişim programlarının mevcut durumunu incelemek ve bu programların okutmanların mesleki gelişimlerinde etkili olup olmadığını ortaya çıkarmaktır. Bu sebeple bir betimsel çalışma tasarlanmıştır. Çalışma 2015-2016 akademik yılında yapılmış olup, o zamanki durumu incelemektedir. Literatür taraması yapılmış ve veri toplamak için 3 farklı araç seçilmiştir. Bu veri toplama araçları, Ankara'daki dört özel üniversitenin hazırlık okullarında çalışan 348 İngilizce okutmanına uygulanan anket çalışması ve yine aynı üniversitelerde çalışan 4 okutman ve 4 eğitimle yapılan görüşmelerdir. Bu anket ve görüşmeler mesleki gelişim programlarının mevcut durumunu incelemek için tasarlanmıştır. Verilerin nicel ve nitel analizi sonucu olarak, Ankara'daki 4 özel üniversitenin hazırlık okulunda hizmet veren mesleki gelişim birimlerinin sistematik olmadığı saptanmıştır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Mesleki Gelişim, Mesleki Gelişim Programları, Öğretmen Eğitimi, Hazırlık Okulları.

1. Introduction

Due to the rapid changes in the world of education, which also affect the field of teaching English as a Foreign Language, professional development is receiving more attention at universities all around the world in order to be able to meet the needs of the educators who follow the latest innovations in this field (Liyanage & Bartlett, 2008). This issue is also very important in Turkey, especially for the preparatory schools of universities (Ünal, 2010). In particular, despite the innovative education systems at universities, there is still a need for continuous learning and improvement for educators since the world of teaching is changing rapidly (Balcıoğlu, 2010). This leads to the need of refreshing the knowledge of the instructors with new teaching techniques and approaches so that they could keep up to date and be competent (Ünal, 2010). Consequently, it is important to look into the ways of activating the role of the instructors and helping them to improve themselves professionally by providing more effective teacher training programs (Burns & Richards, 2009).

2. Review of Literature

2.1. Teacher training programs (TTPs)

TTPs are very effective and necessary as they are accepted as a practical method of increasing the knowledge, skills and positive beliefs of teachers by Locke (1984; Burns, 2011). TTPs are considered as a process used to continue the teachers' development even after they have received their certification in teaching and are employed in a professional position (Locke, 1984). By means of TTPs, teachers are able to assess the quality and the current situation of their own teaching and explore relevant approaches for their own situations (Murdoch, 1994, Palmer, 1993). Additionally, TTPs create an atmosphere where teachers share and exchange their experiences and ideas that they have gained from their classrooms and try to find solutions to their problems encountered in classes by discussing them with their colleagues and trainers so, they develop not only effective pedagogical goals but also contextual knowledge (Alan, 2003).

With the recognized need for well-qualified ELT instructors, preparatory schools of universities in Turkey have been carrying out In-Service Teacher Training Programs (TTPs) (Balcıoğlu, 2010). These teacher training programs are implemented in several ways such as conferences, academic readings, classroom

observations, and collaborative classroom research (Hiep, 2001). The main goal of TTPs conducted at preparatory schools of universities is to create a change in instructors' teaching performance (Koç, 1992). TTPs also provide teacher development for novice instructors to help them adapt to their workplaces and teaching conditions while increasing job satisfaction and avoiding burnout of the more experienced instructors (Alan, 2003).

2.2. The need for teacher training programs

Up to now, the requirements of teaching have changed continuously due to the changes in the educational policies, priorities, technology, and societal changes. According to Duggal (2005, p.5), “continuous in-service education of teachers is necessary to keep them abreast of the changes taking place in their professional environment and to develop their skills and attitudes in the light of their changing roles”. As a result, it is necessary for teachers to adapt to the changes imposed from outside of their own immediate context. This has important implications for teacher training programs. It is important that teachers get the necessary skills and competences to achieve the educational objectives they have formulated to serve the students they teach (Murthy, 2006; Burns, 2014). To be able to keep up with all the changes, TTPs are necessary (Bayrakçı, 2009).

Perhaps the major reason is that after pre-service education, teachers get ready to enter the classroom with entry level proficiency, which may not be enough to be a competent teacher. A mastery level proficiency requires that teachers broaden and deepen their understanding and acquire skills based on extensive practical experience through TTPs (Ünal, 2010). The renewal and upgrading on the skills and competencies are obligatory due to the elements of change and continuity in teacher education. For this reason, TTPs which are prepared for in-service teacher training are inevitable. Professional development starts with pre-service training and it is renewed through TTPs (Duggal, 2005). Guskey (2000) agrees with Duggal and states that if the administrators and teachers do not improve, the schools will not improve, either. In conclusion, to be able to keep up with the change, to broaden and deepen understanding and acquire skills based on extensive practical experience and to be a competent teacher, TTPs are necessary.

2.3. Characteristics of teacher training programs

The design of TTPs is very important so it is necessary to design TTPs in consideration of some factors which are interrelated to some extent (Hashweh, 2003). These factors include being classroom-centred (Doecke, Brown & Loughran, 2000), the involvement of trainees in the design of the courses (Hayes, 1995), covering case studies (Jenlik & Welsh, 2001), having a collaborative atmosphere (Knight, 2002), being reflective and having variation in activities (Little, 2002; Sandholtz, 2002; Wolter, 2000).

- a. **Being classroom-centred:** The activities prepared for TTPs are expected to be classroom centered (Richards, 2010). Instead of transmitting theoretical knowledge or a proposed model to teacher trainees, teacher trainers are suggested to provide them with the subjects related to the classroom that they have encountered (Alan, 2003). It is necessary to provide the content of TTPs according to the problems of trainees, so that these programs manage to mirror the trainees' concerns that they have about teaching in their contexts (Little, 2002). In training sessions, the materials that are used by the trainees in their classrooms are expected to be chosen for a particular topic (Hashweh, 2003).
- b. **Involvement of trainees in the design of courses:** It is necessary for trainers to determine the content of TTPs according to the needs and problems of the teacher trainees (Little, 2002). Trainees are expected to state the most problematic areas of teaching in their teaching context (Alan, 2003). Due to the fact that professional development is individualized and TTPs are tools of teacher development, trainees are expected to articulate their needs and interests to determine the

content of the programme (Sandholtz, 2002). As a result, trainee autonomy will be increased and this will lead the trainees to feel themselves as a part of TTPs (Hashweh, 2003).

- c. Covering case studies: Instead of a predetermined curriculum for TTPs, it is better to consider not only trainers' but also trainees' teaching experiences. TTPs are expected to allow interaction where trainers and trainees exchange and share their ideas and experiences about teaching (Hayes, 1995). By sharing their own teaching stories and experiences, the trainees and trainers are to be role models for each other. During this process, teacher trainees are expected to learn from their colleagues experiences and have a chance to ask for suggestions to improve their teaching practices and develop themselves (Doecke, Brown & Loughran, 2000). Case studies conducted are very efficient for all trainees. However, especially the novice teachers benefit from them a lot due to the lack of teaching experience and not knowing the dynamics of the institution (Knight, 2002; Farrell, 2012). By discussing the other teachers' experiences and sharing ideas, trainees recognize their own teaching practices better (Sandholtz, 2002). Sharing teaching experiences with other trainees results in a "common identity" (Jenlik & Welsh, 2001) in the institution, by the way empathy can be ensured.
- d. Having a collaborative atmosphere: The aim of TTPs is to enhance collaboration among trainers and trainees for a continuous professional development process (Hayes, 1995). In a collaborative atmosphere, the trainees have the opportunity to work with other trainees and trainers to assess their teaching experiences and get immediate feedback at the same time (Hashweh, 2003). By means of group work activities in which the new items or experiences are presented and evaluated, collaboration among trainees can be achieved (Sandholtz, 2002; Burns, 2014).
- e. Being reflective: In designing TTPs, a basis, where trainees can reflect on the knowledge bases they have gained from the TTP sessions in a follow up activity, is to be taken into consideration (Hashweh, 2003). The effectiveness and appropriateness of the suggested techniques, approaches, methods and materials are expected to be used by the trainees in their own classrooms. It is assumed that trainees internalize abstract notions of theory presented in TTPs through repeated activities or sessions (Hashweh, 2003). Sandholtz (2002) also asserts that trainees claim that one-shot workshops are not sufficient for professional development hence follow-up or on-going sessions are to be implemented in the programme. Consequently, the need for reflection of the presented knowledge is to be taken into consideration while designing TTPs (Sandholtz, 2002).
- f. Having variation in activities: Besides lectures, readings, workshops and classroom observations, TTPs are expected to include a large number of activities (Ur, 1992). Variety in TTP activities enlarges trainees' skills and avoids the use of monotonous activities in their classrooms (Hashweh, 2003). Variety in TTP activities enlarges trainees' skills and avoids the use of monotonous activities in their classrooms. Atkin (1992) states that professional development takes place only when the trainees realize deficiency in their own teaching. Hence, trainees are expected to practice unfamiliar activities on the condition that they are relevant to their teaching.

In addition to the factors that affect design, TTPs have some essential components as follows;

- a. TTPs are expected to be voluntary (Freeman, 2001; Lange, 1990). However, most of the teacher training programs conducted at preparatory schools of universities are obligatory for all instructors working there due to the fact that they may not be aware of the new approaches, methods and innovations in their field (Alan, 2003).
- b. They are expected to take needs of the teachers into consideration. Due to the fact that teacher trainees have different backgrounds, the TTPs conducted at universities are to follow a top-down approach. As a result, a basis for the content of the teacher training courses is established by the individuality characteristic of TTPs (Alan, 2003).

- c. Continuity is another essential component of TTPs (Balcıoğlu, 2010). Instructors face lots of problems and encounter a large number of difficulties during their career. Hence, to be able to overcome the difficulties and solve problems, they need TTPs. TTPs help them have a chance to be aware of the latest innovations in their field, adapt them to their teaching and develop themselves (Alwan, 2000).

When all these components are taken into consideration, it can be claimed that as an individualized and continuous process, the aim of TTPs is to provide continuing professional development. To be able to achieve the goal, there are some suggestions. First of all, both experienced and novice teachers are to participate in TTPs. Moreover, they are to be provided with a large number of activities to meet their individual needs. Additionally, they are to be supported continuously by the trainers and colleagues. Finally, teachers who have the same interests and face similar difficulties, are to be encouraged to exchange views with openness (Alwan, 2000, p.48).

3. Method

3.1. Purpose of the study

A large-scale descriptive study was set up to investigate the practices of Teacher Training Programs that are available in the preparatory schools of four foundation universities in Ankara, Turkey, and find out whether the TTPs are effective in self-development. The main research questions that are to be answered in this study are:

1. What is the system of the current teacher training programs in preparatory schools of four foundation universities in Ankara?
2. Are teacher training programs effective enough for the self-development of the instructors?

3.2. Research design

The present study is a descriptive study which uses a mixed method design including both quantitative and qualitative research for the triangulation of data. Within this descriptive study, three instruments were used to collect both quantitative and qualitative data. The quantitative data were collected by means of a questionnaire given to a sample of 348 instructors working at the preparatory schools of four foundation universities in Ankara and data were analysed through statistical analyses. Besides, qualitative data were collected through interviews with teacher trainers and instructors and analysed in the light of the review of literature.

3.3. The participants

Four teacher trainers, 348 EFL instructors working at preparatory schools of four foundation universities in Ankara and four instructors who were chosen with convenient sampling method participated in the study.

3.4. Data analysis

The quantitative data collected through questionnaires were analysed through SPSS 22 and AMOS 22. Moreover, the interviews with teachers and trainers were analysed through in depth content analysis and used for triangulation. Findings were interpreted with the help of the qualitative data from the interviews and the relevant literature helped to interpret the findings of the study.

4. Results and Discussion

4.1. Results

The first part of the questionnaire was designed to elicit background information about the participants and to decide on whether these factors have any significant effect on the participants' attitudes towards self-development activities.

The general characteristics of the participants are discussed in the following tables. Table 1 presents some demographic information about the participant instructors.

Table 1.

General characteristics of the participants

	Age				Gender		Nationality	
	20-30	31-40	41-50	51-60	Male	Female	Turkish	Other
Frequency	83	116	114	35	78	270	339	9
Percentage	23,9	33,3	32,8	10,1	22,4	77,6	97,4	2,6

As shown in Table 1, 83 of the participants (p.23,9%) were aged between 20-30, 116 of them (p.33,3%) were aged between 31-40, 114 of them (p.32,8%) were between 41-50 and only 35 of them (p.10,1%) were 51-60. 270 (p.77,6%) of the participants were females, while 78 (p.22,4%) of them were males. As for nationalities, there were 339 Turkish (p.97,4%), 2 American, 5 British, 1 Iranian and 1 Russian participants. It is clear that most of the participants were females and Turkish. They were teaching at different levels in foundation universities.

In addition to the demographic information about the participants, Table 2 presents their teaching hours and experiences.

Table 2.

Teaching hours and teaching experience of the participants

	Teaching Hours per Week				Years of Teaching Experience				
	5-11	12-18	19-21	22-more	1-5	6-10	11-15	16-20	20-more
Frequency	42	279	25	2	51	54	68	83	92
Percentage	12,1	80,2	7,2	0,5	14,7	15,5	19,5	23,9	26,4

Table 2 shows that, 80,2% of the participants were teaching between 12-18 hours per week, 12,1% of them were teaching from 5 to 11 hours and only 7% of the instructors had more than 19 teaching hours per week. As for years of experience, 50,3% of the instructors had more than 16 years of teaching experience, 35% had six to fifteen years' experience, and 14,7% had less than six years' experience.

The participant interviewees are classified in Table 3.

Table 3.

General characteristics of interviewees

	Gender		Qualifications			Total
	Male	Female	BA	MA	PhD	
<i>Trainers</i>	-	4	2	2	0	4
<i>Instructors</i>	2	2	2	0	2	4
<i>Total</i>	2	6	4	2	2	8

As Table 3 suggests, all teacher trainers were females. On the other hand, two of the interviewee instructors were females while the others were males. In terms of qualifications, 2 of the trainers and 2 of the trainees had bachelor's degrees, 2 of the teacher trainers had master's degrees in ELT and 2 of the instructors had PhD degrees.

4.1.1. The structure of current teacher training programs.

With reference to the facts that were gathered about teacher training programs conducted at preparatory schools of private universities in Ankara, it was found that teacher training programs were characterised by frequency and attitudes of instructors towards TTPs.

4.1.1.1. Frequency.

Results related to the Teacher Training Programs, provided in preparatory schools of foundation universities, showed that all instructors did not get the same chances for training. With reference to the questionnaire, it was found out that the majority of the subjects had less than 4 times of training in the previous year as in table 4.

Table 4.

The frequency of teacher training activities

	<i>Frequency of TTPs</i>			
	<i>Once a year</i>	<i>2-3 times a year</i>	<i>Each month</i>	<i>Each week</i>
<i>Frequency</i>	139	179	30	0
<i>Percentage</i>	39,9	51,4	8,7	0

As Table 4 presents all instructors did not get the same chances for training. Their participation in TTPs in regard to experience will be presented in Table 5.

Table 5.

The participation in TTPs in regard to experience

<i>Experience</i>	<i>Participation in TTPs</i>				
	<i>Once a year</i>	<i>2-3 times a year</i>	<i>Each month</i>	<i>Each week</i>	<i>Total</i>
<i>1-5</i>	-	21	30	-	51
<i>6-10</i>	-	54	-	-	54
<i>11-15</i>	-	68	-	-	68
<i>16-20</i>	47	36	-	-	83
<i>20 or more</i>	92	-	-	-	92
<i>Total</i>	139	179	30	-	348

Table 5 shows the distribution of the participation in TTPs in regard to working experience. These findings were not affected by any factor due to the fact that most of the teacher training activities were not obligatory for the total number of population represented in the sample. With respect to different universities and diverse programs, it was found that there was no significant difference in the number of training courses available to the instructors. However, it was found that most of these programs were directed to the instructors who had less than 6 years of experience. Hence, instructors who were very experienced received the least training.

When all these findings are taken into consideration, it can be claimed that the training provision provided was not satisfactory enough for most of the instructors. This was also stated by most of the interviewees. Interviewee instructor (T.5) criticized the frequency of teacher training activities and expressed his dissatisfaction with the training offered. He says: "Not much is done for our self-development. They are not doing anything exactly. The teacher trainers mostly carry out the training activities for trainers, who were recruited at the beginning of the semester, for about two weeks. However, not much is done for the others. I mean, the amount of training activities is not enough for our professional and self-development". As, T.5. stated, in some cases, teacher trainers provided extra training opportunities for their newly recruited instructors. As instructor T.5., interviewee trainer (T.4), said: "As trainers, we prepare teacher training activities for newly recruited instructors and we focus on one cycle in each session, since we believe that

they need more professional development than the others.". Interviewee instructor (T.7) brought about the issue of attendance and claimed: "Teacher training programs are sufficient to some extent, especially for inexperienced teachers. More experienced instructors do not care to attend teacher training activities. If the instructor is for improving and self-developing, he/she should do something else or participate in the seminars designed for inexperienced instructors. In my opinion, good results will be found, then". Moreover, interviewee instructor (T.8) and (T.6) also stated that TTPs were not sufficient enough for their self-development due to the fact that they were not doing anything for them. Instructor (T.8) said: "Teacher training activities are not effective and sufficient enough for our self-development. They are mostly conducted twice a year and most of the time we prefer not participating in them, since there is nothing new for us".

4.1.1.2. Attitudes of instructors towards TTPs.

Instructors working at preparatory schools of four chosen foundation universities were asked to express their views regarding current TTPs in their institutions. To measure their attitudes Likert Scale was used in the questionnaire. The statements on the questionnaire were interrelated. However, they were grouped into four categories, which were training activities, role of training activities on professional development, needs analysis and self-development by using factor analysis.

4.1.1.2.1. Training activities.

Nine items in the questionnaire were related to training activities conducted at foundation universities in Ankara with the aim of investigating the system of their current Teacher Training Programs. Table 6 presents these current activities.

Table 6.

Training activities

	<i>Strongly Disagree</i>	<i>Disagree</i>	<i>Undecided</i>	<i>Agree</i>	<i>Strongly Agree</i>
<i>Item 1. In my institution, training activities in a year are sufficient in number.</i>					
Frequency	58	108	31	125	26
Percentage	16,5	31	8,9	36,1	7,5
<i>Item 3. In training activities, very brief information is given in a long time.</i>					
Frequency	35	40	88	101	84
Percentage	10,1	11,4	25,3	29,1	24,1
<i>Item 4. Training activities have positive effects on improving teaching skills.</i>					
Frequency	37	137	114	33	27
Percentage	10,8	39,2	32,9	9,5	7,6
<i>Item 8. Training activities are theoretical and depend on lecture format.</i>					
Frequency	15	81	71	121	60
Percentage	4,4	23,4	20,3	34,8	17,1
<i>Item 9. Activities in the sessions are practical enough to be implemented in class.</i>					
Frequency	103	180	32	23	10
Percentage	29,5	51,7	9,1	6,6	2,8
<i>Item 10. Training activities are learner-centred; instructors are given the chance to discuss.</i>					
Frequency	29	53	39	172	55
Percentage	8,2	15,2	11,4	49,4	15,8
<i>Item 11. The content of the training activities is recycled</i>					
Frequency	28	86	40	110	84
Percentage	8,2	24,7	11,4	31,6	24,1
<i>Item 12. Training activities focus on the subjects that instructors regard as important.</i>					
Frequency	32	77	52	144	43
Percentage	9,1	22,2	14,8	41,5	12,4
<i>Item 14. Classroom visits are parts of the training without using the results for final appraisal report.</i>					
Frequency	112	152	57	23	4
Percentage	32,1	43,8	16,5	6,5	1,1

As regards the issue of whether training activities in their institutions were sufficient in number, 166 instructors stated that they were not sufficient while 151 instructors were of the opinion that they were sufficient in number. When the years of experience were taken into consideration, 50% of the experienced instructors, with more than 16 years of experience, agreed with this statement and thought that teacher training activities were sufficient in number. However, 35% of the instructors who had less than 6 years of experience disagreed with this statement. Additionally, interviewee instructor (T.6) disagreed with this statement and said that "Training activities are not sufficient enough for us since they are a few in numbers".

Concerning Item 3, 185 of the instructors thought very little information was given in a long time which was the proof of the unsystematic program. Interviewee instructor (T.6) said: "Teacher training activities are very boring since they are preparing a few sessions for a subject which can be taught in an hour".

As for the issue of whether the training activities had positive effects on improving teaching skills or not, 174 instructors disagreed with it. 32,9 of them were undecided and this number was quite high. Interviewee trainer (T.4) also approved of this finding and stated: "Unfortunately, most of the instructors are complaining about the training activities and they participate in a training activity without any benefit. I think most of them are not satisfied with teacher training activities. We are not also satisfied with them due to heavy workload".

Regarding Item 8, 181 of the instructors considered the mode of delivery of teacher training activities as theoretical and depending on the lecture format. As a result, most of the instructors thought that training activities were theoretical and depended on the lecture format. This finding was backed up by some of the interviewee trainers. T.2. said: "Activities are mostly workshop, swap shops, group discussions, lectures, etc." Interviewee trainer (T.4) put an emphasis on the importance of lectures by saying: "Most of the teacher training activities consist of lectures. Even when the title says that it's a workshop, in the end it turns out to be one of the traditional lectures. Although we prefer workshops to lectures, trainees prefer lectures". On the other hand interviewee trainer (T.3) stated they preferred workshops since they were practical as sessions. Similarly, interviewee trainer (T.1) said: "We have collaborative projects, in-house workshops, Seminars, in-house events, sharing & caring sessions, peer observations, swap-shops".

Item 9 was put into the questionnaire to cross check the previous statement (Item 8). 283 instructors did not think that activities in the sessions were practical enough to be implemented in class. Interviewee instructor (T.5) disagreed with this statement by saying: "... all of the training activities are theoretical. They are not practical at all. They depend on lecture format and we are not given a chance to implement what we learn in our classes. They are really very boring and unnecessary". Similarly, interviewee instructor (T.8) said: "Training activities are not practical enough to be implemented in my classes. I need something new and practical but they are always repeating the same things". On the other hand, interviewee trainer (T.3) claimed the opposite. She said: "Teacher training sessions involve background knowledge and information about the practices. At the end, all of the sessions are practical since we give the instructors some tasks which they work collaboratively together and then they present some of them. So they are very practical". As a result, while the trainers considered the training activities as practical enough to be implemented in class, most of the instructors were not of the same view. They regarded these activities as theoretical.

As a next statement, whether training activities were learner-centred or not was asked. 227 instructors considered them as learner-centred and they thought that they were given a chance to discuss. With regard to the year of experience, 70% of the experienced instructors who had more than 15 years of experience agreed with the statement while 80% of the instructors who had less than 5 years of experience disagreed with it. This might be as a result of the number of activities attended by instructors. Similarly, interviewee

instructor (T.7) said: "...although most of the training activities depend on lecture format, sometimes we are given a chance to discuss and share our opinions". As it was clear, there was a great tendency toward making teacher training activities more learner-centred.

When item 11 was compared to item 2, which presented the opposite view, 194 instructors thought that there was no variety in the content of the teacher training activities received which verified the findings of item 2. Even newly recruited instructors were of the same view as their colleagues.

As for item 12, 187 instructors either agreed or strongly agreed to the statement. With regard to the year of experience, 67% of the experienced instructors who had more than 15 years of experience agreed with the statement while most of the instructors who had less than 5 years of experience disagreed with it. This might be due to the number of teacher training activities attended by instructors. The subjects that instructors regarded as important were the main procedures for determining the needs, interviewee trainer (T.2) explained. When she was asked how they decided on the needs of the instructors, she said: "Depending on a needs analysis survey at the beginning of each academic year, suggestions by teachers during appraisal meetings, and TT observation data concerning the points to reconsider" which showed that the subjects that were important for the instructors were taken into consideration while designing the TTPs.

The last item was item 14. 264 instructors disagreed/strongly disagreed with this statement. According to the findings obtained, it could be inferred that after training activities, there were no classroom visits as a follow up activity.

4.1.1.2.2. *Role of training activities on professional development.*

4 items in the questionnaire were related to the role of the training activities. Table 7 presents some information about the role of TTPs on professional development.

Table 7.

Role of training activities on professional development

	<i>Strongly Disagree</i>	<i>Disagree</i>	<i>Undecided</i>	<i>Agree</i>	<i>Strongly Agree</i>
<i>Item 2. Training activities provide the instructors with up to date input.</i>					
Frequency	66	123	77	60	22
Percentage	19	35,4	22,2	17,1	6,3
<i>Item 5. Attending training activities increases the instructors' knowledge of teaching.</i>					
Frequency	48	147	115	29	9
Percentage	13,9	42,4	32,9	8,3	2,5
<i>Item 6. Attending training activities improves classroom performance.</i>					
Frequency	106	166	33	38	5
Percentage	30,4	48,1	9,5	10,8	1,3
<i>Item 7. Training activities have a positive impact on the instructors' performance.</i>					
Frequency	13	35	48	146	106
Percentage	3,8	10,1	13,9	41,8	30,4

As regards the item 2, 189 instructors thought that teacher training activities did not provide them with up to date input. Although interviewee trainers claimed that they dealt with current issues in ELT, most of the instructors did not agree with them. One of the interviewee instructors (T.8) said: "Although the aim of the teacher training programs is to help professional development of the instructors and provide them with up to date input, nothing new is introduced here since these activities are always the same. As a result, we do not benefit from these activities". As a result, it could be inferred that instructors were not updated through teacher training activities which confirmed the findings of item 11.

According to the findings of item 5, 195 respondents thought that attending teacher training activities did not increase their knowledge of teaching which verified item 4. Similarly, interviewee instructors were of

the same view. On the other hand, interviewee trainers had a different point of view. Interviewee trainer (T.2) claimed: "...with the help of teacher training activities, instructors are encouraged to reflect on their own teaching practices and improve their knowledge of teaching".

As for item 6, 272 instructors were with the opinion that attending teacher training activities did not improve their classroom performances which was with regard the practical input. This confirmed the findings of items 4 and 5. All of the interviewee instructors were of the same view and they did not consider teacher training activities as beneficial.

According to the findings of Item 7, 252 of the instructors were satisfied with the outcomes of teacher training activities and considered the effect of current teacher training programs as positive. On the other hand, interviewee instructors were not of the same view. Interviewee instructor (T.8) said: "There is a general dissatisfaction with teacher training programs".

4.1.1.2.3. Needs analysis.

5 items in the questionnaire were used to find out whether the needs of the instructors were taken into consideration while planning training activities. Table 8 presents the items.

Table 8.

Needs analysis

	<i>Strongly Disagree</i>	<i>Disagree</i>	<i>Undecided</i>	<i>Agree</i>	<i>Strongly Agree</i>
<i>Item 13. Teacher trainers specify the instructors' training needs continuously.</i>					
Frequency	35	67	27	124	95
Percentage	10,1	19,3	7,8	35,6	27,2
<i>Item 15. Training activities meet the needs of the instructors.</i>					
Frequency	83	183	46	29	7
Percentage	23,8	52,7	13,2	8,2	2,1
<i>Item 16. The management identifies what the instructors need for training.</i>					
Frequency	32	246	52	18	0
Percentage	9,1	70,6	14,9	5,1	0
<i>Item 17. The teacher trainers identify what the instructors need for training.</i>					
Frequency	0	32	60	182	74
Percentage	0	9,2	17,2	52,5	21,1
<i>Item 18. The instructors identify what they need for training.</i>					
Frequency	0	25	127	152	44
Percentage	0	7,3	36,5	43,5	12,7

Item 13 was put into the questionnaire to cross check the previous statement. 219 instructors thought that their needs were continuously specified while teacher training activities were being planned which verified the findings of item 12. With regard to the year of experience, 70% of the instructors who agreed with this statement were the ones who had more than 11 years of experience. As interviewee trainers stated, the needs of the trainers were taken into consideration. Interviewee trainer, T.3. stated that needs analysis was an ongoing process and said: "Not only questionnaires, induction week, the evaluation forms that the instructors completed at the end of each sessions to evaluate the sessions, and also the information that we get from the unit members and the coordinators working help me decide on the needs of the instructors".

Concerning the issue of whether or not the training activities met their needs, although all of the interviewee trainers stated that they were giving importance on the needs of the instructors and designing activities accordingly, 266 instructors and all of the interviewee instructors thought these training activities did not meet the needs of them. Interviewee instructor (T.8) said: "Training activities are not practical enough to be implemented in my classes. I need something new and practical but they are always repeating

the same things. Although needs analysis is done through appraisals or questionnaires, they are not taken into consideration by the trainers”.

When items 16, 17 and 18 were taken into consideration, most of the instructors believed that trainers and instructors played a great role in identifying what they needed for training. Similarly, teacher trainer (T.3) clarified the process step by step. Firstly, she consulted the instructors regarding their training needs in the first general meeting and then distributed questionnaires so that they could choose which field they wanted to have training in. After that, most important topics were chosen and training activities were designed accordingly. This statement showed that the needs of the instructors were taken into consideration. However, the trainers were choosing what to teach in TTPs.

4.1.1.2.4. Self-development.

8 items in the questionnaire were related to self-development. They were used to find out whether teacher training activities helped the instructors to develop themselves. Table 9 presents some information about the relationship between teacher training activities and self-development.

Table 9.

Self-development

	<i>Strongly Disagree</i>	<i>Disagree</i>	<i>Undecided</i>	<i>Agree</i>	<i>Strongly Agree</i>
<i>Item 19. Trainers deliver reflection hand-outs on topics covered after each session.</i>					
Frequency	48	179	55	60	6
Percentage	13,7	51,5	15,8	17,3	1,7
<i>Item 20. After attending a training activity, instructors feel the need to learn more.</i>					
Frequency	5	20	169	111	43
Percentage	1,3	5,7	48,8	31,9	12,3
<i>Item 21. Teacher training programs encourage the instructors to write journals.</i>					
Frequency	178	161	5	4	0
Percentage	51,3	46,3	1,3	1,1	0
<i>Item 22. Teacher training programs encourage the instructors to conduct action research.</i>					
Frequency	117	168	3	59	1
Percentage	33,7	48,3	0,8	16,9	0,3
<i>Item 23. Teacher training programs encourage the instructors to assess their performances.</i>					
Frequency	73	178	38	51	8
Percentage	20,9	51,2	10,9	14,7	2,3
<i>Item 24. Teacher training programs encourage the instructors to observe their colleagues.</i>					
Frequency	0	36	5	237	70
Percentage	0	10,3	1,3	68,2	20,2
<i>Item 25. Teacher training programs encourage the instructors to read books, articles, etc. on teaching techniques.</i>					
Frequency	86	102	100	55	5
Percentage	24,7	29,3	28,7	15,8	1,4
<i>Item 26. Teacher training programs encourage the instructors to write research papers.</i>					
Frequency	218	98	30	2	0
Percentage	62,6	28,1	8,6	0,5	0

As for item 19, 227 participants stated that reflection hand outs on topics covered after each session were not delivered. On the other hand, interviews with trainers revealed that some trainers took special care in preparing the training material.

As regards the issue of whether they felt the need to learn more after attending a training activity, 154 participants agreed with the statement. This finding showed that most of the instructors needed to learn more after attending a training activity. Similarly, interviewee instructor (T.5) said: "Not much is done for

our self-development. They (teacher trainers) are not doing anything exactly. I always need something else after training activities. "

Item 21 investigated whether TTPs encouraged the instructors to write journals. 339 participants disagreed with this statement, which showed that TTPs did not encourage the instructors to write journals. Also, all interviewee trainers stated that they had not suggested journal writing before.

According to the results of item 22 , 285 instructors disagreed with it. This finding showed that TTPs did not encourage them to conduct an action research. Moreover, all of the interviewee instructors stated they had not experienced an action research. Interviewee instructor (T.8) said: "Except for peer observation, I have not tried the others (the other self-development activities) since they are time consuming and I do not need them".

Considering item 23, 251 instructors thought that current teacher training programs did not provide them with chances of examining their own performances and teaching. Interviewee instructor (T.8) said: "I do want to be encouraged to assess my own performance by the trainers, but this element is missing in the current TT activities".

As for item 24, 88,4% of the instructors agreed with this statement which showed that TTPs encouraged them to observe their peers. T.5. for example, said: "As a school policy, I have been observing the lessons of my peers twice a year". It was inferred that peer observation was introduced as a school policy. Similarly, all interviewee trainers expressed that peer observation was a school policy. Interviewee trainer (T.1) defined one her job responsibilities as providing training and supervision in peer coaching classroom observations.

Regarding item 25, 188 instructors disagreed and strongly disagreed with the statement. T.5., for example, said: "I read articles, a huge number of articles indeed and write a lot of articles and research papers. I do them since I want. No one told me to do so". The other interviewee instructors were not encouraged to read articles. For instance, interviewee instructor, T.7. said: "I do not like reading academic articles. I used other techniques efficiently so I did not need to use it".

According to the findings of the last item, item 26, 316 (90,7%) instructors strongly disagreed and disagreed with this statement. As a result it could be inferred that TTPs did not encourage the instructors to write research papers.

4.2. Discussion

The first question of this study was designed to find out the system of the current teacher training programs in some of the preparatory schools of four foundation universities in Ankara. The results of the study indicate that TTPs are not systematic. While some institutions carry out teacher training activities once a year, others are conducting them twice or three times a year. This finding indicates that the number of the teacher training activities offered is "inconsistent and insufficient".

Although teacher training programs are referred to as a series of planned events or as extended programs of accredited or non-accredited learning and help teachers keep up with the recent developments in their field and remember their previous knowledge while upgrading it, the findings of this study indicate that TTPs do not provide the instructors with up to date input and there is no variety in the content of the TTPs. As a result, it can be claimed that, instructors do not learn about the current issues and recent trends in TTPs.

Another finding is related to the fact that very brief information is given in a long time which in turn causes boredom. Additionally, most of the instructors think that TTPs do not have positive effects on improving instructors' teaching skills and do not improve their classroom performances although they have a positive impact on their performances. In conclusion, it can be inferred that, TTPs are considered as boring and they do not help instructors to improve their teaching skills and classroom performances.

The fourth finding which is related to the system of current TTPs is that teacher training activities are theoretical and depend on the lecture format. However, for a mastery level proficiency, the instructors are expected to broaden and deepen their understanding and acquire skills based on extensive practical experience through TTPs. As a result, it can be claimed that teacher training activities provided by TTPs are not practical enough to be implemented in class and do not provide an opportunity for instructors to be competent. Although these activities are not practical, they are learner-centred and instructors are given a chance to discuss.

Due to the rapid changes in the world of education, teacher education is getting more and more important at universities in order to be able to meet the needs of the instructors who follow the latest innovations. However, the results of the questionnaire indicate that although teacher training activities partially focus on the subjects that instructors regard as important and their needs are specified by teacher trainers continuously, the teacher training activities do not meet the needs of the instructors. Additionally, findings of the questionnaire show that the needs of the instructors are identified by instructors and teacher trainers.

What is more, according to the findings obtained, after training activities, there are no classroom visits as a follow up activity. Following up the training outcome is missing in TTPs. Not only the follow-up sessions but also reflections of the instructors on topics covered after each session are ignored by the teacher trainers.

The second question of this study was designed to find out the role of current teacher training programs the self-development of instructors.

It is clear that, self-development activities such as journal writing, self-appraisal, action research, academic reading and writing research papers are not encouraged by TTPs. They only encourage the instructors to observe their peers as a school policy. This descriptive study also finds out that TTPs are not sufficient enough to contribute the professional and self-development of the instructors.

To sum up, the system of the current teacher training programs in some of the preparatory schools of foundation universities in Ankara are not systematic and insufficient for professional and self-development. With reference to interviews with instructors and questionnaire, instructors are not satisfied with the available training and hope for a better prospect. Also, TTPs do not encourage the instructors for self-development activities.

5. Conclusion

The current system of TTPs in preparatory schools of four foundation universities in Ankara was analysed and the results show that TTPs do not follow a defined and certain system, which means that each institution has its own system and teacher training program. These programs are also considered as insufficient for the professional and self-development of the instructors due to the insufficient number of activities conducted each term. Additionally, instructors are not provided with up to date information due to the fact that there is no variety in the content of TTPs which causes boredom. Based on the workload, and the training prospects available, instructors feel dissatisfied by what they are given in TTPs since these teacher training programs are not practical enough to be implemented in class and do not provide an opportunity for instructors to be competent. Although the needs of the instructors are continuously specified by the trainers, TTPs do not meet their needs which also cause dissatisfaction. Moreover, following up the training outcome and reflections of the instructors on topics covered after each session are missing in TTPs. Finally, TTPs do not encourage the instructors for self-development activities such as journal writing, self-appraisal, action research, academic reading and writing research papers. They only encourage the instructors to observe their peers as a school policy. To sum up, the systems of the current teacher training programs in some of the preparatory schools of foundation universities in Ankara are not systematic and insufficient for professional and self-development of the instructors.

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