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## **THE VOICES OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHERS REGARDING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT: A THIRD SPACE ACTIVITY FOR IN-SERVICE ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHERS**

*Research Article*

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## Abstract

Since faculties of education mainly serve in the field of pre-service teacher education, their role for in-service teacher education is questioned for a long time. In Turkey, a partnership protocol signed in 1997 between the Ministry of National Education (MoNE) and the Council of Higher Education (CoHE) to enable pre-service teachers to adapt to the school process and to the act of teaching skills under the guidance of a mentor teacher. Yet, in-service teacher education is widely neglected by universities creating a big gap in terms of providing teachers with in-service teacher training activities by the Faculties of Education. Thus, this study set out to understand English language teachers' perceived needs in terms of in-service teacher education and their expectations from faculty academics. For the study, a partnership agreement was signed between the Directorate of National Education (DoNE) and the Education Faculty and a two-day seminar and workshop was conducted organized as a "Third Space Activity". At the end of the event, teachers' perceived needs for in-service teacher education, their views about the Third Space activity, and their expectations and wants from the academics were investigated. The qualitative data were analysed on the basis of Hutchinson and Waters' needs analysis. Based on findings, this study highlights the significance of a close cooperation between the universities and schools. This study also highlights and questions a neglected function of education faculties in terms of providing in-service teachers with the necessary teacher training activities.

*Keywords:* school-university partnership, third space, in-service teacher education, professional development, academics

## 1. Introduction

Because teachers are attributed as one of the most significant stakeholders in the field of education, teacher quality has always been a crucial aspect in the improvement of the education system of a country, which necessitates the need for investment in this particular field, namely the in-service teacher education for their professional lives (Snoek, 2010). With this respect, countries set national teacher education standards in their education policies in line with international policies, and various institutions such as universities and schools collaborate with the aim of increasing teacher quality. Education faculties are the responsible body for initial pre-service teacher education for the purpose of equipping the students with the necessary content and pedagogical knowledge; yet, the commonly known function of education faculties is not only to train teachers with the necessary knowledge and skills for teaching, but also to continue supporting them throughout their professional lives. The provision of in-service teacher education, which is widely underestimated, by education faculties is generally enacted by establishing partnership with the local educational institutions, schools and in-service teachers.

University-School partnership is a collaboration model for the stakeholders involved in teacher education and professional development to increase teacher quality established for serving a number of purposes such as implementation of field experience and practice teaching (Kasapoglu, 2015), consolidation of the teacher education practices as well as induction of pre-service teachers into the educational system (Atmaca, 2017), coordination and closer communication among stakeholders (Grossman & Sands, 2008), transformation of these stakeholders and institutions (E. J. Klein et al., 2013) and turning academic theory into practice for pre-service teachers (Lewis, 2012) or closing the gap between theory and practice. However, it is true that what is generally addressed in the partnership between universities-faculties and schools is the pre-service teacher education and one of the major functions of such partnerships is to introduce the pre-service teachers with the real challenges of teaching in natural classroom setting (Gökmenoglu, 2013). It is worth stressing that the field of education is constantly evolving as with the education technologies and learner profiles. Thus, as a neglected role of education faculties, these institutions may serve to provide teacher training opportunities for in-service teachers to introduce them with the developments and changes in their fields.

One of the recent concepts within the context of university and school partnership is the Third Space Activity (TSA) known also as hybridity theory (Bhabha, 1994), which generally refers to “a neutral Third Space” other than the schools and universities (namely, faculty) in order to deliver teacher education with mutual understanding, vision and equal knowledge sharing (Jackson & Burch, 2019). In fact, the third spaces are the hybrid places where roles and knowledge domains of teaching on the part of the stakeholders involved in teacher education such as faculties, teachers, if exists members of the community are reconstructed to enable transformation in teacher education through reflective collaboration (Flessner, 2014; E. J. Klein et al., 2013). The reason for employing third space in teacher education stems from the idea of diminishing the top-down processes resulting in othering and placing distances among the stakeholders; thus, the Third Space allows depolarization in teacher education (Beck, 2018). Although the Third Space is intended for less hierarchical pre-service teacher education (Zeichner, 2010), within the context of current study, it is employed for in-service English language teacher training.

In Turkey, Ministry of National Education (MoNE) and Universities first initiated a partnership in 1997 under “Faculty-School Partnership Model” to engage pre-service teachers with teaching activities in schools under the mentorship of practicing teachers (Grossman & Sands, 2008; Kasapoglu, 2015). The main objective of this partnership was, in fact, to train prospective teachers in their final years of university education with the support of mentor teachers in their practicum school and the supervisors as faculty members. However, another mission of the faculty-school partnership was to create a link between practicing teachers and education faculties to support teachers throughout their professional lives when needed. Generally, this aspect of the partnership was neglected since the primary purpose appeared to be on mentoring the pre-service teachers within this partnership.

In terms of in-service teacher education, it is known that Ministry of National Education (MoNE) is primarily responsible body for offering training to in-service teachers (Koç, 2016; Ozer, 2004; Yilmaz & Esen, 2015). By this body, regular but limited seminars are offered to the practicing teachers for two weeks at the beginning and at the end of the teaching years. However, for the ongoing professional developments of teachers, a faculty-school cooperation and partnership is also needed (Jackson & Burch, 2019). Regarding the professional developments of teachers in Turkey, one of the highly criticized attributes is that after they start to serve as a teacher within the employment of MoNE schools, they can continue teaching without further need to have professional development which indicates that given the limited

seminar or in-service training services offered by MoNE, most of the practicing teachers do not get professional support from the faculties after graduation (Akbulut Tas & Karabay, 2016; Grossman & Sands, 2008).

When the related literature is reviewed, it is seen that studies mainly focus on pre-service teacher training, issues in teaching practicum, and the professional needs of the in-service teachers (Akbulut Tas & Karabay, 2016; Çakır et al., 2010; Eraslan, 2008; Gokmenoglu et al., 2016; Kasapoglu, 2015). These studies reveal that the faculty-school partnership has a number of drawbacks in terms of pre-service teacher education and teaching practicum as intended to equip teacher candidates to turn theory into practice through real-classroom experience before transition to in-service teaching. As stated by Kasapoglu (2015), when studies investigating the faculty-school partnership are reviewed, it is seen that pre-service teacher education does not yield the intended results due to involuntary academic staff at education faculties, mentor teachers in practicum schools, school and faculty administrators, teacher candidates and the content of the teaching practicum and school experience courses. Regarding content of the courses offered within this partnership, Akbulut Tas and Karabay (2016) state that these courses did not, in fact, offer the necessary content for the development of pre-service teaching skills, and did not include content and pedagogical knowledge as required. Also, Çakır et al., (2010) in their study found that both teacher candidates and school-faculty stakeholders need to be better acknowledged about the implementation of this partnership.

Due to insufficient legal regulations regarding professional teacher development trainings for in-service teachers in Turkey, teachers cannot participate in teacher training programs such as seminars, conferences and congresses. As stated by Gokmenoglu et al. (2016), most teachers in Turkey do not have a strong desire for any professional development programs which may indicate that they do not willingly play the actual role in transforming and achieving any education reform in Turkey. As discussed by Gokmenoglu et al. (2016), they do not want to participate in such training programs. In fact, during the teachers' duration of active teaching in state schools, they are not legally requested any kind of imposition in terms of participation to teacher development programs except for a total of 2-week seminar programs at the opening and closure of the education year. Regarding these in-service training seminars provided by MoNE, studies show that there are a number of limitations in achieving the intended results due to top-down processes implemented rather than taking teachers' need into account (Sıcak & Parmaksız, 2016).

In terms of support for in-service teachers during their professional lives, Gökmenoglu (2013) reports that faculties should have closer connections with the schools to bridge to educate teachers better for the specified outcomes of teacher education programs. It is often the case that faculties of education are meager in having strong coordination with schools which results in imbalance between theory and practice for the teachers. Thus, it is assumed that education faculties should create close relationships with the school administrators and teachers since in-service teachers need the support of faculty members for their on-going professional development. Considering the availability of most universities with education faculties in Turkey, through a collaboration and partnership agreement between faculty and school administrators to organize training programs for in-service teachers, an increase in the quality of teacher education can be consolidated both for pre-service and in-service teachers.

Although this is a small scale study in terms of its limited number of participants and data collection, it intends to fulfil two major gaps in literature regarding in-service teacher training as the unique feature offered. Initially, in spite of the significance of supporting the in-service teachers by education faculties after their graduation, there are scant studies in literature, focusing on continuous support for in-service teachers by the faculties. The second gap is

related to the use of Third Space Activity based on hybridity model proposed by Bhabha (1994). In literature, no studies were found regarding Third Space activity in Turkey. Within the context of this study, the Third Space was utilized for in-service teacher training activity even though it is mainly used for pre-service teacher education. For these aims, the study combined university-school partnership and Third Space activity for in-service teacher training purpose rather than pre-service teacher education as both were neglected aspects in Turkey. Aiming to fulfil these needs in literature, this study seeks to investigate the effects of a joint workshop and a two-day-seminar offered to in-service English language teachers by the academics in the department of English Language Teaching (ELT), Faculty of Education at a state university. For this aim, the following research questions are sought throughout the study;

1-What are the perceived needs of in-service English language teachers in terms of professional development?

2- What are the opinions of in-service English language teachers regarding the joint workshop between teachers and faculty members as a Third Space activity?

3-What are the future expectations of in-service English language teachers from academics in terms of their professional development?

## **2. Methodology**

The study was based on qualitative research design since the primary aims was to reveal practicing teachers' opinions regarding a Third Space teacher education activity which was organized as a joint workshop under an agreement between Faculty of Education and Directorate of National Education (DoNE) as explained below. Qualitative research aims at having an in-depth understanding about a concept, an organization or a phenomenon making use of interviews, observations, opinion forms, etc. (Cohen, L., Manion, L., Morrison, 2000). Thus, in this qualitative study, data were gathered using an opinion form constructed to elaborate on teachers' opinions regarding their needs, opinions and expectations in relation to professional development.

### **2.1. Setting and Participants**

With the purpose of collaboration and in-service teacher education for this study, following the approval of university rector, the dean of Education Faculty and the director of local DoNE (Directorate of National Education) had a partnership agreement in 2017 in Alanya, Turkey in order to activate and develop partnership in the areas of learning and teaching, conducting researches and projects including organizing joint workshops and seminars for practising teachers and students covering all the schools in the city. Under this agreement, the academic members of the ELT Department organized a joint workshop and a two-day seminar under the title of "Contemporary Approaches in English Language Teaching" with the participation of practicing teachers working in state high schools in Alanya, Turkey. These titles were chosen based on the recommendations given by local DoNE administrative as received from the teachers as their perceived needs. After long and strenuous procedures and correspondence with both institutions (Education Faculty and local DoNE), a total of 75 English language teachers, with the legal approval of the MoNE, participated in this organization and three academics from ELT Department gave lectures and implemented activities with the teachers regarding "Lifelong Learning", "the Use of Technology in Language Teaching" and "English Language Teaching Programs in Turkey" in different sessions. Also, to design this activity as a Third Space activity, in-service English language teachers and the academics gathered in a hotel and the activity was completed there. Both participant teachers and the academics had the opportunity to share their experiences after having lunch together.

Although this joint organization was intended for state high school English language teachers, there were also teachers from private high schools. However, these participants were excluded from the data set of this study since the scope of the agreement was focused on state high school teachers. Among the participants, more than half of the participants (65%, n=49) were female and 35% of them were male (n=26). In this regard, all of the participants in this study were the in-service English language teachers working at high schools. When school type distribution is analysed, 23 of the teachers (%30) were from various Anatolian high schools. More than half of them (%61, n=46) worked at vocational high schools. The rest (9%) were from various other school types such as Science High School and Sports High School.

## 2.2. Data Collection and Data Analysis

In the final day of the workshop, an opinion form containing six open-ended questions was distributed to the teachers to collect data about their opinions regarding their perceived needs for teacher development, the nature of workshop as a Third Space activity, the need for such activities for their professional lives, and the effect of university-school partnership.

The data gathered in the study was analysed based on Hutchinson and Waters' (1987) target needs analysis. Hutchinson and Waters assert that the needs in academic purposes, namely academic purposes in the context of this study, and general purposes differ in terms of the awareness of the needs rather than their existence since this awareness will have a direct effect on the exploitation of the possible potentials; thus, the needs analysis should try to exploit the awareness dimension of the stakeholders. Hutchinson and Waters' needs analysis is based on three major dimensions as "necessities", "lacks" and finally "wants". Since the themes of the seminar and workshop utilized within the context of this research were previously determined by the DoNE based on teachers' demands, the awareness of needs as maintained by Hutchinson and Waters was readily available. Thus, research questions were designed based on the teachers' perceived "necessities", "lacks" and "wants". The qualitative data were analysed by the two researchers using inductive thematic analysis, which involves generating themes and categories from the raw data as a data coding process without a specific presupposed categorisation or framework (Nowell et al., 2017). Thus, within inductive analysis, initially the participants were coded (as P1, P2, etc.) and next, the data were analysed to generate common themes and categories followed by tabulation of these themes and categories with their frequencies and percentages.

## 3. Findings

Since the practicing English language teachers' needs for professional development from the faculty members were the major focus of this study, related research questions were analysed and findings are presented under three sections separately.

*Findings related to the reported needs of in-service English language teachers in terms of professional development*

Following the joint organization between faculty and school partnership, English language teachers in the opinion form were first asked their opinions in terms of professional needs. The analysis of their answers revealed three major aspects labelled as "*limited MoNE in-service training*", "*loss of pedagogical knowledge*" and "*adaptation to new developments in field*".

In terms of "*limited MoNE in-service training*", nearly all teachers stated that the in-service trainings were insufficient for English language teachers and did not meet their expectations or did not promote effective teaching (please see Table 1). Regarding this, to illustrate, T17 stated "*we do not a true in-service training, just receive 10-day training at the beginning and at the end of the teaching year, and that's all. In these days, we just listen to same routines for years.*" As stated by the teachers, there were quite limited in-service trainings provided to them by

MoNE. They reported that only two-week seminars offered at the beginning and end of the education years were far from satisfying their perceived needs. Also, they complained about the content of these two-week seminars stating that they did not even know what the topics of the seminars were about. Regarding this, T49 wrote that *“In the days of in-service training, we are not asked what we needed. They just organize everything and explain the content to everyone.”*

Table 1. *Teachers’ Perceived Professional Needs*

	<i>f</i>	<i>%</i>
<i>Limited MoNE in-service training</i>	68	91
Scant in-service training opportunity	51	68
Insufficient content	30	40
<b>Teachers’ Perceived Needs</b>		
Field Independence	24	32
<i>Loss of pedagogical knowledge</i>	46	61
Lack of institutional sources for renewal	40	53
Difficulty in implementing the new programs	35	46
<i>Adaptation to new developments in field</i>	27	36

Finally, one of the most important limitations of the in-service trainings was reported to be field independence. Regarding this, teachers stated that in order for the seminars or in-service trainings organized by MoNE to be effective, teachers needed to be given such trainings based on their fields such as English, History, Maths etc. In this respect, two of the teachers (T37 and T56) reported that *“We are given nothing about English language teaching in trainings.”*

Based on the *“loss of pedagogical knowledge”*, the participants reported that they cut contact with the university long ago after graduation. They stated that they need to keep their knowledge up to date with the help of experts to increase their quality of teaching. In this respect, T10 explained *“I graduated from university 16 years ago and I really forgot many of the things I learned at university... In my school, there are teachers who are about to retire within a few years; there are several teachers in my case who cannot remember the pedagogical knowledge.”* At the same time, findings based on teachers’ answers to research questions often indicated the lack of opportunities to *“renew their pedagogical knowledge”* under their existing conditions. Thus, one of the most reported needs of the practicing teachers was about renewing their pedagogical content knowledge they gained while studying at university. With respect to this aspect, teachers stressed that the seminar they held which is the focus of this study was the first comprehensive one the teachers took place in as an activity to renew some aspects regarding teaching and learning. In terms of this, T10, T56, T67 and several others in general highlighted the need for renewing the knowledge by writing, *“For most of the times, it is the teachers who are blamed for students’ lack of communication in English; we are not given any opportunity to renew our knowledge. They should invest on this first. (T56)”* Another aspect regarding decrease in content pedagogical knowledge was that teachers could not implement the new or the changing teaching programs in desired way due to lack of knowledge for being away from professional development which could not be

satisfactorily met in in-service trainings offered by MoNE. Thus, they believe that faculties where available may help teachers to sustain and improve their existing knowledge to close the gap which could not be eliminated by limitedly offered in-service trainings of MoNE. In relation to this aspect, T13 reported *“They changed the education system in 2013 and I have not received any training about the changes for English courses. We, as teachers, had to ask each other what changes were brought about. Thanks to this seminar, I could now understand the philosophy behind it.”*

Regarding the English language teachers’ perceived needs in terms of professional development, findings show that due to lack of knowledge renewal opportunities, teachers find it difficult to gain and adapt to new developments and changes in the field of language teaching. Based on their answers, it seems obvious that teachers have difficulty in gaining the transformative knowledge to keep them up to date due to the reported reasons. One of the areas they find themselves ineffective is *the new course materials* brought about with improvements with technology. Shedding light on this issue, T72 and T10 stated *“Education materials are changing each year and to keep informed about them we need to gain knowledge about these new materials. For example, most teachers need help from the students to use smart boards especially those above 50 (T10)”*. Since most classes are equipped with smart boards, online networks and computers, they claim that these technologies were not adequately introduced for educational uses. Also, they explained that the *new methods in language teaching*, which they either forgot by the time or were not given to them as course content, were demanding for the teachers since the new programs required the use of various methods and techniques combined with technological innovations brought into classes. To illustrate, T70 reported that *“I worked at secondary school 2 years ago and now, I am working in high school. Applying the right method with the right age group and school type is quite difficult. I try to watch videos about teaching methods on the net because no one in MoNE dealt with this.”*

When the findings for the perceived needs of in-service English language teachers in terms of professional development are reviewed, it is seen that teachers divulge some significant demands which they regard as their needs. Findings indicate that teachers are in need of being pedagogically supported during their professional lives since they report that they feel like diverging from what they learned at university. Following graduation, most of them did not take any comprehensive in-service training except for the ones offered by MoNE. Also, due to knowledge divergence, they state facing difficulties in implementing new education programs effectively. At the same time, they claim to have problems in adapting themselves to changing conditions and renovations in the field of language teaching. Thus, education faculties are regarded by these teachers as creditable in places where available to provide teachers in-service trainings to revive teachers’ content pedagogical knowledge to increase teacher quality. Also, they reported that they expect academics of the department to organize seminars or trainings based on their needs such as the introduction of new programs, use of materials effectively.

*Findings related to opinions of in-service English language teachers regarding the Third Space joint workshop and seminar between teachers and academics of ELT department.*

The participant teachers’ opinions regarding the joint workshop and seminar in the context of the partnership agreement between the Education Faculty and DoNE highlighted a number of issues as shown in Table 2.

Table 2. *Teachers' opinions about the joint Third Space partnership activity*

	f	%	
Opinions for Joint Third Space Partnership Activity	<i>Motivation</i>	70	93
	Satisfaction	68	91
	<i>Feeling of Valued</i>	46	61
	Sense of Belonging	35	46
	<i>Willingness for development</i>	23	30
	<i>Opportunity for sharing problems</i>	17	22

Teacher statements in relation to their opinions for the Third Space activity based on partnership conducted as workshop and seminar showed that being one of the first comprehensive workshops they have ever attended since their graduation from their departments, this organization motivated teachers. Teachers stated that this activity had a motivating effect for them creating desire to learn more about their field and to follow other available academic organizations. One of the teachers stated that s/he wanted to continue his/her uncompleted MA education (T13) by writing “*Now, I feel like that I have to continue my Masters Education which I gave up three years ago*”. Also, a number of teachers reported that they felt satisfied about the content of the workshop and the seminar. In a similar vein, findings showed that the participants found this activity as triggering and relevant to their needs. For example, T52 stated “*I feel very happy to participate in this event because, this is the first time I have enjoyed such a training because the content is just for English language teachers and it addresses all my needs for teaching.*” Thus, it can be stated that the joint workshop and seminar offered to the teachers appealed and motivated the practicing teachers to renew their existing knowledge. One another aspect highlighted regarding this Third Space activity was that they felt they were valued by being invited to the workshop. Teachers explained that this was the first activity they participated and since the focus was only on English language teachers, they had the feeling of valued and honoured. Based on their statements, findings show that teachers complained about lack of such activities and this organization contributed them affectively. T38 wrote “*Thanks for this informing event. I am quite happy to be here because this is the first time I have been invited to a training activity like this and this is what we actually expect in our institution. Schools and MoNE should also make teachers feel that they are valuable.*”

Regarding the teachers' opinions, this Third Space activity is reported to trigger their desire to pursuit professional development opportunities including masters and doctoral degrees apart from seeking to involve in conferences and seminars available. Yet, they complained that due to time and budget related restrictions, they were not supported by MoNE to participate in such activities for professional development. In this respect, T4 reported “*I personally decided that I want to have Master's degree in my field. Before this workshop, I applied for a conference as a listener, but the school did not support me economically. Thus, if you are a teacher, it is nearly impossible to attend such conferences*”. Additionally, teachers stated that they sought to apply what they gained practically from content of the workshop and seminar indicating a possible change in their teaching out of their accustomed styles of teaching for trying innovative initiations. Regarding this, T31 wrote “*I especially benefitted from the sessions of “the Use of Technology in Language Teaching” and “English Language Teaching Programs in Turkey” and I want to apply the things I learned here in my classes.*” They reported that they gained a number of critical implementation issues to apply in class in terms of technology use and suggested methods as required in the new 4+4+4 education program. Thus, findings

show that the teachers were of the opinion that the joint workshop and seminar contributed to their pursuit of professional development opportunities for self-improvement in teaching.

As the last finding based on teachers' opinions in relation to the workshop and seminar they attended within the context of this study, they emphasized the worth of this activity from the perspective of teacher coordination and meeting opportunity for those working across different schools. T68 explained "*I had the chance of meeting other English language teachers working in other schools thanks to this activity.*" Regarding this as a chance for networking, a number of teachers (T4, T17, T48, T68 for example) stated that the joint workshop was as an opportunity for information exchange for the problems, their solutions and for sharing their way of conducting classroom activities and implementations of various teaching strategies. Some stated that they had the chance of meeting their friends whom they could not see for a long time as well as gaining new friends as colleagues working at other schools.

In general, findings regarding research question 2 revealed that the workshop and seminar offered by ELT Department, Faculty of Education for English language teachers working in schools of MoNE under the partnership of these two institutions was the first comprehensive one which most teachers participated in for the first time since they actively started to work at MoNE schools. Arousing the feeling of motivation and satisfaction on the part of the participant teachers, the activity was reported to meet their expectations making them feel valued. Findings also showed that participating into the joint activity provoked teachers' desire to pursue professional development opportunities in order to renew their knowledge of teaching. Finally, teachers had the opinion that they could come together with their friends working in other schools in addition to making new friends which enabled them to share their experiences and problems for possible solutions.

*Findings related to future expectations of in-service English language teachers from faculty members in terms of their professional development.*

Following the joint workshop and seminar held by academics of ELT department for in-service teachers of English, teachers were asked for their future expectations from the faculty members, namely the academics working at ELT, in terms of their professional developments and findings for this research question were shown in Table 3 below.

Under the theme of "*expectations from academics*" or teachers' wants based on Hutchinson and Waters' needs analysis classification, three major categories were identified regarding teachers' expectations from the faculty members. The initial category "*continuous meetings & activities*" revealed that teachers complained about the lack of such activities for professional development stating that each teacher can only join two trainings a year offered by MoNE; however, they also added that the ones offered by other institutions like universities are only held for once. Thus, they demanded such meetings and activities on a continuous basis.

Table 3. *Teachers' Expectations from the Academics*

	<i>f</i>	<i>%</i>
<i>Continious meetings &amp; activities</i>	72	96
Teacher training	68	91
Teacher Appraisal	2	3
<b>Expectations from academics (WANTs)</b>		
<i>Activities based on school types</i>	12	16
Primary and secondary school	4	5
<i>Various collaboration types</i>	70	93
Projects	68	91
Student visits	2	3

Regarding this, they also have a number of expectations from the academics of ELT Department requesting regular special focus teacher training sessions. Teachers demand academics to analyse their professional needs and organize meetings and teacher training sessions focusing on those needs identified. For example, T6 stated *"I hope this activity will be repeated in regular intervals because we do not often receive this kind of activities."* Another category found with respect to teacher expectations was "teacher evaluation". A number of teachers stated they needed to be evaluated by an outsider expert in the field. In relation to this, for example, one of the teachers (T67) wrote *"I do not exactly know how I am performing in the class, if academics join us in the class, they can give us feedback in terms of applying the methods and techniques appropriately, managing the classroom activities effectively..."*

One another wants of the English teachers from the academics was that they wanted academics to organize meetings and seminars for other school types, too. Since this seminar was only offered to high school English language teachers, primary and secondary school teachers of English could not attend; thus, teachers requested a similar activity for their colleagues working in primary schools and secondary schools. In relation to this, one of the teachers (T19) stated *"I think, this activity should be organized for primary school teachers, too. In fact, not only primary school but also secondary school teachers should join"*. Similarly, one another teacher (T47) requested academics to even organize such activities for teacher working in same type high schools by asking *"Here, teachers working at vocational high schools, like me, and science high school come together. Our students and needs are totally different from each other. So, if possible, I think this should be arranged for similar school types"*.

As the final finding regarding the teachers' expectations from the academics, apart from seminars and workshops, teachers requested variety of activity types. Almost all teachers stated that they were willing to take part in similar activities in the future, too. Yet, they also demanded project cooperation in addition to regular and needs based teacher trainings. For this, a teacher (T74) stated *"I am sure that we can go beyond this activity. There are several issues on which we can cooperate to prepare abroad projects."* As another demand, two teachers (T34 and T50) offered academics to make pre-service teachers of English to visit their classes and observe them so that the students could bridge the gap between theory and practice

before they were assigned to schools. One other participant also advised the faculty members to visit them accompanied by department students to increase this meeting initiative.

Findings for the last research question posed in this study revealed a number of English language teacher expectations from the academics working in ELT department. Teachers had the opinion that teacher training seminars or workshops were not regularly organized; thus, they demanded such activities or academic member-teacher meetings to be regular and needs based. Additionally, rather than focusing on teachers from various high school types, heterogeneous groups of teachers such as primary or secondary schools were also demanded by the teachers. Finally, teachers who participated in the workshop and seminar asked for extra collaborative academic activities such as projects as well as school visits.

#### **4. Discussion and Conclusions**

Due to quite scant research in the literature in relation to English language teachers' opinions regarding in-service training activities offered by the academic members of education faculties for teachers working in schools affiliated to National Education, this study set out to explore the opinions of English language teachers working in various state high school regarding a Third Space workshop and seminar organized under a partnership agreement between an education faculty and Directorate of National Education.

When the findings of the study are analysed, it is seen that teachers have limited in-service teacher training opportunities and reportedly in need of such trainings in addition to the ones provided by the Ministry. In fact, findings also show that teachers are dissatisfied with the content of the in-service trainings offered by MoNE. In Turkey, several studies indicate that in-service teacher trainings need to be re-organized based on the needs of the practicing teachers to increase the teacher quality (Büyükduman, 2005; Coşkun, Küçüktepe, & Baykın, 2014; Gokmenoglu et al., 2016; Özüdoğru & Adıgüzel, 2015; Topkaya & Küçük, 2010, Yüce, 2019). When these studies are analysed, it is apparent that in-service teacher trainings have recurrently been low in quality although Turkish education system has witnessed three major education reforms since 1997. Thus, it can be stated here that in-service teacher trainings offered by MoNE do not address the needs of the teachers and do not yield the intended outcomes in order to increase the teacher quality, particularly of English language teachers. Findings based on English language teachers' reports in this study also show that the problem of insufficient in-service teacher training opportunities still continues and needs a comprehensive restructuring process.

Another significant aspect found in this study is that language teachers experience becoming less knowledgeable in their field due to lack of knowledge renewal opportunities which is also linked to insufficient in-service training. It is a known fact that teachers need to keep their content and pedagogical knowledge updated and adapt to changes in education. Additionally, one of the most important aspects for achieving the learning outcomes on the part of the students is the teachers' knowledge of content and pedagogy which mandates teacher education institutions and teachers to increase knowledge renewal and improvement (Wilson & Berne, 1999) for quality learning and teaching. As also stated by Holmqvist(2019), enhancing teacher knowledge for increasing the teacher quality as well as encouraging them to pursuit their own professional development opportunities is one of the core needs of countries. Yet, in many cases it is clear that teachers' development is left to teachers themselves (Holmqvist, 2019) and Turkey is not an exception since teachers complain about limited renewal opportunities as one of the significant findings of this research.

Another significant aspect revealed in this study is that teachers stated drawbacks regarding the introduction of language teaching program changes. It seems clear that although teachers

experience education program changes in terms of language teaching, they are not sufficiently informed about the nature of such program changes. In fact, in spite of the education reforms conducted in Turkey which also affected language teaching programs by changing the program components, these changes lack in supporting teachers professionally due to lack of insufficient in-service trainings (Alkan & Arslan, 2014; Özüdoğru & Adıgüzel, 2015; Topkaya & Küçük, 2010). Due to teachers' becoming distant to knowledge renewal opportunities, it seems clear that they have difficulties implementing the program effectively. As discussed by Gokmenoglu et al.(2016), for any education reform or change in the education system together with teaching programs to succeed, teachers' knowledge and needs should be maximized. Yet, when education program changes are considered in the context of Turkey, studies repeatedly showed that education reforms and changes had failures in almost all fields and one of the reasons why these changes did not yield the intended results was linked to teachers need for in-service training to introduce the program components (Erarslan, 2018; Eraslan, 2008; Gokmenoglu et al., 2016) supporting the findings of this study.

Joining to the Third Space joint workshop and seminar by an official invitation, teachers declared they felt satisfied and valued indicating feeling of undervalued in their institutions for teacher development. It is undeniable that teachers' feeling of well-being is of great significance for the professional performance at the workplace namely schools. Regarding this, Daniels and Strauss (2010) argue that various factors contribute to teachers' emotional vulnerability and their teaching quality, how they act upon their students and environment is affected in a negative way due to their feelings of well-being and mental state which are also linked to teacher burnout. Thus, it can be concluded that teachers' feelings of valued and motivated through such academic meetings as workshops, conferences or seminar may be a positive contributor to knowledge renewal, teacher quality and their self-worth. It is true that (Klein, 2005) such meetings are significant contributors for the teachers to exchange new ideas, to increase their demands for deeper cooperation and for the evaluation of their own actions in teaching process.

The teachers' opinions regarding the joint workshop and seminar revealed that they need such activities on a regular basis indicating a desire to keep abreast for continuous improvement as well as dissatisfaction from the in-service trainings of MoNE. At this point, the universities and particular academic members of the Education Faculties, department of ELT in the context of this study, are expected by English language teachers to organize training activities and regular meetings to fill their professional development needs. Regarding this, Klein (2005) asserted that academic meetings enrich teachers' educational efficiency in their teaching since such organizations are among the scarce platforms for their ideas to be shared and taken seriously into consideration. Thus, this study highlights the significance of a close partnership between the universities and educational institutions since they serve the basis for improving the quality of education particularly by creating teacher-oriented activities.

## **5. Conflict of Interests**

The author declares that there is no conflict of interest.

## **6. Ethics Committee Approval**

The author confirms that the study does not need ethics committee approval according to the research integrity rules in their country.

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