

## In-Service Training Needs of Efl Teachers in Non-Formal Education Settings\*

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### Abstract

The education system in Turkey consists of the implementations in both formal and non-formal education settings; however, the majority of studies related to educational practices and teacher education focus on formal education settings. For this reason, this study aims to investigate the professional training needs of English as a foreign language (EFL) teachers in non-formal education settings. With this in mind, a non-formal education (NFE) institution in İstanbul was chosen since it had a high course attendee capacity and 105 EFL teachers who taught at this institution attended in the study. A needs analysis questionnaire and a semi-structured interview were used to collect the data about the training needs of the participants. The findings revealed that the needs centered around skills, vocabulary instruction, teaching pronunciation, material development, use of instructional technology in ELT, teaching mixed-ability classes, and classroom management. Findings also revealed that the teachers had a desire to improve their speaking skills through the in-service teacher training (INSET) programs.

**Keywords:** English as a foreign language (EFL), in-service teacher training, needs analysis, non-formal education.

## Yaygın Eğitim Kurumunda Çalışan İngilizce Öğretmenlerinin Mesleki Eğitim İhtiyaçları

### Öz

Türkiye'deki eğitim sistemi hem örgün hem de yaygın eğitim alanındaki uygulamaları kapsamaktadır. Fakat, eğitim uygulamaları ve öğretmen eğitimi alanıyla ilgili yapılan çalışmaların büyük kısmı ise örgün eğitim alanı ile ilgilidir. Bu yüzden, bu çalışma, yaygın eğitim kurumunda çalışan İngilizce öğretmenlerinin mesleki eğitim ihtiyaçlarını tespit etmeyi amaçlamaktadır. Çalışma için, bünyesinde oldukça fazla kursiyeri bulunan ve

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İstanbul'da yer alan bir yaygın eğitim kurumu seçilmiş ve bu kurumdaki 105 İngilizce öğretmeni çalışmaya katılmıştır. Öğretmenlerin mesleki eğitim ihtiyaçlarını öğrenebilmek amacıyla, ihtiyaç analizi anketi ve yarı-yapilandırılmış görüşmeler kullanılmıştır. Araştırmanın bulgularına göre, öğretmenlerin mesleki eğitim ihtiyaçları, beceri, kelime öğretimi, telaffuz öğretimi, materyal geliştirme, dil sınıflarında öğretim teknolojilerinin kullanımı, farklı yetenekteki öğrencilere İngilizce öğretimi ve sınıf yönetimi alanlarındadır. Bunların yanı sıra, öğretmenler düzenlenen hizmet-içi eğitim programları aracılığıyla, kendilerinin de İngilizce konuşma becerilerini de geliştirmek istemektedirler.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** Yabancı dil olarak İngilizce, yaygın eğitim, hizmet-içi eğitim, ihtiyaç analizi.

## INTRODUCTION

Teacher learning is not solely limited to the pre-service teacher training (PSTT) during which teacher candidates receive professional knowledge and skills; additionally, gaining a certificate after finishing PSTT does not mean that professional development has ended for newly qualified teachers. Rather, they may be a fish out of water since they need support and guidance in order to cope with the challenges posed by student profiles, teaching settings, materials or other conditions including parents, communication with colleagues, etc. Even though a teacher has several years of teaching experience, he needs professional assistance in that the century which we live in is called the 'Knowledge Age' and it stands on a great volume of information through digital platforms, bringing out a large impact on education since the advancements are likely to affect educational philosophies, approaches and assumptions easily. In view of this, teachers are required to seek new ways of meeting learners' educational needs by taking up the role of facilitator and counsellor. That is to say, the roles rendered for teachers have changed and, subsequently, this shift brings a different set of knowledge and skills to be equipped by the in-service teachers.

Given the global position of English as an international language or lingua franca, non-English speaking nations increasingly prefer English as an additional or foreign language in the first place (Shohamy, 2006). Likewise, in Turkey, English has popularity and it is the only compulsory foreign language course (Kurkgöz, 2007), which indicates there is a need for effective teacher training for language teachers.

In-service teacher training (INSET) programs are designed for the benefit of teachers in order to help them to keep abreast of the shifting pedagogical perspectives, educational technologies, in-class dynamics, etc. More importantly, teaching profession does not have an end in itself, ushering teachers on a continuous professional development (CPD) due to emerging pedagogical paradigms and teachers are to be furnished by the brand-new skills and concepts in order to address learners' needs and breed success. For this reason, it will be of crucial importance to develop a well-established INSET program in order to yield effective outcomes for teacher trainees. In designing an INSET program, the first step is to obtain the professional needs of the teachers; thus, the trainees could be offered with the basic knowledge and skills (Mede & Işık, 2016). Receiving the training needs from the teachers may be tantamount to the program design since it provides a full understanding into the expectations of the trainees, thereby providing a pathway to craft an organized program that is cleared from the indecision and imprecision. Through needs, the program developer could set the program objectives, define the content, methods, and materials to be used. Therefore, administration of the needs analysis is the key to the program development and if the analysis is done by digging the training needs thoroughly and meticulously, the interests, needs and expectations could be unraveled neatly.

This study aims at exploring the needs of the EFL teachers in non-formal education (NFE) and it is significant as the literature reveals that the studies generally center on formal education (FE) teachers (Akcan, 2016; Alan, 2003; Atay, 2008; Bayyurt & Sifakis, 2015; Daloğlu, 2004; Özen, 1997; Şahinkarakaş, Yumru & İnözü, 2010; Personn & Yiğitoğlu, 2015; Tevs, 1996; Yaman, 2008). Therefore, the needs of the EFL teachers in NFE settings are investigated throughout the study by starting a new route of research within the INSET program development in Turkey and filling the existing gap in the literature.

## EDUCATION SYSTEM IN TURKEY

In Turkey, all educational institutions are affiliated with the Ministry of National Education (MoNE) in 1924 by the Law on Unification of Education (MoNE, 1924) and the MoNE is the authority that designs, implements and supervises all of the educational services with FE and NFE institutions. In addition to the aforementioned law, the other fundamental law for the Turkish national education system is The Basic Law of National Education (MoNE, 1973), which defines the educational principles, objectives, duties, responsibilities, and profession of teaching in detail.

Specifically speaking of the foreign language education, the "Law on Foreign Language Education and Teaching with Turkish Citizen's Learning Different Languages and Dialects" (Information System of Regulations, 1983) is the essential law which arranges the structure of education within this field. This law dictates that the Turkish language is the 'only native language' to be taught and that MoNE is the authority that defines the foreign language education curriculum in primary, secondary, high schools and FE institutions. On the other hand, the Council of Higher Education in Turkey (CoHE) is liable for planning and organizing foreign language education courses in higher education institutions. Ultimately, it could be concluded that MoNE is the main body of authority in Turkish national education system since it enforces certain laws which declare the main tenets of education and all of the educational institutions affiliated with the ministry are supposed to follow the related rules and legislation.

According to the Basic Law of National Education, the Turkish national education system includes both FE and NFE (MoNE, 1973). FE is systematic and planned and it is carried out in state or private educational institutions. Pre-school education, primary school education, secondary school education, high school education and tertiary education are the basic stages that FE includes. As for NFE, it is rather flexible since it could take place within any learning setting in contrary to FE. Education is not limited to traditional classrooms within the cycle of FE. One who has (not) completed any stage of FE could also attend NFE in order to get an education about any field of subject, thereby cultivating lifelong learning. NFE institutions are officially attached to The Directorate General of Lifelong Learning in Turkey and the Regulations of Non-Formal Education Institutions describe the responsibilities that those institutions are supposed to hold. The principles of NFE are summarized as follows: "1) open to everyone, 2) appropriate to needs, 3) continuous, 4) valid, 5) planned, 6) open to innovation and improvement, 7) voluntary, 8) education everywhere, 9) lifelong learning, 10) scientifism and unity and 11) cooperation and coordination" (MoNE, 2010, Article 5). In addition, NFE services could also be organized by some other bodies including ministries, municipalities and non-governmental organizations (Ministry of Family and Social Policies, 2013). That said, NFE promotes lifelong learning through flexible and alternative educational settings, and it welcomes every citizen who is willing and voluntary to pursue their education.

## FOREIGN LANGUAGE POLICY IN TURKEY

### Pre-service Teacher Training (PSTT)

It refers to a form of education during which teacher candidates are equipped with knowledge and skills concerning the nature of the teaching profession and they get certificated when this period ends. The graduates mostly begin teaching in state or private

educational institutions in line with the theoretical and practical knowledge that they received during PSTT.

PSTT in Turkey has undergone several changes throughout history. During the 1997-98 academic year, compulsory education was increased up to 8 years and, eventually, school practice was tremendously needed as a result of this reform movement. Therefore, courses entitled 'School Experience I' and 'School Experience II' apart from other courses including 'Instructional Technologies' and 'Material Development', 'Classroom Management', and 'Counselling and Computer' were incorporated into the curriculum (CoHE, 2007).

Apart from that reform movement, in 2006, PSTT program was restructured once again; some courses (e.g. Lexicology, Drama, Public Service, Second Foreign Language, Special Needs Education, Effective Communication, etc) were added whereas some other courses (Turkish Phonetics and Stylistics, Reading Skills I-II, Writing Skills I-II and so forth) were dismissed (Yavuz & Zehir-Topkaya, 2013).

Likewise, in 2018, PSTT curriculum for ELT program was reconstructed once again and the number of teaching profession courses was increased. Also, the course of Instructional Technologies and Material Design was revised and named as 'Instructional Technologies'. Similarly, School Experience course was blended with Practicum and some new courses such as 'Morality and Ethics in Education' were released (CoHE, 2018).

### **In-service Teacher Training**

The General Directorate of Teacher Education and Development of the Ministry of Education in Turkey is responsible for organizing and carrying out INSET activities for teachers in state and private schools (Official Gazette, 2011). According to the Regulations for Ministry of National Education In-Service Training (MoNE, 1995), INSET activities target at providing an adaptation for pre-service personnel, enhancing knowledge and skills, improving teacher competences, offering training for senior positions, supplementing pre-service education, developing an understanding into the principles of national education system and administering those tenets in harmony and unity (2nd Division, Article 5).

In addition to MoNE, Teachers Academy Foundation, a non-governmental body, provides non-paid teacher training courses in Turkey and around 142.000 teachers were offered the opportunity to attend those courses between 2008-2016 (Teachers Academy Foundation, n.d.).

As for the INSET activities designed for EFL teachers, Küçüksüleymanoğlu (2006) investigated the programs held between 1998 and 2005 by MoNE in Turkey and pointed out that the percentage of the programs organized for EFL teachers were less when all of the INSET programs were considered as a whole. The findings of her study seem to display the quantitative aspect of the INSET programs designed for EFL teachers; however, when the qualitative nature of those programs was investigated, the studies conducted by Haznedar, (2010) and Uysal (2012) revealed that teachers did not participate actively in the planning phase of the programs. That is to say, they could not construct the program in accordance with their needs and expectations.

## NEEDS ASSESSMENT IN INSET PROGRAMS

Wilson and Easen (1995) state that needs mean "...a desired end-state..." (p.274) whereas "...wants are an intuitive response" (p.283). Similarly, Nixon (1989) thinks that needs and wants are two different terms and that needs refer to a degree of uncertainty unlike wants. According to him, defining training needs could be challenging for someone as s/he may feel insecure about his/her profession. Furthermore, Reti (1980) maintains that the expression of 'teachers' needs' are imprecise since it is not clear whose needs are referred to. In a word, do we talk about teachers' own needs or the things expected from them? Therefore, the needs are to be accurately recognized in order to develop an insight into the training components the teachers would like to have.

A model was suggested in order to implement a needs assessment by Stufflebeam, McCornick, Brinkerhoff, and Nelson (1985) and it consists of the following phases:

- 1) Preparing to do a needs assessment,
- 2) Gathering desired needs assessment information,
- 3) Analyzing the needs assessment information,
- 4) Reporting needs assessment information,
- 5) Using and applying needs assessment information" (p.16).

As seen, conducting a needs assessment entails a specific set of stages. In the first stage, components including questions, participants, data collection procedures and methods are specified. The second stage refers to the period during which information is collected and kept. Next, the information collected as a result of assessment is investigated, the results are presented and the statistical data could be classified at this stage. Later, in the fourth stage, information derived from the assessment is documented and shared. Finally, the needs analysis information is used in order to develop an INSET program.

In designing a program, it is important to use various data collection sources during needs assessment because including various forms of methods adds richness to the needs assessment information. Coupled with this fact, Richards (2001) states that the triangular approach should be used for carrying out a needs assessment to receive more reliable results. For this reason, he says that questionnaires, self-ratings, interviews and meetings could be adopted for conducting a well-established needs assessment.

One of the most important tenets in developing an INSET program is a needs assessment. It might act as a guide for program developers and trainers since the professional needs obtained from the assessment could highlight the knowledge, skills and teaching behaviors to be enhanced. Through a needs assessment, the objectives, content, methods and materials to be used and evaluation techniques could be defined in advance, thereby preventing idling in uncertainty.

The professional needs of the teachers are to be included in teacher training programs (Çimer, Çakır, & Çimer, 2010; Daloğlu, 2004; Özen, 2001) since the teachers are the main audience themselves and engagement of the teachers from the very beginning could motivate them for participation. Otherwise, teachers may feel isolated because they may think that the program is not molded in accordance with their real needs so they might avoid joining the activities. However, the previous studies pointed out that training programs fail to incorporate teachers' needs (Çimer, Çakır, & Çimer, 2010;

Küçüksüleymanoğlu, 2006). Basically, the INSET programs are supposed to stand on the training needs of the participants and their expectations since they implement the curriculum in their teaching settings and face some problems and challenges regarding students, materials, in-class physical conditions and so forth. They are the real agents who experience each aspect of teaching, so their contributions to the planning of any INSET might be greater.

## METHODOLOGY

### Research Design

A convergent parallel design, which is a type of mixed methods design, was employed in order to gain an insight into the research problem through the collection of qualitative and quantitative data nearly at the same time (Creswell, 2012). Put simply, teachers' training needs were received through a questionnaire and the semi-structured interviews simultaneously. The main aim of adopting a mixed-methods design was to develop a full understanding of the perspectives derived from both qualitative and quantitative data collection methods.

### Setting

The study was carried out in a non-formal education (NFE) institution of Istanbul Cosmopolitan Municipality, which comprises a variety of courses on art and vocational training as well as several language schools in various districts of Istanbul. The language schools offer foreign language courses for such languages as Arabic, Chinese, English, French, German, Italian, Japanese, Korean, Ottoman Turkish, Persian, Russian, Spanish, Turkish and Turkish Sign Language.

### Participants

The participants of the study included EFL teachers ( $N= 105$ ; female: 76, 72.4%; male: 29; 27.6%) who taught in a non-formal education institution in Istanbul. Around half of the participants (44.8%) had 0-5 years of experience, and 36 (34.30%) graduated from ELT departments whereas the rest held BA degrees from non-ELT departments (Table 1).

**Table 1.** Some demographic information about the participants

		N	Percentage(%)
<b>Gender</b>	Male	29	27.6
	Female	76	72.4
<b>Years of experience</b>	0-5 years	47	44.8
	6-11 years	30	28.6
	12-16 years	15	14.3
	17 years and above	13	12.4
<b>Department of graduation</b>	English Language Teaching	36	34.3
	English Language and Literature	23	21.9
	American Language and Literature	12	11.4
	Linguistics	3	2.9
	Other	31	29.5
<b>Total</b>		105	100

### Instruments

**The needs analysis questionnaire:** "The Questionnaire on Teacher Training for Teachers" designed by Ilyushina (1997) was used and molded in order to investigate the training needs of the teachers. The questionnaire includes 3 sections: The 1st section was related to personal information including gender, years of experience and department of graduation. As for the 2nd section, it collected information about participants' past experiences with regard to INSET programs by probing into the number of the INSET programs the teachers attended in the last three years, the type of INSET courses, the courses found most/less useful, the amount of transfer into teaching, and perceived changes as a result of training. The 3rd section of the questionnaire explored the INSET needs and expectations by asking what INSET means to them, the balance between theory and practice in an INSET program, their expectations from INSET courses and trainers, their preferences for the content, input form, assessment, perceptions regarding trainers, trainee and the training, and course types. All the participant teachers responded to the questions in the needs analysis questionnaire which was administered in the 2016-2017 spring semester.

For estimating the internal consistency of the questionnaire, reliability analysis was run and it was found to be reliable (99 items;  $\alpha=.763$ ) since the score of at least 0.7 and higher is considered as reliable (Frankel & Wallen, 2006).

**The-semi structured interview:** Apart from the needs analysis questionnaire, a semi-structured interview was also administered in order to develop a detailed understanding of the training needs of the teachers. Therefore, a set of semi-structured interview questions was organized considering Korkmazgil's study (2015) and checked by two experts to find out if the relevant content was included or not.

The interviews were held face-to-face with 10 voluntary participants during the 2016-2017 spring semester. Inter-coding was adopted to enable the data reliability by hiring one instructor apart from the researcher for coding the responses.

### Data Analysis Procedure

**Data analysis for the needs questionnaire:** The first section of the questionnaire which investigated the personal information of the participants was analyzed through presenting the descriptive statistics data with frequencies and percentages. For the second section, descriptive statistics were conducted for the questions regarding the number of INSET courses, type of courses, and the amount of transfer into actual teaching. On the other hand, for the questions that sought open-ended responses, qualitative content analysis was adopted. The responses were sorted for creating codes and, subsequently, the codes which shared the common characteristics were classified into certain categories. Based on the theoretical framework in the literature, the qualitative analysis process was implemented, including emerging coding where categories are structured through investigating the categories (Stemler, 2001) and priori coding that refers to pre-determined categories. Similarly, in the third section, descriptive statistics were utilized for the check-box questions, selected-response questions and 5-point Likert scale items whereas qualitative content analysis was carried out for open-ended question types.

**Data analysis for the semi-structured interview:** As the semi-structured interview contained qualitative data, it entailed a qualitative content analysis which began with the coding process. Miles and Huberman (1994) define codes as "tags of labels for assigning

units of meaning to the descriptive or inferential information compiled during a study" (p.56). Codes were derived by exploring the data; in addition, categories were developed and documented through classifying the codes.

## FINDINGS

### **Findings Based on the Needs Analysis Questionnaire**

As mentioned before, the needs analysis questionnaire comprised three parts: 1) personal information about the participants, 2) INSET experiences of the participants, and 3) participants' expectations and needs related to INSET programs. As the first part has already been discussed in the previous section in this part of the study, the data about the second and the third parts of the questionnaire are given in the following tables:

**Table 2.** Number of the INSET programs that the teachers attended

<b>Number of INSET programs</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage(%)</b>
1-4	34	64.2
5-8	17	32.1
9 and above	2	3.8
<b>Total</b>	<b>53</b>	<b>100</b>

As seen above, out of 105, only 53 participants responded to the questions about the INSET programs that they had attended. Shortly, the majority of the participants ( $N=34$ ) attended between 1-4 INSET programs whereas only 2 of the participants participated in 9 or more than 9 INSET programs.

Moreover, 30 out of 53 participants (56.6%) stated that they attended extensive INSET programs (part-time over a significant period of time) whereas 23 (43.4%) participants participated in intensive (less than a month) programs. In terms of the usefulness of these programs, the participant teachers reflected their viewpoints in seven categories as given in Table 3 below:

**Table 3.** Viewpoints on the categories of the INSET programs and their useful aspects

<b>Categories</b>	<b>Useful aspects</b>	<b>Frequency</b>
1. Communication	Non-verbal communication skills	15
	Verbal communication skills	3
2. Classroom management	Setting classroom rules	7
	Managing misbehavior	4
3. Language teaching and learning	Provision of classroom activities	5
	Language teaching methodology	2
4. Educational technology	The methodology of educational technology & Web 2.0 tools	6
5. Motivation	Encouraging learners	4
6. Collaboration	Managing teamwork	3
7. Self-development	Learning a second language &	2
	Learning first aid	

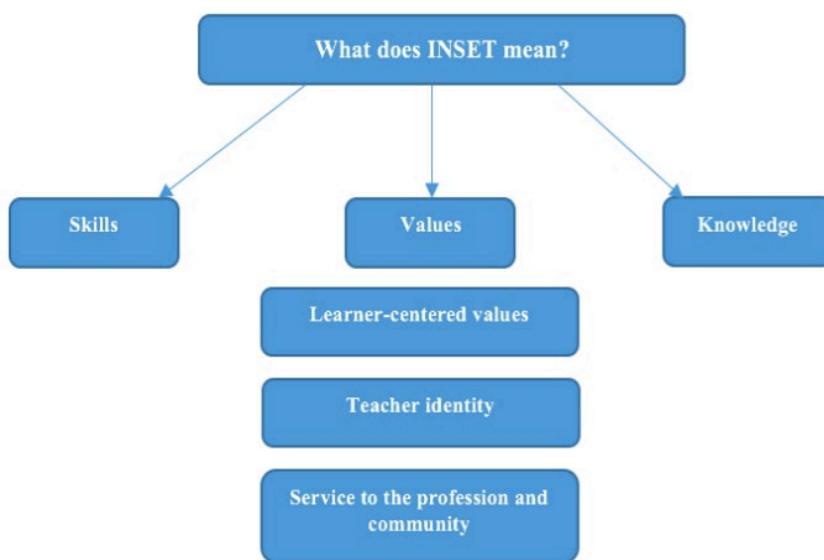
Table 3 shows that the most useful INSET programs were in the category of communication ( $N=18$ ). The non-verbal communication skills ( $N=15$ ) including gestures,

posture, the tone of voice with verbal communication skills with effective communication strategies ( $N=3$ ) regarding active listening are appreciated. The classroom management programs were helpful to set classroom rules ( $N=7$ ) and manage misbehavior in the class ( $N=4$ ). Language teaching and learning related programs were effective to support teachers' practices related to language teaching and methodology ( $N=2$ ) as well as provision of classroom activities ( $N=5$ ). Training on the methodology of educational technology ( $N=6$ ) including Web 2.0 tools was efficient for teachers; motivation ( $N=4$ ), Collaboration ( $N=3$ ), and Self-development ( $N=2$ ) programs were useful for encouraging learners, for managing teamwork, for learning a second foreign language and for learning first aid.

Apart from the data discussed above, the majority of the participants ( $N=36$ ; 67.9%) were of the opinion that they could implement some ideas that they had learnt from training programs; 12 participants (22.6%) believed that they could transfer most of the ideas and very few of them ( $N=5$ ; 9.4%) said they could not transfer anything.

In terms of the perceived changes, the participants' responses were classified by priori coding by considering the framework of teacher competences that includes a) skills, b) knowledge, and c) disposition (European Commision, 2013). Indicating the perceived changes, the participants suggested more than one change. The qualitative content analysis pointed out that many of the participants ( $N=42$ ; 51.2%) were of the opinion that the change occurred within the field of skills, yet 25 of the participants (30.5%) indicated that the level of knowledge increased. 15 participants (18.3%) believed that their disposition underwent a change. In a word, the largest effect of the INSET training was perceived within skills such as classroom management, feedback use, technology integration, and lesson organization.

**The definitions of INSET made by the EFL teachers:** The responses received through the questionnaire were analyzed by adopting a qualitative content analysis. Priori coding was performed since the pre-determined categories were used in exploring the qualitative data. For this reason, the theoretical framework suggested by the National Institute of Education (2009) was used in order to classify the definitions made by the EFL teachers. The framework includes three categories: 1) Skills, 2) Values, and 3) Knowledge. The classification through these categories is illustrated in the following figure:



**Figure 1.** Definitions of INSET

Skills include the competences that teachers are supposed to have for effective teaching practices in the field of pedagogy, communication and technology. 25 out of 105 participants associated INSET with skills development. On the other hand, the category of values includes three sub-categories listed as learner-centered values addressing the attitudes towards learners, teacher identity associated with continuous professional development and service to the profession and community implying collaborative practices. Whereas one participant linked INSET with learner-centered values, 43 respondents thought that INSET was all about teacher identity. Finally, 9 of them perceived INSET as part of a collaboration among colleagues. The third category, knowledge, specifies an insight into the learning settings, content, and pedagogy. According to 31 participants, INSET was a platform where knowledge was offered.

**The balance between theory and practice in an INSET program:** More than half of the respondents ( $N=60$ ; 57.1%) stated that practice should outweigh the theory in an INSET program. Nearly half ( $N=44$ ; 41.9%) thought that both theory and practice should be balanced and treated equally in an INSET program. The rest of the participants ( $N=1$ ; 1%) indicated that the theoretical knowledge should be greater than the practice.

**Teachers' expectations of INSET programs:** In the questionnaire, teachers were asked about their expectations of INSET programs and their responses were summarized as follows:

**Table 4.** Expectations of INSET programs

Expectations	Frequency	Percentage(%)
To gain some practical ideas	95	90.5
To receive help with particular teaching problems	64	61.0
To share experience	58	55.2
To receive an update on research in ELT	57	54.3
To try out ideas and techniques presented on a course	55	52.4
To understand better how to evaluate your own practice	53	50.5
To learn how to manage change	45	42.9
To understand the learning process better	44	41.9
To learn how to manage stress	44	41.9
To meet people who have the same problems and share with them	42	40.0
To understand theoretical ideas underlying practice	38	36.2
To organize a collaborative team for further professional development	37	35.2
To have opportunities to articulate and discuss what you already know	31	29.5
To gain confidence	29	27.6
To do observed teaching	27	25.7

As displayed in the table above, the majority ( $N=95$ ; 90.5%) indicated that they would like to 'gain some practical ideas'. In a similar vein, 'receiving help with particular teaching problems' ( $N=64$ ; 61.0%) and 'sharing experience' ( $N=58$ ; 55.2%) were the most recurring choices among teachers.

**The components of the INSET program:** Participants were asked to list the five items they considered important for language improvement in an INSET program. The most frequently chosen items were 'speaking practice' ( $N=83$ ; 79.0%), 'fluency activities' ( $N=65$ ; 61.9%), 'activating vocabulary' ( $N=53$ ; 50.5), 'pronunciation' ( $N=45$ ; 42.9%) and 'listening skills' ( $N=43$ ; 41.0%) respectively. On the other hand, when the participants were asked to choose five important components for the language methodology, 'teaching skills' ( $N=79$ , 75.20%), 'classroom management' ( $N=58$ , 55.2%), 'management with mixed ability groups' ( $N=57$ , 54.3%), 'material development' ( $N=56$ ; 53.3%) and 'teaching vocabulary' ( $N=54$ , 51.4%) were the most frequently listed ones.

**Mode of input:** The participants thought that the delivery of the INSET program should be through 'discussions' ( $N=55$ ; 52.4%), 'collaborative learning groups' ( $N=50$ , 47.6%), 'demonstration' ( $N=50$ ; 47.6%) and handouts ( $N=47$ ; 44.8%). The least chosen input type was action research ( $N=18$ ; 17.1%) and only 2 respondents mentioned that they would like to be offered input through exchange programs (Erasmus, etc.) and videos.

**Table 5.** The responsibilities of trainees and the trainer

Descriptors	f	%	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Undecided	Agree	Strongly agree	Mean	SD
1. Training is mostly the responsibility of the trainer.	f 3	% 2.9	6	51	27	18	3.48	.94	
2. Training is a shared attempt of a trainer and trainees.	f 0	% 0.0	3	20	26	56	4.28	.87	
3. A trainee needs to work on language.	f 1	% 1.0	5	17	34	48	4.17	.93	
4. A trainee needs to work on classroom data.	f 0	% 0.0	3	28	40	34	4.00	.84	
5. A trainee needs to work on methodology.	f 6	% 5.7	17	34	26	22	3.39	1.15	
6. A trainer is an instructor.	f 1	% 1.0	5	27	40	32	3.92	.91	
7. A trainer is a catalyst.	f 2	% 1.9	5	32	40	26	3.79	.93	
8. A trainer is counsellor.	f 0	% 0.0	3	21	37	44	4.16	.84	
9. A trainer is a guide.	f 1	% 1.0	3	8	29	64	4.44	.83	
10. A trainee is a researcher.	f 1	% 1.0	3	10	31	60	4.39	.84	
11. A trainee is a learner.	f 1	% 1.0	2	16	31	55	4.30	.86	
12. A trainee is a negotiator.	f 4	% 3.8	11	24	34	32	3.75	1.11	

As seen in the table above, slightly more than half of the participants ( $N=51$ ; 48.6) were undecided about the responsibility of the trainer. Contrarily, the majority ( $N=82$ ; 78.1%) thought that training is a shared attempt of a trainer and trainees. With regard to the content of the INSET, according to the participants, the trainee needs to work on language ( $N=82$ ; 78.1%), classroom data ( $N=74$ ; 70.5%), and methodology ( $N=48$ ; 45.8%). About the responsibilities of the trainer, the majority ( $N=72$ ; 68.6%) stated that the trainer should be an instructor. Similarly, 66 of the participants (62.9%) confirmed that the trainer was to be a catalyst. In addition, the trainer was supposed to act as a counsellor ( $N=81$ ; 77.1%) and as a guide ( $N=93$ ; 88.6%). As to the roles ascribed to the trainees, a large number of participants ( $N=91$ ; 86.6%) thought that the trainee should be a researcher whereas 86 of them ( $N=81.9\%$ )

confirmed that trainee was to be learners. To add, the role of the negotiator was ascribed to the trainees by 66 participants (62.9%).

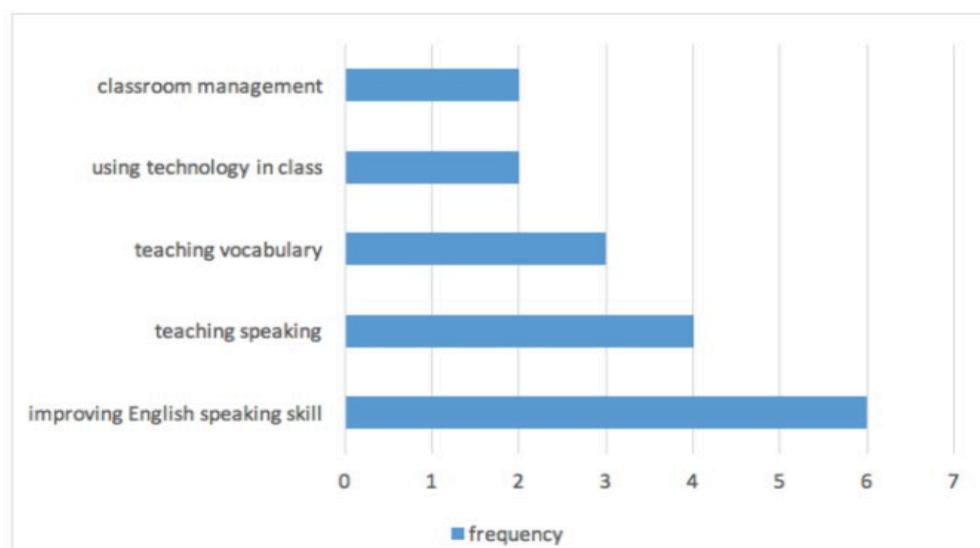
**The types of programs:** The majority ( $N=66$ ; 62.9%) chose 'short intensive programs' while the rest of them ( $N=39$ ; 37.1%) were into the 'extensive programs'.

**Expectations from the trainer:** According to 68 participants (64.8%), the trainers should negotiate the syllabus according to the trainees' needs. A native speaker as a trainer was preferred by nearly half of the participants ( $N=45$ ; 42.9%); contrarily, 36 respondents (34.3%) stated that the trainer could be a non-native speaker, as well. Only 28 of them (26.7%) would like to receive a pre-determined and fixed syllabus.

**The form of assessment:** More than one-third of the participants ( $N=38$ ; 36.2%) went for 'observed teaching' while 33 participants (31.4%) preferred no assessment at all. Tests ( $N=26$ ; 24.8%), written assignments ( $N=25$ ; 23.8%) and exams ( $N=13$ ; 12.4%) were among the other choices regarding form of assessment.

#### Findings Based on the Semi-structured Interviews

For analyzing the training needs of the teachers, semi-structured interviews were also used with 10 voluntary EFL teachers. The interview consisted of 5 questions and the first question investigated EFL teachers' professional needs. The responses were highlighted in the figure below:



**Figure 2.** Content analysis results regarding professional needs

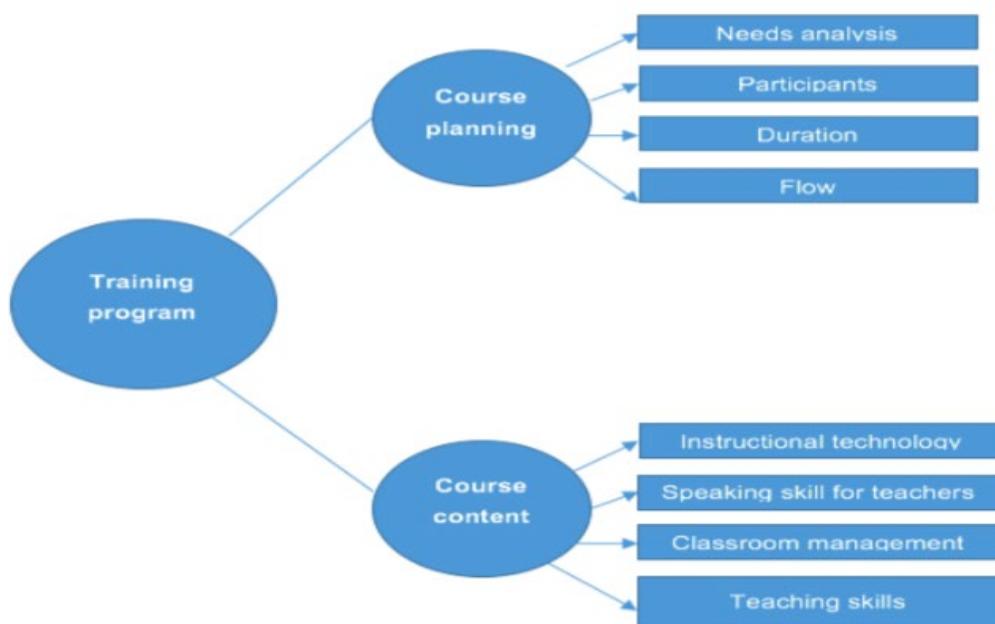
As seen, teachers mostly would like to 'improve their English speaking skill' ( $N=6$ ), which indicated that speaking was the needed skill for their own language development. Apart from that, 'teaching speaking' ( $N=4$ ), 'teaching vocabulary' ( $N=3$ ), 'using technology in class' ( $N=2$ ) and 'classroom management' ( $N=2$ ) were the other professional needs for teachers.

The second question aimed to find out whether the institutions caused different training needs for teachers. 9 respondents thought that they would like to know how to teach mixed-ability classes since the institutions are based on NFE and welcome students with different backgrounds, ages, and proficiency.

As for the third question exploring if these institutions met their professional needs, 7 out of 10 teachers indicated that the institutions designed INSET events considering their training needs. Only 3 of them mentioned otherwise, thereby stating the organizations did not center around their needs such as practicing the speaking skill for teachers and teaching mixed-ability classes.

To add, in the fourth interview question, the teachers were asked to identify any challenges or problems that they faced in attending INSET activities. Whereas 2 respondents said they always taught low-level students, which caused professional burn-out and the other 2 teachers maintained that they worked for long hours and they did not have sufficient time and energy because of this working condition in the institutions. 1 respondent said she did not get paid well because she worked part-time; for this reason, her first ultimate concern was to find a full-time job. Finally, 1 participant stated she had to take care of her baby, so attending any INSET activities was demanding for her. As seen, 6 interviewees put forward some challenges; contrarily, 4 of them did not mention any.

Subsequently, the fifth interview question aimed to find out the participants' ideal INSET program; therefore, the responses were analyzed by employing a thematic analysis and presented in the following figure below:



**Figure 3.** The components of an ideal INSET program

The responses provided by the interviewees were coded and classified under two categories: a) *Course planning* including needs analysis, participants, duration, flow, and b) *Course content* with regard to instructional technology, speaking skill for teachers, classroom management and teaching skills.

To illustrate, according to the interviewees, INSET program should be developed by administering a needs analysis; that is, the participants might be the organic partners in program designing. Also, they thought that the number of participants was to be limited and that a short intensive course of training was favored. Finally, within the category of course

planning, the interviewees said the courses in an INSET program should be offered on separate days.

Furthermore, the interviewees had also opinions about how the course content should be built: Accordingly, courses on how to deliver teaching with instructional technology, courses where the teachers could practice speaking skills for their language improvement, courses on classroom management and teaching skills should be incorporated in an INSET program.

## DISCUSSION

Brown (2002) maintains that needs analysis is a fundamental instrument for defining the gap between the existing and needed skills. She thus says the program's effectiveness could also be measured since it provides an opportunity for comparing these two classes of needs. However, when the literature is reviewed, it is seen that some studies pointed out (Bozkurt, Kavak, Yamak, Canbazoğlu-Bilici, Darıcı, & Özkaya, 2012; Ekşi & Aydin, 2012) conducting needs analysis is a must for designing INSET programs but it is not performed properly (Büyükyavuz & İnal, 2008; Koç, 2016; Küçüksüleymanoğlu, 2006; Ünal, 2010).

In this study, a needs analysis questionnaire and semi-structured interviews were adopted in order to collect the professional needs of the teachers in a NFE institution located in Istanbul. The results of the questionnaire revealed 53 out of 105 participants attended any INSET activity in the last three years. Of those, the big portion participated in 1-4 INSET programs, which may be resulted from the fact that the majority had 5 years of teaching experience or less. That is to say, there might be a link between the years of experience and the number of INSET programs the teachers had participated in.

Some of the interviewees mentioned that teaching at the same proficiency level caused professional burnout. In the study conducted by Özer and Beycioğlu (2010), it was pointed out burnout could lead to negative professional attitudes. Creating better working conditions and providing teachers with professional development activities could prevent burnout (Kılavuz-Önal & Tatar, 2017).

The needs obtained through interviews and questionnaires seemed to be strongly linked to each other. The needs were in the field of teaching skills, pronunciation, vocabulary, classroom management, management with mixed-ability groups, material development, and using instructional technology. These findings were echoed in Özen's study (2001) in which language skills and teaching vocabulary were to be found among the core components that EFL teachers needed to improve. Similarly, in Duzan's study (2006, as cited in Ekşi, 2010), language teaching methodology, classroom management and teaching skills were the areas of professional needs for the newly hired teachers. Duzan thinks that the needs may be associated with the teaching experience and, in the context of this study, it could be concluded teachers needed training in language skills since their years of teaching experience were 5 years or less.

Besides, the teachers expressed that they would like to improve their own speaking abilities so they expected to take part in professional development activities in line with this need. Having good language proficiency is fundamental to building professional confidence for teachers (Murdoch, 1994). That is to say, if the language teachers are proficient users of

English, it may get easier to deliver the course content and become a good model for the learners.

When the responses provided in the questionnaire and semi-structured interviews were taken into consideration, it could be said that the short intensive programs for INSET activities were favored by the teachers. In parallel with this study, the findings from another study conveyed by Gültekin (2007) pointed out that weekly and bi-weekly programs were preferred by most of the teachers. This could be because they believed short intensive programs were time-saving and they would have dense content, which may make them effective. In addition to that, teaching mixed-classes was an issue that was voiced by the teachers as a professional need. As the teachers taught learners with different language proficiency, educational background, and age, they would like to know how to deliver teaching in mixed-classes.

The teachers also posited that they managed to transfer only some ideas that they learned in previous INSET activities into their actual teaching practices. It could be concluded that the previous INSET practices were not as effective as they had expected or that they received so much theoretical information instead of practices. The participant teachers mostly agreed that an INSET program should offer practical ideas, support for particular teaching problems and provide a platform where the colleagues share experiences. Professional development programs should contain need-oriented and authentic learning activities (Ryan, 2019) and reflective practices where teachers had the chance of discussing classroom events (Tosriadi, Asib, Marmanto & Azizah, 2018).

It is apparent that the teachers were not interested in theory loaded programs but practical implementations. This is also clear in their preferences regarding input forms; that is, they would like to convey training through discussions and collaborative learning groups and demonstrations. Similarly, observed teaching was supported by them as a form of assessment. The teachers expected to be indulged in collaborative and practical applications in INSET programs. Besides, according to the participants, INSET means improving one-self professionally through enhancing knowledge and skills and engaging in collaborative practices with colleagues by exchanging information and experience.

Also, the participants adopted a trainee-centered approach in designing INSET programs since they believed that INSET trainers were to be guides and counsellors and that a needs analysis should be implemented, thereby engaging the participants into the process actively.

## **CONCLUSION AND PEDAGOGICAL IMPLICATIONS**

The present study was conducted to design an INSET program for EFL teachers who taught in non-formal education settings. Teachers' training needs were investigated by conducting a needs analysis with a questionnaire and semi-structured interview since it is believed that employing not only a questionnaire but also a semi-structured interview may document a comprehensive analysis of the professional needs. For this reason, in order not to skip any detail, the use of different data collection tools might yield effective outcomes.

The findings implied that information regarding workload, schedule and obstacles to attend any training activity should be obtained before designing the INSET program. In

doing so, the content and delivery methods of the training could be identified in a way that the participation could be encouraged.

Moreover, the INSET programs are to be developed through incorporating practice rather than theory-driven interventions. Basic techniques and practical ideas could be provided by integrating collaboration in programs so that INSET programs could become platforms where teachers could share the specific problems that they face in teaching contexts and try to figure out those challenges working together with the support and guidance of the teacher trainer. To put it simply, the trainer should act as facilitator and counsellor who could help the trainees to understand the content and solve the problems through introducing some techniques and methods.

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