

Turkish and Lithuanian EFL Instructors' Professional Development Experiences: Worth the Effort, or Waste of Time?*

Türk ve Litvan İngilizce Okutmanlarının Mesleki Gelişim Tecrübeleri: Profesyonel Gelişim İçin Harcanan Çabaya Değer Mi?

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Abstract

Effective EFL instructors must have a good command of English, as well as sound pedagogical knowledge and adequate communication and classroom management skills. Professional development has been indicated as significant in developing these attributes. This comparative study was designed to analyze the viewpoints of EFL professionals working in Turkey and Lithuania using a scalar survey. The results revealed that Turkish instructors found their professional development experiences to be largely irrelevant, while the Lithuanian instructors perceived professional development as beneficial. In both groups, obstacles such as financial concerns and heavy teaching loads impaired the participants' ability to grow professionally. The findings may draw attention to the ways in which existing professional growth opportunities are meeting or failing to meet EFL instructors' needs.

Keywords: EFL instructors, professional development, professional growth, teacher development

Özet

Etkili İngilizce öğretmenleri iyi bir İngilizce bilgisine, güçlü bir pedagojik alan bilgisine ve yeterli iletişimsel ve sınıf yönetimi becerilerine sahip olmak zorundadır. Mesleki gelişimin bu nitelikleri sağlama noktasında önemli bir yere sahip olduğuna işaret edilmektedir. Bu karşılaştırmalı çalışma yabancı dil olarak İngilizce öğreten Türk ve Litvan profesyonellerin görüşlerini anket yoluyla elde etmek amacıyla tasarlanmıştır. Sonuçlar Litvan okutmanların mesleki gelişimi faydalı olarak algımlarken, Türk okutmanların mesleki gelişim tecrübelerini meslekleriyle büyük oranda alakasız bulduklarını ortaya koymaktadır. İki grupta da finansal endişeler ve ağır ders yüklerinin okutmanların mesleki gelişimine zarar verdiği görülmüştür. Çalışmanın bulguları mevcut kişisel gelişim fırsatlarının

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yabancı dil olarak İngilizce öğreten okutmanların ihtiyaçlarını ne şekilde karşılayıp karşılamadığına dikkat çekmek için kullanılabilir.

Anahtar Sözcükler: Yabancı dil olarak İngilizce öğretmenleri, profesyonel gelişim, mesleki gelişim, öğretmen gelişimi

Introduction

The “Good” Language Teacher and the Need for Ongoing Professional Development

In light of the prominent status of English as an international contact language, countries around the world have placed great emphasis on English language education (Büyükkantarcıoğlu, 2004; Çelik, Bayraktar-Çepni, & İlyas, 2013; Kızıldağ, 2009). Research has consistently shown that learner success in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) instruction depends substantially on the effectiveness of classroom teachers. As a result, the profile of a “good” foreign language teacher has been the focus of considerable investigation (Çelik, Arikan, & Caner, 2013). To reach learners effectively, EFL teachers must have not only a good command of English, but also sound pedagogical knowledge and adequate classroom management skills. In addition, they must be good communicators and possess the ability to connect with their students on an affective level.

In order to develop and maintain effective teaching skills, researchers such as Altan (2006), Daloğlu (2004), and Mačianskienė and Tuomaitė (2004) point to ongoing efforts at professional development as playing a major role, particularly in the case of language teachers in EFL settings who are themselves non-native speakers of English (Serdiukov & Tarnopolsky, 1999). In this respect, researchers such as Karabenick and Noda (2004) argue that teacher development is essential in order to stay current with the latest developments in the field and to avoid falling behind in the current standards for practice. Likewise, Mizell (2010) and Richards and Farrell (2005) note that ongoing professional development is necessary for teachers to understand how best to reach their students in a continuously changing, technology-enhanced educational environment.

What Do We Understand as Professional Development?

Before going further into the issues surrounding professional development for language teachers, it is important to make it clear what we mean by this term, as it has been interpreted in a variety of ways. For instance, scholars such as Craft (1996) and Johnson and Golombek (2011) refer to professional development as any effort to expand one's professional knowledge, both during the preparatory phase and throughout an individual's teaching career. On the other hand, according to Richards and Ferrell (2011) and Shawer (2010), professional development consists of career-building activities that are carried out by in-service teachers after their initial training. As the focus of the current study involves in-service teachers' professional development efforts, the researchers make the following distinction:

- *Teacher training* refers to teacher preparatory programs and pre-service fieldwork assignments;
- *Professional development* involves an individual's efforts to augment his or her professional skills following completion of a teacher education program.

Types of Professional Development Activities

Teachers in all disciplines, including foreign language education, are generally required to participate in ongoing in-service workshops, training sessions and seminars (Çelik, Bayraktar-Çepni et al., 2013; Daloğlu, 2004; Özer, 2005). Beyond these mandated professional development activities, however, teaching practitioners at all levels have multiple opportunities to engage in individual professional development on both a formal and informal basis. The following are among the numerous activities that may contribute to a teachers' ongoing professional growth:

- Reflective writing through the use of teaching journals;
- Reviewing audio or video recordings of real-time classroom instruction;
- Conducting teacher research (Richards & Farrell, 2011);

- Keeping a teaching portfolio of lesson plans, student evaluations, administrative documents and other materials (Nodoushan, 2010);
- Peer mentoring;
- Support groups;
- Cooperative research (Murray, 2010).

As Murray contends, carrying out any or all of these activities may not only contribute to a teachers' professional knowledge, but also "foster a sense of achievement and connectedness, leading to increased career satisfaction in addition to improving one's professional knowledge" (Çelik, Bayraktar-Çepni et al., p. 1862).

Purpose of the Study

According to Çelik, Bayraktar-Çepni et al. (2013), research has consistently demonstrated that "teachers' performance is closely linked to their professional development efforts, from a formative standpoint as well as a reflection on their personal and professional commitment to teaching" (p. 1862). However, the existing literature on EFL instructors' behaviors and attitudes with respect to voluntary (as opposed to mandatory) professional development is limited; and the majority of the existing studies have focused on elementary and secondary teachers of English (Bayrakçı, 2009; Özer, 2005). Furthermore, according to the existing research, a variety of factors that may inhibit EFL teachers' professional development activities, such as poor financial incentive, excessive workload, and lack of relevance of professional development opportunities to their practice (Daloğlu, 2004; Özmusul, 2011; Seferoğlu, 1996).

Therefore, investigating the views and behaviors of university EFL instructors concerning professional development may help to highlight their efforts to build on their professional knowledge and skills, as well as the factors that contribute to their motivation (or their absence of motivation) to take part in developmental activities. The current study builds on a previous investigation that was carried out by the first author and his colleagues in the Turkish context (see Çelik, Mačianskienė et al., 2013). By extending the prior investigation

outside the confines of Turkey to an additional English as a Foreign Language instructional context (namely, Lithuania), the authors hope to add depth the findings, as well as to compare the responses given by the Turkish respondents to those of their Lithuanian counterparts. In doing so, it is their intention to build an understanding of EFL teachers' perspectives on professional development on an international level. Accordingly, the present study was conducted in order to answer the following research questions:

1. What do university-level English instructors in international EFL educational settings understand as professional development?
2. How important is professional development to EFL instructors at the university level?
3. What types of professional development activities do university-level EFL instructors engage in on a regular basis?
4. How effective do they believe these activities are in terms of enhancing their teaching ability?
5. How do Lithuanian EFL instructors' attitudes and behaviors with respect to professional development compare with those of Turkish EFL instructors?

Research Framework

Research Design and Sample

The present study was carried out as a follow-up to an existing study published by Çelik, Bayraktar-Çepni et al. (2013). The original study took place in the 2012-2013 academic year and was carried out with 42 English teachers who were employed at the School of Foreign Languages of a prominent university located in northeastern Turkey. The current study, which was conducted by the first author of the original study and two additional colleagues, expanded on the data from the original work with 13 instructors from a Lithuanian university as a means to compare the attitudes of the two groups of instructors. Permission for use of the data from the first study was obtained from all of the original authors prior to beginning the second study.

In order to understand EFL instructors' overall attitudes toward various aspects of professional development, a cross-sectional survey design was adopted for both the initial and the current investigation (Fraenkel & Wallen, 2008). Purposive sampling (Creswell, 2007; Patton, 2002) was employed in order to select the participants who could provide the most relevant information for the purposes of the study. Each participant group was drawn from the accessible population at the respective universities. The Turkish university employed 60 EFL instructors, all of whom were contacted and asked to participate by completing a detailed survey. Of the 60 surveys distributed, 42 were completed by the instructors, for a return rate of 70%. The Lithuanian university employed 22 EFL instructors at the time of the study; of these, 13 returned a completed survey, for a return rate of nearly 60%. Before proceeding with data collection, the respondents in both cases were informed of the purpose of the investigation, and their written consent was obtained.

The distribution of the Turkish and Lithuanian participants are presented side by side in the table below according to gender, age range, and years of teaching experience. In addition, their weekly workload is included, as well as academic degrees held and their future plans concerning whether or not to continue their formal education.

Table 1. Demographic information for the Turkish and Lithuanian Instructors.

	<i>Turkish Instructors</i>		<i>Lithuanian Instructors</i>	
	<i>N</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>%</i>
Gender:				
<i>Male</i>	19	45.2	1	7.6
<i>Female</i>	20	47.6	12	92.3
<i>Prefer not to say</i>	3	7.1	0	
Total	42		13	
Age range:				
23-28	12	28.5	2	15.3
29-34	11	26.1	2	15.3
35-40	9	21.4	5	38.4
41-46	5	11.9	0	0
Over 46	3	7.1	4	30.7
Missing-system	2	4.7	0	0
Total	42		13	

Years of English teaching experience:					
	0-5	14	33.3	3	23
	6-11	9	21.4	4	30.7
	12-17	9	21.4	2	15.3
	18-23	6	14.2	2	15.3
	24 +	2	4.7	2	15.3
	Missing-system	2	4.7	0	0
	Total	42		13	
Weekly teaching load:					
	0-6 hours	2	4.7	1	7.6
	7-13 hours	1	2.3	4	30.7
	14-19 hours	4	9.5	4	30.7
	20-25 hours	23	54.7	2	15.3
	26-30 hours	10	23.8	1	7.6
	31 hours and up	2	4.7	0	0
	Missing-system	0	0	1	7.6
	Total	42		13	
Academic degree:					
	Baccalaureate	30	71.4	0	0
	Masters	11	26.1	10	76.9
	PhD	0	0	3	23
	Missing-system	1	2.3	0	0
	Total	42		13	
Plans to continue formal education in a degree program:					
	Yes	22	52.3	2	15.3
	No	16	38	11	84.6
	Missing-system	4	9.5	0	0
	Total	42		13	

Data Collection and Analysis

In both the original and the current study, the data were collected by means of a 9-section questionnaire which was designed by the first author and colleagues (Çelik, Bayraktar-Çepni, et al., 2013). In order to ensure content validity of the instrument, a draft of the survey was analyzed by three experienced researchers and revised based on their comments. The initial survey section of the survey consisted of a number of preliminary items concerning the participants' teaching experience and field of expertise; this

demographic information was followed by 71 Likert-type questions which asked participants to rank their responses according to a specified scale (e.g., “not important,” “of little importance,” “somewhat important,” “very important”). An inventory of the survey items has been included in Appendix A.

Internal reliability of the questionnaire was established through a Cronbach alpha coefficient analysis (Fraenkel & Wallen, 2008). A satisfactory level of consistency for each section was indicated (Section B: 0.725; Section C: 0.842; Section D: 0.847; Section E: 0.853; Section F: 0.731; Section G: 0.864; Section H: 0.691; Section I: 0.891) (Çelik, Bayraktar-Çepni et al., 2013).

Analysis was carried out separately for each data set using SPSS 16.0 software, and descriptive statistics were used to present the numerical results in each case (Fraenkel & Wallen, 2008). In addition, an independent-samples t-test for equality of means was conducted for the Lithuanian and Turkish scores. Initially, the t-test was carried out for each section of the survey to determine whether there was any significant difference between the two groups in relation to the degree of importance given to the survey items. However, only Section I, related to the instructors’ perceived need for professional development, favored the Lithuanian instructors for all items in the section; therefore, an independent samples t-test was then carried out for each survey item individually.

Results

The results of the survey sections B through I are presented in the tables below; the descriptive statistics for the Turkish and Lithuanian respondents shown side by side for comparison, along with the related t-test scores. The t-test scores that indicated a significant difference between the Turkish and Lithuanian correspondents are indicated in bold type, with an asterisk (*). The findings are discussed in terms of the items that were found to be *most* and *least* important by both the Turkish and Lithuanian respondents for each section of the questionnaire, as well as the items that demonstrated the most significant difference between the two groups. Throughout the discussion, the survey items are referenced according to section and

item number (e.g., item 1 from section B of the questionnaire is coded as SB1, and so on).

EFL Teachers Attitudes towards Professional Development

Section B of the survey was designed to explore EFL teachers' general attitudes concerning professional development. There were 11 items in this section; the five possible responses ranged from “strongly disagree” to “strongly agree.”

Table 2. Survey Section B: Turkish and Lithuanian Teachers' attitudes towards professional development.

Item	<i>Turkish Respondents</i>			<i>Lithuanian Respondents</i>			t
	N	Mean	Std. Dev.	N	Mean	Std. Dev.	
SB1	41	4.0732	.84824	13	4.6154	.65044	-2.423*
SB2	42	4.2143	.68202	13	4.7692	.43853	-3.450*
SB3	40	4.1500	.69982	13	3.7692	.83205	1.488
SB4	42	4.1190	.67000	13	4.4615	.66023	-1.629
SB5	40	3.8750	.72280	13	3.3846	1.19293	1.401
SB6	41	4.4390	.54994	13	4.6923	.48038	-1.598
SB7	41	4.8780	.39970	13	4.7692	.43853	.796
SB8	41	4.8049	.40122	13	4.8462	.37553	-.340
SB9	42	4.4762	.59420	13	4.4615	.51887	.086
SB0	42	3.9762	.81114	13	3.4615	.87706	1.881
SB11	41	4.5854	.49878	13	4.6923	.48038	.693

As indicated in Table 2, item SB7, “Willingness is an important factor in professional development,” was given the most significance by the Turkish respondents. That is, nearly all the Turkish participants agreed or strongly agreed on the item (M=4.88). The response from the Lithuanian instructors to this statement (m=4.79) indicated no significant difference from the Turkish score ($t(18.76)=.80, p=0.44$).

According to the descriptive statistics, the Lithuanian group agreed most strongly with item SB8, “Teachers should be open to new ideas and developments” (m=4.84); the Turkish score for this item (m=4.80) likewise showed no significant difference from the Lithuanian score, with $t(22.86)=-0.34, p=0.74$. The item with the lowest degree of agreement for both groups was SB5, “teachers should evaluate each other’s teaching to identify problems, strengths

and weaknesses,” with a mean score ($m=3.88$) for the Turkish participants and ($m=3.85$) for the Lithuanian respondents. The independent-samples t-test score for this item, $t(14.97)=1.40$, $p=0.18$, indicates no significant difference between the Turkish and Lithuanian mean scores for item SB5. While items SB2, “Teachers should take the initiative for their own professional development” and SB1, “Teachers should take steps to improve their professional skills and knowledge without depending too much on the institution they work for,” received less emphasis by either group than the survey items outlined above, a significant difference was found between the two groups for each item ($t(31.52)=-3.450$, $p=0.002$ for SB2; and $t(26.15)=-2.423$, $p=0.04$ respectively). In both cases, the Lithuanian respondents felt significantly more strongly about the importance of taking individual initiative for their professional development.

Teacher Development Activities

Section C concerned the importance that the respondents placed on various professional development activities. There were 16 items in this section, all of which had five options ranging from “not important” to “very important.”

Table 3. Survey Section C: Importance placed on various professional development activities.

Item	<i>Turkish Respondents</i>			<i>Lithuanian Respondents</i>			t
	N	Mean	Std. Dev.	N	Mean	Std. Dev.	
SC1	42	4.2143	.51965	13	4.3077	.75107	-.418
SC2	42	4.0000	.69843	13	4.0000	.57735	0.000
SC3	41	4.1220	.64012	13	4.2308	.92681	-.395
SC4	42	4.0952	.69175	13	4.1538	.89872	-.216
SC5	39	3.8974	.82062	13	3.3846	.76795	2.049
SC6	42	3.2857	1.19523	13	2.3846	.96077	2.781*
SC7	41	3.8780	.78087	13	3.7692	1.01274	.355
SC8	42	4.0000	.79633	13	4.5385	.51887	-2.846*
SC9	42	4.2857	.50778	13	4.3077	.48038	-.142
SC10	42	4.0238	.64347	13	3.9231	.95407	.356
SC11	41	4.1951	.67895	13	4.5385	.87706	-1.294
SC12	42	3.3810	.98655	13	4.2308	.59914	-3.777*
SC13	42	3.7857	.75015	13	4.1538	.80064	-1.470
SC14	41	3.2927	1.03063	13	2.8462	1.06819	1.324

SC15 42 4.0238 .64347 13 3.9231 .64051 .495

Table 3 indicates that the participants from Lithuania commonly agreed that item SC11, “In-service training” (m=4.54) and item SC8, “Reflection on own teaching” (m=4.54) were very important activities with respect to teacher development; while the Turkish respondents reflected mean scores of (m=4.20) and (m=4.00), respectively, for these two items. The corresponding t-test score for item SC11 ($t(16.81)=-1.29$, $p=0.213$) indicated no significant difference between the Turkish and Lithuanian responses to this item. However, the t-test score for item SC8, $t(31.05)=-2.85$, $p=0.008$, demonstrates a significant difference between the Lithuanian and Turkish mean scores. This result suggests that, while the Lithuanian respondents saw in-service training as an important activity, the Turkish participants gave this activity significantly less emphasis than their Lithuanian counterparts.

The item in this section given the most importance by the Turkish respondents was SC9, “Trying out new ideas or suggestions in practice” (m=4.29); the Lithuanian participants gave this item slightly more importance (m=4.30). In this case, the t-test score ($t(21)=-0.14$, $p=0.89$) shows no significance between the two groups. In both contexts, the least important item in the section, SC6, concerned “observation of classroom events by department heads, directors and administrators,” with (m=3.29) for the Turkish instructors and (m=2.38) for the Lithuanian respondents. T-test scores for this item, $t(24.96)=2.78$, $p=0.01$, indicate a significant difference between the Turkish and Lithuanian groups, suggesting that the Lithuanian participants gave this activity considerably less importance than the Turkish respondents.

The Turkish (m=3.38) and Lithuanian (m=4.23) responses to item SC12, “following research literature in the field,” received less importance by both groups than other professional development activities. However, the t-test score of $t(33.66)=-3.771$, $p=.001$ indicates a substantially significant difference between the two groups; therefore, we can infer that the Lithuanian respondents gave this activity considerably more emphasis than their Turkish peers.

Likewise, item SC6, “Observation of classroom events by department heads, directors and administrators,” indicated a

significant difference between the two groups, with $t(24.59)=2.781$, $p=.01$. Therefore, it can be inferred that the Turkish instructors were considerably less inclined to believe that classroom observation by supervisors was important to their professional development than the Lithuanian respondents.

Overall, the results indicate that in-service training and reflecting on one's own practice received the greatest overall significance among the participants, while trying out new ideas or suggestions was also seen as important. On the contrary, classroom observation by school administrators or officials was not seen as important to professional development by either group.

Factors that Hinder EFL Teachers' Professional Development

Section D was designed to explore the factors that may hinder EFL teachers' professional development. There were nine items, all of which had five options ranging from "not important" to "very important."

Table 4. Survey Section D: Factors that hinder EFL teachers' professional development efforts.

Item	<i>Turkish Respondents</i>			<i>Lithuanian Respondents</i>			t
	N	Mean	Std. Dev.	N	Mean	Std. Dev.	
SD1	42	4.1190	1.06387	13	4.0769	.86232	.145
SD2	42	4.2381	.95788	13	3.6154	1.66024	1.288
SD3	42	3.8571	.95180	13	3.1538	1.51911	1.576
SD4	42	3.7857	1.04848	13	3.4615	1.45002	.748
SD5	41	3.5366	1.22673	13	2.6923	1.37747	1.975
SD6	41	3.8293	1.20213	13	3.6923	1.43670	.311
SD7	42	3.9524	1.16770	13	3.2308	1.78670	1.369
SD8	42	3.4286	1.51646	13	2.9231	1.55250	1.031
SD9	41	2.8780	1.30758	13	2.4615	1.39137	.654

Most of the Turkish participants indicated that item SD2, which related to excessive workload, was a factor that hindered their professional development ($m=4.24$), rating this item as either important or very important, as shown in Table 4. The Lithuanian respondents, on the other hand, rated this item as less important ($m=3.62$). However, according to the independent-samples t-test score

for this item, $t(14.55)=1.29$, $p=.22$, there was no significant difference in the responses of these two groups.

For the Lithuanian instructors, item SD1, concerning personal financial problems, was rated as a greater obstacle ($m=4.07$) than excessive workload; the Turkish instructors rated this as the second most important obstacle to professional development ($m=4.12$). With a t-test score of $t(24.39)=0.115$ $p=0.89$, there was again no significant difference in the responses of the two groups. In both contexts, the instructors indicated that item SD9, relating to difficulty in accessing literature in the field, was not a significant obstacle, with scores of ($m=2.88$) for the Turkish and ($m=2.46$) for the Lithuanian respondents; the independent-samples t-test score $t(19.21)=0.954$, $p=0.35$ suggests no significant difference between the two groups. Overall, no significant difference was found between the Turkish and Lithuanian instructors for any of the items in section D of the survey.

Time Spent on Improving Your Teaching

Section E concerned the time spent by EFL instructors on personal efforts to improve their teaching practice. There were nine items, all of which had five options: “no time,” “less than ½ hour,” “½ to hour,” “1 to 2 hours,” and “more than 2 hours.”

Table 5. Survey Section E: Time spent on improving teaching practice.

Item	<i>Turkish Respondents</i>			<i>Lithuanian Respondents</i>			t
	N	Mean	Std. Dev.	N	Mean	Std. Dev.	
SE1	39	3.3333	1.19942	13	4.0769	.64051	-2.842*
SE2	42	2.9762	1.37021	13	3.0000	.70711	-.083
SE3	42	3.1429	1.20104	13	3.6923	1.10940	-1.530
SE4	41	2.8780	1.14445	13	2.7692	.83205	.373
SE5	42	3.3571	1.26532	13	4.3846	.86972	-3.311*
SE6	42	3.0238	1.11504	13	3.4615	1.12660	-1.258
SE7	41	3.2683	1.16242	13	3.7692	1.10274	-1.498
SE8	42	3.0952	1.12205	13	2.8462	1.46322	.565
SE9	41	3.4878	1.28689	13	3.6154	1.32530	-.305

For section E of the survey, the Lithuanian participants indicated spending more than 2 hours weekly on item SE5, improving their subject matter knowledge ($m=4.38$). The score for the Turkish

respondents on this item ($m=3.36$) was significantly lower, as supported by the t-test score for the item ($t(29.21)=-2.84, p=0.01$).

In fact, the Turkish participants reported that they spent less than 1 hour per week on any of the specified items related to improving their teaching. Of the activities mentioned, item SE9, spending ½ to 1 hour per week using computers to support instruction, was indicated most frequently by the Turkish respondents ($M=3.49$); the Lithuanian participants spent a similar amount of time on this activity ($m=3.61$). The related t-test score, $t(19.72)=-.305, p=.764$, indicates no significant difference between the two groups.

Of all of the activities mentioned, both groups of respondents spent the least amount of time on item SE4, improving their classroom management skills, at less than ½ hour per week ($m=2.88$ for the Turkish and $m=2.77$ for the Lithuanian instructors).

The independent-samples t-test score for item SE4 ($t(27.7)=0.38, p=.71$) indicates no statistically significant difference between the two groups in this respect.

Applicability of Professional Development

Section F consisted of two items concerning the applicability of the professional development activities in which the teachers had participated in the past 12 months. The first item asked participants to characterize the usefulness of these activities according to the options “not at all useful,” “mostly not useful,” “mostly useful,” and “very useful.” The second item asked the respondents to rate the extent to which they had been able to implement what they had learned from these activities as “not at all,” “slightly,” “somewhat” and “a great deal.”

Table 6. Survey Section F: Applicability of professional development activities.

Item	<i>Turkish Respondents</i>			<i>Lithuanian Respondents</i>			t
	N	Mean	Std. Dev.	N	Mean	Std. Dev.	
SF1	42	2.7619	.87818	13	3.2308	.43853	-2.575*
SF2	42	2.9048	.82075	13	3.1538	.55470	-1.250

In response to item SF1, the Turkish participants characterized professional development activities as mostly not useful to their

teaching ($m=2.76$); on the other hand, participants from Lithuania indicated that professional development activities which they had carried out were mostly applicable to their practice ($m=3.23$). The t-test score for this item, $t(41.55)=-2.58$, $p=.01$, supports a statistically significant difference between the Turkish and Lithuanian groups. Furthermore, the Turkish participants noted in reference to item SF2 that they had learned to a slight degree ($m=2.90$) from professional development activities in which they had participated during the last 12 months, while the Lithuanian instructors implied that they learned slightly more ($m=3.15$) than their Turkish counterparts. For this item, the t-test score ($t(29.78)=-1.25$, $p=0.22$) demonstrates no statistically significant difference between the two groups of participants.

Incentives for Professional Development

Section G was designed to gather information about incentives for professional development. There were seven items, all of which required a YES or NO answer.

Table 7. Survey Section G: Potential incentives for professional development.

Item	<i>Turkish Respondents</i>			<i>Lithuanian Respondents</i>			t
	N	Mean	Std. Dev.	N	Mean	Std. Dev.	
SG1	40	1.8750	.33493	13	1.9231	.27735	-.515
SG2	41	1.7805	.41906	13	1.6154	.50637	1.066
SG3	41	1.7561	.43477	13	1.3846	.50637	2.684*
SG4	41	1.7805	.41906	13	1.6154	.50637	1.066
SG5	41	1.8049	.40122	13	1.9231	.27735	-1.191
SG6	41	1.8537	.35784	13	1.8462	.37553	.063
SG7	41	1.4878	.50606	13	1.2308	.43853	1.772

In this section, nearly all of the participants reported in response to item SG1 that they had not received payment or reimbursement of any kind for professional development activities, with a mean score for the Turkish respondents of ($m=1.88$) and a score of ($m=1.92$) for the Lithuanian instructors. The t-test score for item SG1, $t(24.39) = -0.515$, $p=0.64$, demonstrates that there was no significant difference between the responses of the two groups. However, for item SG5, the Lithuanian respondents ($m=1.92$) reported feeling more strongly than

their Turkish counterparts ($m=1.80$) that a potential increase in salary was a significant motivation for engaging in professional development. According to the independent-samples t-test score for this section, $t(29.33) = -1.19$, $p=0.24$, there was no significant difference between the Turkish and Lithuanian instructors for this item. Furthermore, both groups of instructors indicated that item SG6, participation in professional development activities, could lead to formal recognition or higher ratings on their evaluations, at ($m=1.85$) and ($m=1.84$) for the Turkish and Lithuanian instructors respectively. The t-test score for this item, $t(19.42) = 0.63$, $p=0.95$, shows no statistically significant difference for the two sets of responses.

From these results, we can see that the potential for a salary increase offered the strongest incentive for engaging in professional development, while formal recognition or higher ratings on their formal evaluations was also a motivating factor. On the other hand, few of the participants had received any direct monetary compensation for their efforts, either in the form of an incentive or a reimbursement of expenses.

Participation in Professional Development

Part A of Section H asked the participants whether they had engaged in specified professional development activities in the past 12 months. There were seven items, all of which required a YES or NO answer.

Table 8. Survey Section H(A): Participation in professional development activities over the last 12 months.

Item	<i>Turkish Respondents</i>			<i>Lithuanian Respondents</i>			t
	N	Mean	Std. Dev.	N	Mean	Std. Dev.	
SH1A	41	1.4634	.50485	13	1.0769	.27735	3.509*
SH2A	40	1.4500	.50383	13	1.4615	1.39137	-8.097*
SH3A	39	1.7179	.45588	13	1.7692	.43853	6.045*
SH4A	41	1.7073	.46065	13	2.0000	.00000	-5.745*
SH5A	41	1.7317	.44857	13	1.7692	.43853	-.267
SH6A	40	1.4750	.50574	13	1.3846	.50637	-3.476
SH7A	40	1.8000	.40510	13	2.0000	.00000	-3.122*

During the 12 months prior to data collection, few of the participants from either context had participated in mentoring and/or peer observation and coaching as part of a formal university arrangement, with a mean score on item SH7A for the Turkish participants of ($m=1.80$) and ($m=2.00$) for the Lithuanian instructors. The t-test score for this item, $t(39)=-3.12$, $p=0.00$, indicates a significant difference in responses. This may be explained by the fact that while a small number of Turkish respondents had participated in such activities, none of the Lithuanian respondents had done so.

Likewise, the majority of the participants reported on item SH3A that they had not participated in any degree or qualifications programs; the Turkish score for this item was ($m=1.70$), and the Lithuanian score was ($m=1.76$). The t-test score of $t(34.5)=6.045$, $p=0.00$, indicates a statistically significant difference between the two groups.

Of the Turkish participants, a large number of the respondents ($m=1.46$) had participated in training courses or workshops; an even larger proportion of the Lithuanian respondents ($m=1.08$) also reported taking part in courses or workshops, as they indicated in response to item SH1A. With a t-test score of $t(37.91)=3.51$, $p=0.01$, a statistically significant difference exists between the two groups. The fact that nearly all of the Lithuanian respondents had participated in courses or workshops, while a smaller proportion of the larger group of Turkish respondents had done so, may account for this difference. Furthermore, most of the Turkish participants ($m=1.45$), as well as the Lithuanian respondents ($m=1.46$), had attended educational conferences or seminars in the year preceding the study, according to their responses to item SH2A. The independent-samples t-test score of $t(15.89)=-0.10$, $p=0.00$, likewise indicates a statistically significant difference between the two groups.

Impact of Professional Development

Part B of Section H asked the participants to rate the degree of impact of the activities in which they had participated on their teaching practice. There were five potential answers, ranging from “no impact” to “great impact.”

Table 9. Survey Section H(B): Degree of impact of professional development activities.

Item	<i>Turkish Respondents</i>			<i>Lithuanian Respondents</i>			t
	N	Mean	Std. Dev.	N	Mean	Std. Dev.	
SH1B	23	3.0000	.90453	13	3.0000	.57735	0.000
SH2B	21	2.6190	.74001	13	3.0000	.70711	4.204*
SH3B	10	3.0000	1.05409	3	2.6667	.57735	1.134
SH4B	13	2.9231	1.25576	1	3.0000	.00000	4.097*
SH5B	12	2.5833	1.16450	4	2.5000	.57735	-1.696
SH6B	19	3.0526	.84811	8	3.3750	.91613	5.410*
SH7B	11	2.9091	1.13618	--	--	--	--

According to the results for both the Turkish and Lithuanian participants, none of the activities mentioned was described as having a great deal of impact on the participants' teaching. The responses to item SH6B indicated that individual or collaborative research on topics of professional interest had a moderate impact for both the Turkish ($m=3.05$) and Lithuanian ($m=3.38$) instructors. The t-test score for this item, $t(18)=5.41$, $p=0.00$, indicates a statistically significant difference between the two groups. While this item received the most importance from both groups of participants, this disparity suggests that the Turkish respondents gave independent or collaborative research considerably less emphasis in their professional development than the Lithuanian instructors.

Furthermore, item SH5B, joining a network of teachers formed specifically for professional development purposes, had little impact for either the Turkish ($m=2.58$) or Lithuanian ($m=2.50$) participants. In this case, the independent-samples t-test score of $t(17.37)=-1.70$, $p=0.11$, demonstrates that there was no significant difference between the two groups. Finally, while item SH7B, participating in peer mentoring or coaching, had a moderate impact for the Turkish instructors ($m=2.91$), none of the Lithuanians responded to this item.

Perceived Need for Professional Development

Section I was designed to gather information about the respondents' perception of the need for professional development.

There were nine items, with four possible responses ranging from “no need at all” to “high level of need.”

Table 10. Survey Section I: Turkish and Lithuanian teachers’ perceptions of the need for professional development.

Item	<i>Turkish Respondents</i>			<i>Lithuanian Respondents</i>			t
	N	Mean	Std. Dev.	N	Mean	Std. Dev.	
SI1	40	2.3000	.99228	13	3.2308	.92681	-3.088*
SI2	41	2.3171	.81973	13	3.1538	.55470	-3.883*
SI3	40	2.2500	1.03155	13	2.8462	.98710	-1.871
SI4	41	2.1951	1.00547	13	3.0769	.95407	-2.859*
SI5	40	2.1500	.89299	13	2.7692	.92681	-2.111*
SI6	41	2.5854	.89375	13	3.1538	.98710	-1.850
SI7	41	2.4390	1.07352	13	3.1538	.89872	-2.420
SI8	41	2.1707	.94611	13	2.3846	1.12090	-.763
SI9	41	2.1220	.92723	13	2.2308	1.09193	-.324
SI10	40	2.6000	1.10477	13	2.7692	.83205	-.758
SI11	41	2.2195	1.08426	13	3.0769	.95407	-2.738*

The independent-samples t-test scores for section I of the survey indicate that the Lithuanian respondents gave more emphasis to the need for professional development in all respects; therefore, we can infer that, on the whole, they viewed professional development as more important than the Turkish instructors.

Of the professional development activities mentioned in the survey, the Turkish instructors gave the most significance to item SI10, learning about teaching in multicultural settings, although they only saw a moderate need ($m=2.6$) in this respect. The Lithuanian scores closely mirrored their Turkish counterparts at ($m=2.77$). The t-test score for item SI10, $t(22.61)=-0.758$, $p=0.456$, indicates no significant difference between the two groups in this case.

On the other hand, most of the participants from Turkey saw item SI9, managerial duties and administrative tasks, as unnecessary for their professional development ($m=2.12$), with only slightly more importance ($m=2.23$) given to this activity by the Lithuanian instructors. The t-test score for this item, $t(17.84)=-0.32$, $p=0.75$, also indicates no significant difference between the two groups of respondents.

Likewise, most of the Turkish participants ranked item SI5, knowledge and understanding of instructional practice (knowledge mediation) in their main subject field, as having little importance to their professional development with a mean score of ($m=2.15$), while the Lithuanian instructors noted a slightly greater need at ($m=2.77$). The t-test score for this item, $t(19.78)=-2.11$, $p=0.01$, points to a statistically significant difference for the two groups; this result suggests that the Lithuanian group saw knowledge and understanding of their instructional practice as considerably more important than the Turkish respondents.

Summary and Discussion

The overall attitudes of the participants toward professional development indicate that Turkish and Lithuanian participants both believed that willingness is important in engaging in PD activities. However, while the Lithuanian participants also expressed that being open to new ideas is necessary, neither group of participants believed that teachers should evaluate the practice of their peers. However, as with Fendler (2003), Murray (2010) and Richards and Farrell (2011), trying out new ideas or suggestions, in-service training and reflection on one's own practice were indicated as important by both groups of participants.

Classroom observation by school administrators or officials was not seen as necessary to developing as teachers by either group of respondents. In terms of obstacles to professional development, the Turkish respondents reported excessive workload as a significant barrier. However, the Lithuanian instructors viewed personal financial issues as a deterring factor, reflecting the concerns of Özmusul (2011) and Seferoğlu (1996). Access to current literature was not viewed as an important problem by either group of instructors. In terms of the time they spent on improving their own teaching skills, the Lithuanian respondents reported spending more than 2 hours per week on increasing their subject knowledge, while the Turkish instructors spent ½ to 1 hour on this activity. While both groups of instructors spend ½ to 1 hour weekly using computers to support instruction, neither group spent much time on improving their classroom management skills.

On the whole, the Turkish respondents found that the professional development activities they engaged in had little relevance to their practice, in support of the contentions of Daloğlu (2004); yet the Lithuanians found professional development activities to be largely relevant. In terms of incentives, however, neither group of respondents received much financial support for professional development (Özmuşul, 2011; Seferoğlu, 1996); on the other hand, both groups of respondents did see the potential for a higher salary as a motivating factor. In addition, the Turkish instructors acknowledged receiving formal recognition or higher evaluation scores.

In terms of whether various professional activities had assisted them in developing their knowledge and practical skills, neither group found that mentoring/peer-coaching or qualification programs had much impact; in contrast, both the Turkish and Lithuanian groups felt that workshops and conferences were of substantial benefit. Finally, the Turkish instructors perceived a need for learning to deal with multicultural issues, while the Lithuanian respondents believed that increasing their knowledge of content and performance standards was important to their professional growth. In this respect, however, carrying out managerial or administrative tasks was not viewed as necessary to developing their professional skills.

Conclusion

The findings suggest that, while the Turkish and Lithuanian instructors had similar experiences and views overall, each group indicated a variety of strengths, as well as weaknesses, in terms of the professional development opportunities available to them. For instance, while the Lithuanian instructors found the content of various professional development activities to be relevant to their practice, the Turkish instructors expressed greater satisfaction with the acknowledgement they received for their efforts. As a result, collaboration between professionals in both countries may be useful in addressing problem areas and enhancing the professional development opportunities available to university-level instructors in both cases.

Due to the limited number of respondents for both groups, the data reported here is not considered as representative of EFL instructors in general. Furthermore, due to the small number of

Lithuanian respondents (N=13), a normal distribution cannot be assumed, and therefore it cannot be said with certainty that the groups were reasonably comparable. However, the views reported by these instructors may reflect the circumstances in a variety of educational settings where English is taught as a foreign language. Extending the research to diverse groups of participants in additional countries may expand our current understanding of university EFL instructors' attitudes and behaviors with respect to ongoing professional development.

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Genişletilmiş Özet

Araştırmalar öğrencilerin yabancı dil olarak İngilizceyi öğrenmelerindeki başarılarında öğretmenlerinin etkinliğinin önemli bir rol oynadığını ortaya çıkarmıştır. Başarılı bir şekilde İngilizce öğretmek için, İngilizce öğretmenlerinin sadece iyi bir İngilizce bilgisine değil, güçlü bir pedagojik alan bilgisine ve yeterli sınıf yönetimi becerilerine de sahip olmaları gerekmektedir; ayrıca iyi birer

iletişimci olmalı ve öğrencileriyle etkili iletişim sağlayabilmelidirler. Bu özelliklere sahip olabilmeleri noktasında öğretmenler için mesleki gelişim önemli bir faktör olarak görülmektedir. Bu sebeple, araştırmacılar öğretmenlerin mesleki gelişime karşı tavırlarının, mesleki becerilerini geliştirmeye yönelik çabalarının ve bu çabaların öğretmenlikleri üzerindeki etkilerine karşı algılarının kişisel gelişim fırsatları araştırmaya dair motivasyonları üzerinde önemli bir etkiye sahip olabileceğini düşünmüşlerdir. Bu karşılaştırmalı çalışma yabancı dil olarak İngilizce öğreten okutmanların eğitimsel bilgilerini ve öğretmenlik becerilerini geliştirmeye dair çabalarına ilişkin görüşlerini analiz etme amacıyla yapılmıştır.

Araştırmacılar iki farklı kültürel ve dilbilimsel yapının araştırmada ele alınması amaçlanan konulara daha zengin bir bakış açısı sağlayacağını düşündüklerinden, katılımcılar olarak Türkiye ve Litvanya'dan üniversitelerde görev yapan İngilizce okutmanları seçildi. Katılımcıların mesleki gelişime dair tavırlarını, katıldıkları aktivite çeşitlerini, tecrübelerine dair algılarını ve mesleki gelişimin öğretmenlikleri üzerindeki etkilerine dair fikirlerini almak amacıyla Likert tipi bir ölçek kullanıldı. Ölçme aracı çalışmanın ilk yazarı ve meslektaşları tarafından geliştirildi ve kapsam geçerliliği ve içerik güvenilirliği açısından test edildi; araç geçerli ve güvenilir bulundu. Anket önce Türk, ardından Litvan katılımcılara uygulandı. Toplamda 42 anket Türk katılımcılardan ve 13 anket Litvan katılımcılardan tamamlanmış olarak geri döndü.

Veriler, iki grup katılımcı tarafından hangi maddelere en fazla, hangilerine en az önem verildiğini belirlemek amacıyla betimleyici istatistikler kullanılarak analiz edilmiştir. Her bir grup için anketler ayrı ayrı analiz edilmiş; ardından ilişkili değişkenler arasında önemli bir istatistiksel farklılık olup olmadığını belirlemek amacıyla iki grup veri arasında bağımsız örnekleme denk bir t-test uygulanmıştır. Türk ve Litvan okutmanlardan elde edilen verilerin ikisi için de betimleyici istatistikler yan yana sunulmuş ve karşılaştırmalı olarak tartışılmıştır; bağımsız örnek t-test puanları bu sonuçları desteklemek için kullanılmıştır.

Genel olarak, okutmanlar mesleki gelişim konusunda isteksiz olduklarını ifade etmişlerdir; ancak, iki grupta da ekonomik kaygılar ve ağır ders yükleri gibi engeller öğretmenlerin mesleki açıdan gelişme yeteneklerini azaltmıştır. Dahası, Türk okutmanlar temel olarak bilgi birikimi konusundaki tatmini arttırmanın sadece bir dereceye kadar önemli olduğunu belirtirken, Litvan katılımcılar bu yöndeki mesleki gelişimin oldukça önemli olduğunu vurgulamışlardır. Sonuç olarak, iki grubun görüşleri detaylar açısından, mesleki gelişimin uygulamadaki etkisinin genel bir değerlendirmesi olarak, büyük ölçüde benzerken, Litvan okutmanlar tecrübelerini, Türk katılımcılar çoğunlukla ilgisiz görürken, faydalı olarak değerlendirmişlerdir.

Özellikle Litvan örneklem sayısının azlığı çalışmanın sonuçlarını sınırlandırır da, bu iki eğitimci grup tarafından belirtilen görüşler var olan mesleki gelişim olanaklarının hangi yönleriyle İngilizce öğretmenlerinin ihtiyaçlarını karşılayıp karşılamadığına ve bu anlamdaki faaliyetlerin yeniden yapılandırılmasının, finansal ve kurumsal desteğin sağlanmasının gerekli olduğu noktalarına dikkat çekmektedir.

* * * *

Appendix A

Section B: EFL TEACHERS' ATTITUDES TOWARDS THEIR OWN PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT
SB1. Teachers should take steps to improve their professional skills and knowledge without depending too much on the institution they work for.
SB2. Teachers should take the initiative for their own professional development.
SB3 . A teacher should be free to test any new ideas or techniques in teaching.
SB4. Teachers should be involved in the evaluation of their own teaching skills and knowledge.
SB5. Teachers should evaluate each other's teaching to identify problems, strengths, and weaknesses.
SB6. Teachers should work together to find solutions to problems.
SB7. Willingness is an important factor in successful professional development.
SB8. Teachers should be open to new ideas and developments.
SB9. Teachers should consider and evaluate their own practices in order to improve themselves professionally.
SB10. Teachers should observe each other's classes to gather information about different approaches to teaching.
SB11. Teachers should keep themselves current on changes and improvements in English language teaching.
Section C: TEACHER DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES
SC1. Sharing experiences and problems with colleagues
SC2. Asking for professional help from colleagues
SC3. Working on developing new materials with colleagues
SC4. Working on developing techniques and activities with colleagues
SC5. Peer observation (observing how colleagues approach their teaching)
SC6. Observation of classroom events by department heads, directors and administrators
SC7. Teacher-initiated classroom investigation (action research)
SC8. In-service training (workshops, seminars, etc.)
SC9. Trying out new ideas or suggestions in practice
SC10. Gathering information about one's own teaching performance (through surveys, interviews, etc.)
SC11. Reflection on own teaching (thinking critically about and evaluating one's own teaching practices)
SC12. Following research literature in the field
SC13. Attending conferences and symposiums in the field
SC14. Training other teachers
SC15. Following professional development programs
Section D: FACTORS THAT HINDER EFL TEACHERS' PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT
SD1. Personal financial problems

SD2. Excessive work load
SD3. Lack of communication among colleagues
SD4. Lack of collaboration among colleagues
SD5. Strict working hours
SD6. Lack of institutional support for professional development
SD7. Lack of self-motivation
SD8. Insufficient educational background
SD9. Difficulty in accessing literature in the field in order to keep up to date
Section E: TIME SPENT ON IMPROVING YOUR TEACHING
SE1. Lesson planning
SE2. Learning to use best-practice instructional techniques
SE3. Reviewing student performance data to inform instruction
SE4. Improving classroom management skills
SE5. Increasing your subject matter or content area knowledge
SE6. Preparing students for standardized tests
SE7. Student motivation and engagement
SE8. Differentiated instruction (i. e., varied approaches to instruction in response to student differences in readiness and learning needs)
SE9. Using computers to support instruction
Section F: APPLICABILITY OF PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES
SF1: On average, how would you characterize the usefulness of the professional development activities you have attended during the last 12 months?
SF2: To what extent have you been able to implement what you have learned from the professional development activities in which you have participated during the last 12 months?
Section G: POTENTIAL INCENTIVES FOR PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT
SG1. Payment for professional development activities that took place outside regular work hours
SG2. Full or partial financial support for fees and expenses related to graduate studies
SG3. Funding for conference or workshop fees
SG4. Funding for travel and/or daily expenses
SG5. Increase in salary or other pay increases
SG6. Formal recognition or higher ratings on annual teacher evaluations
SG7. Appreciation by colleagues, administrators and others in your workplace
Section H: IMPACT OF PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES IN THE LAST 12 MONTHS (Part A of Section H asked participants whether they had participated in any of the given activities; Part B of Section H asked participants to rate the impact of these activities on their professional development)
SH1. Courses/workshops (e.g. on subject matter or methods and/or other education-related topics)
SH2. Education conferences or seminars (where teachers and/or researchers present their research results and discuss educational problems)

SH3. Qualification programs (e.g., degree programs)
SH4. Observation visits to other universities or schools
SH5. Participation in a network of teachers formed specifically for professional development purposes
SH6. Individual or collaborative research on a topic that interests you professionally
SH7. Mentoring and/or peer observation and coaching as part of a formal university arrangement
Section I: PERCEIVED NEED FOR PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT
SI1. Content and performance standards in my field
SI2. Student assessment practice
SI3. Classroom management
SI4. Knowledge and understanding of my field
SI5. Knowledge and understanding of instructional practice (knowledge mediation) in my field
SI6. Information and Communications Technology (ICT) skills for teaching
SI7. Teaching students with special learning needs
SI8. Student discipline and behavior problems
SI9. Managerial duties and administrative tasks
SI10. Teaching in a multicultural setting
SI11. Counseling and advising students