

TURKISH PROVINCIAL STATE UNIVERSITY TEACHERS' PERCEPTIONS
OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHING AS A CAREER

A THESIS PRESENTED BY

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ABSTRACT

Title : Turkish Provincial State University Teachers' Perceptions of English Language Teaching as a Career

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The purpose of this study was to investigate whether Turkish provincial state university teachers see EFL teaching as a career, how demographic factors (age, sex, experience, and institution), and occupational factors (job satisfaction, entrance into teaching, and professional development opportunities) relate to teachers' commitment.

The study was conducted in nine different institutions. 180 EFL teachers in these institutions participated in the study.

Data were collected through a questionnaire which consisted of three parts and the participants were asked multiple-choice and open-ended questions in the first part; Likert-scale questions in the second part, and questions in which more than one option could be selected in the third part of the questionnaire.

Quantitative data analysis techniques were used to analyse the data. For the items in the first part of the questionnaire the frequencies and the percentages were calculated. The frequencies, the percentages, the mean, and the chi-square values were found to analyse teachers' short- and long-term commitment. The relation of age, sex, and institution to teachers' commitment was analysed through the chi-

square, and for the relation of experience to teachers' commitment the Pearson correlation was used. The correlation between occupational factors and teachers' commitment was analysed through the Pearson correlation, and the frequencies and the percentages were calculated to analyse the three questions in Part C in the questionnaire.

The results of the data analysis revealed that teachers generally see ELT as a career. Age, sex, and experience did not relate to teachers' commitment, but institution correlated with teachers' commitment. Teachers' entrance into teaching and their current perceptions of ELT as an occupation, teachers' job satisfaction, and their perceptions of professional development opportunities were found to be related to teachers' commitment. Teachers' being proud of their profession, their having positive relationships with their students, and their being satisfied with their current teaching position were found among the most important factors relating to teachers' commitment. Low salaries were the most important reason for why teachers might consider leaving teaching.

Considering that teachers' job satisfaction and their perceptions of professional development are related to their commitment to EFL teaching, administrators should give priority to providing teachers with positive work conditions, opportunities for professional development, and continual moral and administrative support.

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

Work is one of the most important concepts in human life as it occupies a considerable amount of time and has diverse influences on peoples' psychology. Csikszentmihalyi (1997) points to work as a strange experience due to its intense contradictory effects. It provides a sense of pride and identity and yet is still something many people would be happy to get rid of. He mentions recent studies revealing that the majority of American men and women would not stop working even if they did not have to work. At the same time, he points out the results of several studies showing that people wish to be doing something other than the job they are to do.

What makes people fond of being involved in work might be its quality of enabling one, as Marx proposed, "to realize his human potential through productive activity" (as cited in Csikszentmihalyi, 1997, p.51). On the other hand it is a major source of entropy, a kind of disorder that prevents the effective use of energy, when it is done unskilfully under obligation. If people are to repeat a series of routine actions that do not provide a challenge of appropriate level through which they can learn to improve for more difficult tasks, they can neither establish meaningful goals for work nor can they invest their attention to achieve their goals (Csikszentmihalyi, 1990).

Professionally rewarding workplace conditions and positive attitudes toward the work performed can be said to constitute the necessary conditions for people to experience an encouraging atmosphere for exerting zealous efforts in their career (Fullan, 1991). It could then be possible for individuals to lift both their own performances and their profession to higher standards.

Teaching, like many other professions, is empowered by the purposeful endeavours of its performers. Whether teaching is considered as a "worthy, complex, demanding profession" (Calderhead, as cited in Richards, 1998, p. 65) and a career to be held lifelong by teachers has recently been one of the major concerns for researchers (Johnston, 1997). The reason for this concern is that there can be a strong relationship between teachers' perceptions of ELT as career and their efforts to improve their own standards of doing the job and the quality of the job of teaching.

Today, the terms career and profession are frequently discussed in EFL and ESL teaching although there is not much known about the lives of teachers working in this field (Johnston, 1997). Whether ELT is accepted as a career by the ELT teachers has been partly discussed in the studies conducted by Ar (1998), Johnston (1997), Kleinsasser (1992), Pennington (1995), and Wilkerson (2000), and factors affecting teacher attrition can be said to constitute a starting point to investigate the field of ELT as a career, and the teachers' views on their performing the act of teaching as a lifelong activity.

Kleinsasser (1992), in his study on the foreign language teacher attrition in Illinois between the years 1985-1990, states that an average number of 154 teachers out of 1,570 employed per year leave the profession for voluntary, involuntary or other reasons. Losing ten percent of the actual teaching force every year, for whatever reasons, can be a serious impediment hindering the growth of the profession both in quality and quantity. Pennington (1995) also reports an article in the Sunday Morning Post giving the rate of attrition of teachers in Hong Kong as 10 percent per year. Johnston (1997) describes the lives of teachers in Poland, and says

that some of the teachers choose other jobs as a result of negative work conditions such as low salaries and lack of influence, status, and power.

Wilkerson (2000) states that foreign language teachers leave their jobs and the rates of teacher attrition among foreign language teachers rise to approximately 33% or higher by the end of the fifth year of teaching. Her study mentions unexpected workplace realities as one of the major reasons causing teachers leave the profession. According to her, teachers are given little time to improve themselves to cope with the realities in their teaching contexts. Johnston (1997) mentions a study sponsored by The Centre for British Teachers (1989) which indicates a high attrition rate of English teachers and gives “the lack of an institutionalised career structure” as the main reason for this rate.

As to the situation in Turkey, Ar (1998) argues that the lives of EFL teachers present a similar unpleasant picture. ELT contexts in Turkey vary in terms of work conditions, relationships between teachers and administrators, unity and cooperation among colleagues, relationships with students, salaries, rewards and workload, and successful teachers leave their jobs at government schools (Demircan, 1988). Apart from the private language institutions and universities, state universities also differ in many aspects such as workload, the quality of students, teachers' relationships with their administrators and colleagues, and opportunities for professional development. Unlike in many provincial state universities, in some reputable state universities where there are successfully run preparatory schools of English, mostly in big urban districts, EFL teachers work under well-designed ELT programs with motivated bright students (Bayraktar, 1996), and they are generally offered a range of stable professional development opportunities.

In Turkey, teachers' professional expectations might not be fully satisfied due to the lack of satisfactory work conditions, especially at state universities in relatively smaller, remote or provincial cities. Ar (1998) states that teachers at Turkish state universities are dissatisfied with low salaries, the lack of cooperation and relationships among teachers, heavy workload, curriculum, memorisation or test oriented education system, lack or poor quality of facilities and teaching materials, and students' and administrators' attitudes. Ar also mentions that career or self-development opportunities are among the changes teachers would like to see in their work conditions. Teachers at Turkish provincial state universities might be away from opportunities to develop their content knowledge and teaching ability, which is important in becoming members of an organisation who have technical skills. This is considered to be one of the necessary stages for the members to become successfully acculturated in an organisation (Van Maanen Schein, as cited in Wilkerson, 2000).

The level of job satisfaction of ELT teachers in Turkey might differ due to the fact that ELT contexts vary over a wide range of institutions including private universities, private language institutions and state universities. Teachers' levels of commitment might also vary depending on the work conditions and opportunities offered to them to improve accordingly in different Turkish ELT contexts.

Teachers' entrance into teaching can give some clues about the creation of teaching identities. An enthusiastic start in the profession which has been carefully and willingly planned in advance might lead teachers toward more determined and committed professional growth.

Remuneration is another important factor that may have an impact on teachers' perceptions of EFL teaching as a career. Teacher salaries are reported to be

the main factor affecting the attractiveness of teaching profession (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, 1990). This situation is again diverse in Turkey as teachers who work under government contract at state universities are paid lower salaries than those working at private universities.

To conclude, since research on teachers' lives and perceptions of their occupation as a career is limited in the literature (Johnston, 1997), this study aims to explore whether EFL teachers perceive ELT as a career, and its relation to their perceptions of ELT as an occupation, their entrance into teaching job, their job satisfaction, and their perceptions of professional development opportunities in their teaching careers.

Statement of the Problem

In Turkey, there are many EFL teachers working in provincial state universities, and their perceptions of ELT as a career, and how their perceptions are related to demographic factors (age, sex, institution, and experience), and occupational factors (teachers' entrance into teaching and their perceptions of ELT as an occupation, their job satisfaction, and their perceptions of professional development) have not been fully explored. Job satisfaction of EFL teachers at private and state Turkish universities was investigated by Bayraktar (1996). However, the state universities subject to Bayraktar's study were Bosphorus University in Istanbul, and Middle East Technical University in Ankara, which were the two most reputable state universities in two densely populated urban districts in Turkey. Ar (1998) researched the sentiments of EFL teachers in Anadolu University in Eskişehir, Balıkesir University in Balıkesir, and Middle East Technical University

in Ankara. However the perceptions of Turkish provincial state university teachers of EFL teaching as a career remain unknown.

So this study aims to reflect the Turkish provincial state university EFL teachers' perceptions and whether they see EFL teaching as a career. It is also hoped to find out how the occupational factors (entrance into teaching and perceptions of ELT as an occupation, job satisfaction, and opportunities offered to teachers to improve themselves to become professionals in their institutions), and demographic factors (age, sex, institution, experience) relate to EFL teachers' perceptions of their occupation as a career.

Significance of the Problem

Turkey is among the countries where the demand for EFL is in rapid increase and this means there is also an increasing demand for EFL teachers and effective, vigorous, enthusiastic EFL classes. This demand can only be met with well-qualified, highly motivated, committed and satisfied EFL professionals and this largely depends on the teachers' perceptions of their occupation as a career. Because if they don't see their profession as a course of life, why should they make an effort to improve?

The study might also be useful for undergraduate and graduate ELT programs in EFL departments and their students as its aim is to offer them an overall picture of ELT profession in Turkey. It might give undergraduate students insights to become fully aware of the work conditions with which they will have to live once they start their careers. Hence they might have the opportunity to prepare themselves better for the profession.

Research Questions

This study will address the following research questions:

- 1) What are the perceptions of EFL teachers working in provincial state universities in Turkey of ELT as a career in Turkey?
- 2) How do demographic factors (age, sex, length of experience in ELT in general, and length of experience in ELT within the current institution) relate to teachers' perceptions of ELT as a career?
- 3) How do occupational factors (teachers' entrance into teaching and teachers' perceptions of EFL as an occupation, job satisfaction, and teachers' perceptions of professional development) relate to teachers' perceptions of ELT as a career?

This study takes the term "career" as "a profession or occupation which one trains for and pursues as a lifework" as it is defined in Webster's New World Dictionary (1970).

Conclusion

This chapter dealt with a short summary of the discussions related to the issue in the literature, the statement and the significance of the problem, the research questions, and the data analysis. In the second chapter the related literature is reviewed, whereas in the third chapter participants, materials, procedure, and data analysis are presented. The fourth chapter introduces the findings, and the findings are discussed and conclusions are drawn in the fifth chapter as well as implications for the Turkish university EFL context, limitations of the study, and suggestions for further research.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

This study aims to explore Turkish provincial state university teachers' perceptions of EFL teaching as a career, and the effect of demographic factors (sex, age, institution, and experience), and occupational factors (entrance into teaching and perceptions of ELT as an occupation, job satisfaction, and perceptions of professional development opportunities) on teachers' perceptions.

Teaching the English language has been emphasised as one of the important goals in the Turkish education since the proclamation of the new Turkish Republic in 1923, and the correspondent of an article entitled "English for the Turks", appearing in the London Nation and Athenaeum dated November 16, 1929, wrote "... almost everybody, ... not only in Constantinapole, but through Anatolia, is learning English as hard as he can go" (Bear, 1992). Since 1944 when the first teacher training program in ELT was offered at Gazi Educational Institue in Ankara (Demircan, 1988), training effective EFL teachers has been a major concern and ELT departments have spread at high speed in universities, especially parallel to the growing number of new public and private universities throughout the country in the 1980's and 1990's. In meeting the increasing demand for effective EFL classes, not only training a highly qualified teaching force but also retaining the good teachers within the ELT profession plays a crucial role. Therefore, understanding teachers and their perceptions of their profession as a career is essential.

There is no doubt that teaching is the core of any education program. Among the other variables such as administrators, teaching materials, supplies, and class

size, it is the quality of teaching that affects the quality of education the most (Cross, 1995). As Pennington (1995) states teaching is “the driving force in every educational enterprise” (p. 109). And the teacher is still considered as “the major foundation stone in the world of foreign language teaching” (Roe, 1992, p.1).

Johnston (1997) claims that researchers seem to have realised or remembered the importance of the teaching force, and research conducted on the professional lives of teachers, reasons and results of teachers' satisfaction and dissatisfaction related to their occupation, and teachers' perceptions of their occupation has finally started to offer valuable information to the field of EFL/ESL. The Center for British Teachers (CfBT) conducted a study in 1989 (as cited in Johnston, 1997) and asked 160 CfBT teachers about their entrance in TEFL/TESOL, their career plans, and the main reasons they feel they might be likely to leave. CfBT got very interesting results indicating that 'the Teacher Career Cycle' which defines a lifelong career did not seem to be easy for the teachers participating in the study to construct. Many teachers did not have certain future plans in their career, only a small percentage of teachers were found to be planning to stay in the field until the age of 45, and “the lack of an institutionalised career structure” was the main reason given by the teachers who left the profession (Johnston, 1997, p. 684).

Whether English language teaching can be considered a structured career or a profession has been brought under discussion through the notions of permeability and qualifications in various ELT settings. Maley (1992) states that ELT is far from displaying the necessary characteristics of a 'unified' profession as it is easy to enter and to leave. He mentions the diverse qualifications for participation in the field ranging from a five-year teacher college education to private one-month teaching

courses. These diverse qualifications may interfere with the acceptance that language teacher education and training programs are professional programs like that of law or medicine (Bear, 1992), and this might negatively affect the professional prestige of ELT.

In order to address the question of ELT as a career, teachers' entrance into the teaching profession, teachers' job satisfaction in their teaching careers, the reasons and results of teacher burnout and attrition, opportunities for professional development, and related previous research are discussed and dealt with as possible indicators of whether teaching is considered by teachers as a long-term occupation.

This study does not replicate any previous studies due to the fact that it focuses on EFL teachers at provincial state universities and ELT as a career in Turkey rather than primary or secondary school EFL teachers and/or EFL teachers' sentiments and job satisfaction as these have been researched previously. Still, this study draws on some elements of methodological procedure from the studies done by Ar (1998), Bayraktar (1996), Hart & Murphy (1990), Johnston (1997), Türkay (2000), Wilkerson (2000), and it also borrows some questions asked in the questionnaires or interviews from the above-mentioned authors.

Due to the fact that amount of research on university teachers is limited in the literature, research on primary, secondary and high school teachers is also presented in this section.

Teachers' Entrance into the Teaching Profession

All normal adults nearly in every culture have life stories that account for cornerstones of their lives. Career choice is probably one of the most important decisions we make, directing many other important things in our lives. Linde (1993)

in her book *Life Stories* tries to explore how we make and exchange coherent life stories. The writer sees the process of “creating coherence” as a “social obligation” which is necessary for the participants to become a “competent member” in the society (p. 16), and career choice is a major component in constructing the coherence for most people.

Whether teachers see teaching as their choice of career can be taken as an important indicator of professionalism in the field of ELT. The higher the percentage of teachers who approach their career with ambivalence, the lower the chances of successful careers in teaching unfolding can be. A study done by Rees et al (as cited in Fullan, 1991) with a sample of Ontario school teachers revealed that the teaching was the first choice of occupation for 71% of female elementary teachers, 64% of male elementary teachers, 56% of female secondary teachers, and only 37% of male secondary teachers. What is striking about the Rees' et al study is that "for three of the four groups about one in every five teachers on the job has thought about leaving teaching, and almost two of five secondary male teachers have considered leaving" (p.125). Johnston (1997) investigates entry into teaching in 17 Polish EFL teachers' life story interviews, and finds quite interesting results showing that teaching was the first choice of occupation for none of the teachers who participated in the study, and entry into teaching was an occurrence as a result of external circumstances in every case. These results may indicate that teaching may not be considered attractive enough to be the first career choice for a high number of teachers.

People's awareness and willingness in career choice can be taken as an indicator of an enthusiastic and consistent starting point of the possible successful course of the future career. Therefore teachers' entry into the job of teaching may

reveal valuable data for understanding their perceptions about teaching as a career. Demirel (1992) talks about the importance of positive affective entry characteristics of student teachers before starting the planned program for the teaching profession, and he states that the high scoring students do not prefer ELT departments. Teaching may not attract the brightest students as an occupation, and this might have an impact on the general public's, student teachers' and teachers' perceptions of their occupation as a career. Concepts such as “interest”, “attitudes”, “values”, and “appreciation” are important in describing the student teachers’ affective entry behaviours, and according to Bloom, learners will be good performers of the learning task if they really show a strong interest towards it (as cited in Demirel, 1992). If teaching is the first career choice of interested, enthusiastic student teachers who highly value and appreciate the teaching profession, higher commitment levels might be expected in these student teachers' future teaching careers.

Bear (1992) also mentions the same issue, stating that the majority of the teaching staff in foreign language education departments in Turkey hold their M.A.'s and Ph.D.'s in English literature or in linguistics simply because these are relatively new programs in Turkey, and consequently most of these faculty members see themselves as "misplaced literary scholars or linguists" (p. 29), rather than as educators of teachers. If the teacher educators do not feel completely involved in the profession, teachers' involvement and commitment may be unlikely to reach a desirable level. Bear also points out that the needs and expectations of students who want to have their careers in translation, tourism, or in linguistics should not be aimed to be met while planning the teacher education curricula. A curricula designed only to meet the needs of English language teaching students can contribute to the

quality of the program and therefore ensure the readiness of student teachers for the teaching profession. Bear claims that only through this way can a significant contribution be made to "upgrading the self-image and status of English language teachers in Turkey" (p. 29).

In Turkey EFL teachers differ in their undergraduate degrees as they can be coming from literature, linguistics, and/or translation departments, which is also the case in most other countries (Maley, 1992). In various EFL/ESL contexts throughout the world teachers' undergraduate backgrounds might vary on a wide-range scale. In non-English speaking countries it can often be seen enough for a person who comes from a similar discipline such as linguistics or English language and literature or translation to become an English teacher, without much consideration of the language teaching knowledge and ability of the person. In some cases the situation can be seen as more serious when native English speakers without any related educational background and/or necessary qualifications are hired as language teachers in many institutions in various places in the world.

Maley (1992) states that qualifications in teaching English language are diverse everywhere in the world, and in the UK they are in a wide range starting "from zero through one week 'taster' courses, privately-certificated one-month courses, the RSA-UCLES Cert. And Dip TEFLA, to PGCEs and MAs in TEFL and Applied Linguistics" (p. 96-97), and summarizes the above mentioned situation as follows:

We are not "professionals" in quite the same sense as medics or lawyers. To take a military analogy: we are not an army of career soldiers, all equally well-trained, battle-hardened, well-equipped and committed. We are more like one of those marauding armies in 17th Century Europe with a core of highly trained and motivated cavalry,

surrounded by footsoldiers of sometimes dubious reliability and a host of camp-followers bringing up the rear (p.99).

Unlike doctors, lawyers, architects, and the like, teachers of English can hardly claim to have unique licensing in terms of qualifications, which might cause a certain decrease in the prestige and the attractiveness of the ELT profession and makes it a less preferred career choice for high school graduates.

In Turkey, teachers of English language can be graduates of the English/American Language and Literature, and/or Linguistics departments. Although they are required to take some extra pedagogy courses to become official EFL teachers at primary, secondary and high schools in Turkey, they are accepted to teach English in foreign languages departments and preparatory schools at Turkish universities even without an official teaching certificate. This situation may have significant impacts on the professional growth of EFL teaching in Turkey.

The amount of the research on career choice of teachers is quite limited in the literature, so it does not seem completely possible to have a full picture of the issue reflecting the situation in different EFL/ESL settings.

Teachers' Job Satisfaction

People invest of themselves in terms of time, energy, creativity, enthusiasm, knowledge, skill, and effort in their work to obtain some rewards or returns which might include money, comfort, respect, accomplishment, social acceptance, and security (Sergiovanni, 1975). According to Herzberg's 'motivation-hygiene' theory (as discussed by Sergiovanni) there are some conditions teachers expect to find in work if they are to be satisfied with what they are doing. Hygiene factors are extrinsic conditions of work such as salary, growth possibilities, interpersonal

relations, status, benefits, good supervision, and a feeling of belonging. Neglect of these factors can cause dissatisfaction and low performance in teachers. Motivation factors are intrinsic conditions of work itself such as achievement, recognition, advancement, and increased level of responsibility, and in return for these factors teachers become more willing to invest more of themselves in their work.

Extrinsic factors such as workload, salary, status, collaboration and communication among colleagues, attitudes of administrators, and opportunities for professional development can play an important role in teachers' job satisfaction and their commitment to their occupation. Ar (1998) researched the sentiments of 23 EFL teachers in three Turkish state universities, and found that low salaries, administrators' and students' attitudes towards teachers, quality of facilities and teaching materials, limited opportunities for development, relationships among teachers, heavy workload, and the education system were stated to be the reasons of teachers' dissatisfaction, and half of the teachers in the study were found to have been tempted to leave teaching.

Dissatisfaction with the work conditions may result in a decrease in teachers' enthusiasm and motivation to perform their jobs better. Improving the work conditions of teachers can be a way of ensuring better quality of teachers' performances as well as of raising the attractiveness of teaching as an occupation (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, 1990).

Teachers' perceptions are undoubtedly influenced also by the societal perceptions of the profession. As Esteve (2000) states, today "the public value judgement of teachers and their work is largely negative," (p. 203), and it is not very easy to protect teachers from this negative viewpoint. What's more the social status

of teachers changes depending on the social attitudes in their related culture.

Referring to the schoolteachers in the U.S., Esteve mentions (2000) the situation as in the following:

Today, most people dedicate themselves to the pursuit of power and riches. To much minds, teachers are people who lack the ability to earn more. When teachers take on board and internalise this materialistic mentality, they soon leave teaching to seek more remunerative occupations (p. 204).

The public view of the teaching job might relate to the overall attractiveness of teaching, and if teaching is seen as a job that can be done by anyone with moderate expectations, attracting the young population to teaching and retaining good teachers can be a serious problem for the profession.

Financial rewards in an occupation constitute an essential aspect of the overall attractiveness of it (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, 1990), and insufficient salaries might negatively affect teachers' overall satisfaction and their perceptions of ELT as a career, as well.

Hart and Murphy (1990) investigated the career choices, work perceptions, and career plans of low-, medium-, and high-ability level novice teachers and also the factors that have an impact on their job satisfaction in a large school district in the western United States. The authors point out that new teachers with high ability levels leave the profession for various reasons and there has recently been a focus on reforms in the field to prevent the attrition of those people with high promise. According to the results of the study the medium- and high-ability level teachers stated that community and personal service was a more important job expectation than security, and they were more interested in professionalism, power, and leadership than were less able teachers. As to job satisfaction, the high-ability level

teachers were impressed by the broad, stable, and substantial career growth opportunities, and they were critical about performance outcomes. In terms of organisational commitment, the high-ability level teachers did not see in the future career options as being as limited as the low-ability level teachers did, and they showed more concern about leaving teaching.

Another study on a similar subject by Weinstein (1988) examines the expectations of pre-service teachers, and reveals that the pre-service teachers have unrealistic expectations about their first year in the profession, and these optimistic biases about teaching may hinder the pre-service teachers' motivation to become fully and seriously involved in their professional preparation. Pre-service teachers might underestimate the challenging side of the teaching job, and this may weaken their professional development.

American school teachers were found to expect to see various changes such as better students, better educated administrators, smaller classes, less extra duty, better facilities, and better pay (Lortie, as cited in Ar, 1998), which are similar to the findings of Ar's (1998) study conducted on Turkish university teachers. Yule and Hoffman (1990) also investigated the predicted future success of teaching assistants in Louisiana State University. The researchers concluded that some international graduate assistants lack readiness for classroom duties, which can be taken as another evidence that novice teachers start teaching with unrealistic expectations and a lack of readiness for their professional duties. This might be a possible source of future dissatisfaction for the novice teachers in their teaching careers. Yule and Hoffman (1990) suggest that U.S. universities should provide 'more extended periods of adjustment and ESL training for a substantial number of the students if the aim is "to

recruit the brightest and best of the world's international graduate students to support university teaching" (p.241).

Bayraktar (1996) in her master's thesis investigated job satisfaction among EFL teachers at private and state universities in Turkey, and when her findings are generalised, instructors of state universities showed higher job satisfaction than instructors of private universities, and state university teachers were satisfied with the "job security, flexible time, long summer holidays, and most importantly, having motivated bright students" (p. 60).

Teacher Burnout and Attrition

One might expect to find a close relationship among unaware and unwilling entrance into teaching, unmet expectations and/ or disillusionment about the work realities, and teacher attrition when career perceptions are taken into consideration. Fullan (1991) states that the deterioration of schools mainly results from work conditions which force competent teachers out of the profession, or make good teachers who stay in the profession weary. He infers from the rate of teacher attrition, and the increasing demand for workshops on overcoming stress at workplace that teacher stress and alienation are always high, and points to the fact that whether teaching is seen as a career of choice by teachers is an important indicator of the problem. Fullan further quotes from Cherniss his characterization of "burnout" among professionals;

... the term "burnout" has come to have an additional meaning in recent research and writing on the topic; it refers to negative changes in work-related attitudes and behaviour in response to job stress. What are these negative changes? A major one is loss of concern for the client and a tendency to treat clients in a detached, mechanical fashion... (p. 126)

Among other changes listed by Cherniss are increasing discouragement, pessimism, fatalism about one's work, decline in motivation, effort, and involvement in work. Wilkerson (2000) discusses foreign language teachers' attrition as a result of "disparity between professional expectations and workplace realities," and suggests that "school officials and college of education faculty require field experiences for pre-service, novice and alternatively certified teachers" (p.33). The study also reveals that teachers are unable to deal with workplace realities which are quite different from their expectations, such as low esteem for foreign language teaching, and "the differences in the importance of various types of languages and language programs" (p. 33).

If the relatively more prestigious status of university teaching in Turkey, and the position of university teachers whose job is to teach an older, smarter, and more aware population - as high school graduates have to take the "University Entrance Exam" in Turkey to be able to study in any of the Turkish universities - are taken into consideration, the disparity between the novice teachers' job expectations and work realities might be expected to be lower.

Konanc (as cited in Wilkerson, 2000) found that the attrition rate for foreign language teachers in North Carolina was much higher than the rate for other teachers (22% versus 15% -18%), which might be reveal a general dissatisfaction with teaching a foreign language. Kleinsasser (1992) also investigates the teacher attrition of foreign language teachers in unit and secondary school districts in downstate Illinois. According to this study, the voluntary attrition rate is 48%, and domestic responsibility is the main reason for the teachers who leave the profession voluntarily, whereas retirement and reduction in work force (38%) are seen to be the

leading involuntary attrition factors. The reported attrition rates in the study are considerably high and thought-provoking, even if they might not seem unexpected as the area mentioned in the study is comparatively rural and poor. In all OECD countries, "depressed city centres, isolated rural districts, expensive housing areas" are the regions where severe problems of teacher recruitment occur (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, 1990, p. 55). Similarly, even distribution of the teaching force throughout the country is a serious problem at all levels in Turkish education as there are serious shortages in schools especially in eastern and southeastern districts of the country. However teacher surpluses can occur in big cities and some popular regions where also the biggest and most popular state and private universities are situated.

The same issue was researched by McKnight (as cited in Johnston, 1997) on 116 postgraduates in TESOL from Victoria College, Melbourne, Australia, and the attrition rate was found to be quite high in Australian context due to "low morale and low status, lack of opportunities and a power base within the institution, and colleagues' and superiors' underclass treatment" (p. 685).

Another important aspect of burnout and teacher attrition can be that the reasons for which the teachers cannot leave even when they would like to leave. If the reasons are totally extrinsic, such as financial problems, family matters and/or lack of any kind of alternative professional choice for a language teacher who has lost all the interest and enthusiasm related to the job of teaching, entrenchment can be a more serious problem than the attrition. Sergiovanni (1975) states that large numbers of teachers who would like to quit and still cannot are staying for the wrong reasons, and this can have negative effects on the institution and its students. Therefore not

only the reasons for which teachers leave their jobs but also their reasons for staying should be investigated carefully.

If the reasons for teacher satisfaction arise only from extrinsic factors without giving any sign of concern for the quality of the work performed, positive relationships with students and colleagues and professional growth, the situation might be a matter of concern as increased salaries, reduced workload, decreased class size, provision of up-to-date teaching materials and many other positive changes might not be adequate for success in language teaching without an effective teaching force (Sergiovanni, 1975). All the factors can be present in a teaching context, but if teachers lack intrinsic motivation in their job, the presence of the extrinsic factors might not be enough to retain teachers. Both extrinsic and intrinsic factors can play an equally important role in teachers' high performances and commitment.

Ward (1992) claims that "enthusiasm and honour" are the qualities that provide high standards in teacher education. This can be considered as an ideal start for attracted young recruits, but might not be enough alone to provide good teachers with incentives to keep their enthusiasm and honour all through their teaching careers without the presence of positive work conditions.

Opportunities for Professional Development

The success of an educational institution depends on the success and professional growth of its teachers individually and as a group (Saban, 2000). EFL teaching is a profession that needs ongoing feeding with rich, fresh nourishment as it is highly demanding in its notion of satisfying the needs of regularly increasing numbers of learners with effective teaching methodologies to be performed skilfully with dedication and enthusiasm.

Among many variables, like administrators, physical resources and constraints, and materials, it is the quality of teaching that has the strongest effect on the quality of education (Cross, 1995). Roe (1992) says that “ teachers become skilled and effective members of their profession most efficiently while learning on the job, especially if provided systematically with relevant new ideas based on the experience of others, and the opportunity to reflect productively on their own experience and benefit from peer advice” (p.1). Teachers should be given the opportunity to keep themselves up-to-date and to renew their teaching practices through being informed about improvements and recent developments in their profession and being exposed to constant negotiation with their colleagues. EFL teachers today face the necessity of being informed about the rapid innovations in ELT, and they need professional development "to meet the enormous demands of reform and changing student populations..." (Clair, 1998, p. 466).

Prodomou (1994) mentions the principles ELT teachers should consider if they want to improve the quality of their teaching, and gain greater confidence as teachers. Among these principles are "forming local teachers' groups and holding regular meetings to discuss common problems and inviting fellow teachers / teacher trainers and guest speakers to contribute lectures and workshops" (p.23). This is an important aspect for teachers' development in their profession as it can help teachers go beyond the walls of their classrooms and overcome the isolating boundaries of the teaching job, which is defined as the 'egg carton profession' by Lortie (as cited in Bailey, Curtis & Nunan, 1998, p. 554). Through a process of negotiation teachers can gain awareness of the strengths and weaknesses in their teaching practices as well as

they can be given the opportunity to learn from their colleagues' ideas and direct experiences.

In-service training is an important issue in Turkey since the demand for competent teachers of English is increasing in schools and most of the universities. In addition, private language schools have attracted great many students. However, the results may not always be considered satisfactory, as Doguelli (1992) refers to the situation in Turkey in the following;

English language teaching is still not producing adequate levels of proficiency among learners. Far from it, private language schools and "Dershanes" (Cramming Schools) are filled with students whose English is still way below the standard required to study or work with English as a foreign language – despite years of study of that language (p.102) .

In-service training gains even greater importance when geographical constraints are taken into consideration. Institutions in provincial districts, especially if they are far from big cities can be considered not as lucky as other institutions in urban areas in having opportunities to encourage their teaching staff to attend professional development events such as conferences, seminars, workshops and the like that are held much more frequently in urban districts than in provincial cities. Akdeniz University in Antalya, which is located on the southern coast of Turkey is a good representative of the kind, as it is the only university in the city, and geographically far from the opportunities for EFL teachers offered by language institutions and universities in big cities, like Ankara, İstanbul, and İzmir. EFL teachers at Akdeniz, unlike their colleagues in big cities, are unable to attend the seminars, workshops and conferences held in ELT by various institutions due to their unfavourable location, even if they were willing to do so. Doguelli (1992) talks about her striking observation of EFL teachers working in Eastern Turkey as follows:

Many of the teachers I have worked with in Eastern Turkey have never heard a native British or American voice, have little or no access to resource books and no contact with either their Ministry or colleagues in the same geographical area (p.102).

In-service training implemented within the institution itself including workshops, seminars, collaborative supervision might constitute a source of incentive for those teachers. Peer-observation can be thought as an another aspect of the same goal. Studying the practices of effective teachers in their classrooms can be significant in the development of a teaching conception (Freeman & Richards, 1993).

On the other hand, behind every in-service teacher training program lies a desire for change (Palmer, 1993). Roe (1992) points out that "The process takes place not in the institution but in the person concerned" (p. 5); the teachers' awareness of such a need and their willingness to take part in in-service training are vital. Maley (1987, cited in Roe, 1992) has this to say about the importance of teachers' own realisation of this need and a positive attitude towards satisfying it:

Change which is imposed from above is all too often accepted but not embraced. Change needs also to come from below, from the teachers who will have to implement it. This can only happen if they themselves both understand it and accept the need for it. Organised teacher training is one way of achieving this (p.5).

The importance of the need is an essential factor affecting the fruitfulness of the implementation of any in-service training program. When teachers are aware of problems or difficulties having a kind of direct or indirect negative impact on their teaching, they may be more willing to get involved in in-service training to satisfy their immediate need, and this can bring about more success. Fullan (1991) mentions the significance of "perceived or felt need" (p. 69) for innovations and change and lists some of the studies which show the relevance of the needs prioritized with the

effectiveness of change to be implemented. He quotes the finding of the Experimental Schools (ES) project, done by Rosenblum and Luis, which is that "the degree to which there was a formal recognition within the school system of unmet needs" was accepted as a "readiness factor" for sufficient implementation (p. 69). Therefore, teachers can implement reforms in their teaching contexts if they are provided with time and space "to explore, critique, and situate their work within the context of school reform" (Clair, 1998).

Clearly, teachers need professional development to keep up with the changes occurring in their profession and to stay fresh in their field, which might contribute to teachers' job satisfaction and their commitment to their profession.

Previous research shows that teachers' entrance into teaching and their job satisfaction, as well as opportunities offered for professional development relate to teachers' commitment. However, since Turkish provincial state university teachers' perceptions of ELT as a career have not been fully explored, this study aims to explore this issue and its relation to teachers' entrance into teaching and their perceptions of ELT as an occupation, their job satisfaction, and their perceptions of professional development opportunities. In the next chapter, the methodology of this study is presented.

CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY

Introduction

This research is a descriptive study, focusing on Turkish EFL teachers' perceptions of ELT as a career. It is aimed to find out whether EFL teachers at nine state universities in provincial cities in Turkey think that ELT is a career, and what factors influence their perceptions. This chapter of the study covers the participants, materials, procedures and data analysis.

This study addressed the following research questions:

- 1) What are the perceptions of EFL teachers working in provincial state universities in Turkey of ELT as a career in Turkey?
- 2) How do demographic factors (age, sex, length of experience in ELT in general, and length of experience in ELT within the current institution) relate to teachers' perceptions of ELT as a career?
- 3) How do occupational factors (teachers' entrance into teaching and teachers' perceptions of EFL as an occupation, job satisfaction, and teachers' perceptions of professional development opportunity) relate to teachers' perceptions of ELT as a career?

Participants

This study was conducted in 9 different institutions. The participants are the Turkish EFL teachers employed at the foreign languages departments of the following universities: 18 Mart University in Canakkale, Zonguldak Kara Elmas University in Zonguldak, Anadolu University in Eskisehir, Niğde University in Nigde, Akdeniz University in Antalya, Karadeniz Teknik University in Trabzon,

Erciyes University in Kayseri, İnönü University in Malatya, and Osmangazi University in Eskişehir. The map below displays the locations of the above mentioned institutions.

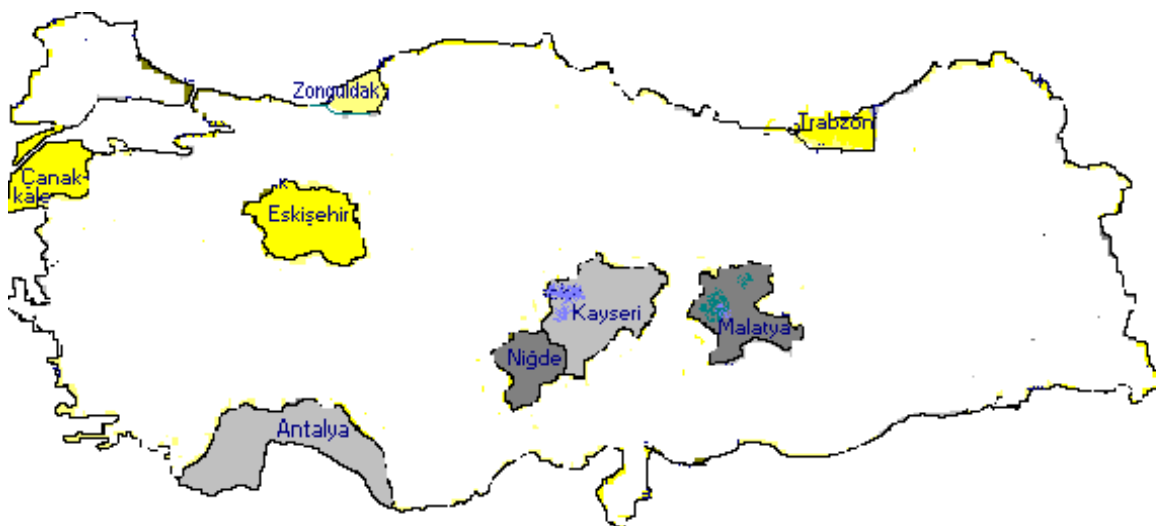


Figure 1

Map of institutional locations in the study

These universities were chosen in order to gather data from EFL teachers who work in state universities in different regions in Turkey, and they were thought to be the representatives of relatively new, smaller universities in provincial cities in the eastern, northern, southern, northwestern, and central parts of Turkey. The institutions are in different provinces in Turkey than the three big cities: Ankara, Istanbul and Izmir, where there are several well-established English-medium universities, and EFL teachers at these universities may be exposed to more positive ELT conditions in terms of better students, more successfully designed programs, and richer opportunities for professional development. Also they have been subject to several research studies already (see for example Ar, 1998; Bayraktar,1996; Turkey, 2000). However, Turkish provincial state university teachers' perceptions of

ELT as a career have not been investigated. The above mentioned provincial state universities were also chosen as the researcher had access to them. Table 1 gives information about the background of the participants.

Table 1

Characteristics of the Subjects

Item	Frequency (N = 180)	Percentage (N = 180)
<u>Institution</u>		
18 Mart University	12	6.7%
Zonguldak Kara Elmas University	17	9.4%
Anadolu University	23	12.8%
Niğde University	16	8.9%
Akdeniz University	22	12.2%
Karadeniz Teknik University	27	15.0%
Erciyes University	27	15.0%
İnönü University	12	6.7%
Osman Gazi University	24	13.3%
<u>Sex</u>		
Male	86	47.8%
Female	93	51.7%
Missing	1	0.6%
<u>Age</u>		
20-29	75	41.7%
30-39	80	44.4%
40-49	21	11.7%
50- over	4	2.2%

Materials

A questionnaire (see Appendix A) was used as the research instrument in the study, and the participants were asked Likert-scale questions, questions that allow

participants to choose more than one option, yes/no questions and open-ended questions. Demographic information about the participants was collected in the first section of the questionnaire. Then the questions related to the teachers' entrance into teaching and their thoughts and expectations related to their profession when they started to teach and the extent to which their expectations have been fulfilled, conditions the respondents work under in their institutions and their opinions about administrators, colleagues, workload, opportunities offered to improve, remuneration, and the teachers' opinions and plans about staying in the profession were asked on a five-point scale.

In the second section, questions 12 and 13 were treated as the reflectors of teachers' perceptions of ELT as a career. Questions 1, 2, 3, 4, 16, 17, 18, 19 were constructed to determine teachers' entrance into the profession and their perceptions of English Language teaching as an occupation. Questions 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11 were aimed at revealing teachers' job satisfaction. Questions 14, 15, 21, and 22 were designed to investigate teachers' perceptions of opportunities for professional development. The scale for the questions in the second section of the questionnaire consisted of five options: "strongly disagree", "disagree", "uncertain", "agree", and "strongly agree".

In the third section of the questionnaire the participants were requested to answer three questions investigating their reasons for having stayed in the profession, and under which conditions they might consider leaving teaching or moving and teaching in another district. For each of these questions, participants were allowed to choose as many options as they felt appropriate.

The same questionnaire was administrated at all the institutions in the study. The questions were developed based on the literature review in Chapter 2.

In chapters 4 and 5, the term "short-term commitment" is used to cover teachers' plans to stay in the field of ELT for the following 5 years, and the term "long-term commitment" is used to cover teachers' plans to stay in the field of ELT for the following 10 years.

Procedure

In conducting this study the initial step was constructing the questionnaire and revising it according to the comments and suggestions made by the faculty. The next step was piloting the questionnaire with eleven MA TEFL (2001) students, some of whom come from the universities chosen for the study and all representing different EFL contexts in Turkey. They were asked to complete the questionnaire and give their opinions on it. Final revisions were made taking the pilot population's comments and suggestions into consideration.

As a next step the questionnaire was administered in Akdeniz University by the researcher herself. The questionnaire was given only on voluntary basis, and the participants were assured of confidentiality.

Later department heads of the universities and/or the key teachers who were willing to assist the researcher in distributing and collecting the questionnaires were contacted via telephone, e-mail, written application, and through personal contacts. The questionnaires were sent to EFL teachers in the sample institutions via mail or through contact people and administrators. In Anadolu University, Osman Gazi University, and Nigde University, the MA TEFL 2001 students who were instructors at these universities administered the questionnaire. In Zonguldak Kara Elmas

University, Karadeniz Teknik University, and 18 Mart University the questionnaires were distributed and collected by colleagues, whereas in Erciyes University it was administrated by one of the coordinators in the Department of English Language. The questionnaires were sent by mail to the head of the Foreign Languages Department in İnönü University and administered by him.

Data Analysis

After the data was collected through questionnaires, the researcher compiled the data on EFL teachers' perceptions of EFL as a career, and the factors affecting their perceptions using SPSS. The data was grouped and discussed under different topics referring to the research questions as presented in chapter 2.

Quantitative data analysis techniques were used. Frequencies and the percentages of the items in the first part of the questionnaire were calculated. Chi-Square values, frequencies and percentages for the items in the second part were found, and mean values were additionally calculated to analyse Q12 and Q13. The multiple-choice item questions were again analysed through frequencies and percentages. Lastly correlation was used to determine the relationship between the results of the second and the third part of the questionnaire and the variables such as age, sex, experience, and undergraduate degree.

Question 20 in the second section of the questionnaire was left out of the analysis as the question revealed analogous data.

In the fourth chapter, the analysis of the obtained data and the results will be discussed.

CHAPTER 4: DATA ANALYSIS

This study investigated the Turkish provincial state university teachers' perceptions of ELT as a career, and aimed to answer the following research questions:

- 1) What are the perceptions of EFL teachers at Turkish provincial state universities of ELT as a career?
- 2) How do demographic factors (age, institution, sex, and length of experience in ELT in general and within the current institution) relate to the teachers' perceptions of ELT as a career?
- 3) How do occupational factors (teachers' entrance into teaching and their perceptions of ELT as an occupation, teachers' job satisfaction, and teachers' perceptions of professional development opportunities) relate to teachers' perceptions of ELT as a career?

The analysis of the questions of the questionnaire will be presented in six different sections. The first section, which covers questions 12 and 13 from the questionnaire, focuses on teachers' future plans for teaching, and is thought to reveal the teachers' perceptions of ELT as a short-term and long-term career since the questions investigate whether teachers are planning to stay in teaching for the following 5 and 10 years or leave the profession. The second section of the chapter involves the demographic data questions, which are the institutions where teachers work, their age, sex, length of experience in ELT in general and in their current institutions. In this section the relation of the above mentioned characteristics of the teachers to their short- and long-term commitment is investigated. The third section covers the questions 1, 2, 3, 4, 16, 17, 18, 19 of the questionnaire, which were

designed to determine the nature of teachers' entrance into the profession and their perception of EFL teaching as an occupation and the relation of these to short- and long-term commitment. The fourth section covers questions 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11 of the questionnaire, and aims to reveal teachers' job satisfaction, and how job satisfaction relates to teachers' short- and long-term commitment. The fifth section covers questions 14, 15, 21 and 22 which were designed to determine teachers' perceptions about professional development opportunities, and the relation of these to teachers' short- and long-term commitment. In the sixth section, teachers' temptation to leave (Q5) was treated as a commitment question and the relation of the nature of teachers' entrance into the field and current perceptions of ELT as an occupation, teachers' job satisfaction, and their perceptions of professional development opportunities to teachers' temptation to leave was investigated. Lastly, the seventh section covers the analysis of the three multiple-choice questions constructed to determine the reasons for which teachers have stayed as EFL teachers and the reasons for which they might consider leaving teaching, as well as mobility both within and out of EFL teaching.

Teachers' Future Plans for Teaching

Questions 12 and 13 investigated whether teachers are planning to continue teaching for the following 5 and 10 years, and teachers' willingness to continue teaching for the set periods of time is being treated as evidence of teachers' accepting the profession as a career. To analyse the questions 12 and 13, frequencies, percentages, the mean, and the chi-square values were found (see Table 2).

Table 2

Teachers' Short- and Long-term Commitment (N= 180)

	SD		D		U		A		SA		M
	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	
Q 12	4	2.2	3	1.7	28	15.6	61	33.9	80	44.4	4.2
Q 13	7	3.9	10	5.6	58	32.2	47	26.1	56	31.1	3.8

Note. Chi-Square (Q12) = 134.511; Chi-Square (Q13) = 70.820; df = 4; p < .001 for both questions; M = Mean, f = frequency, % = percentage. SD = Strongly Disagree, D = Disagree, U = Uncertain, A = Agree, SA = Strongly Agree.

The chi-square value was found to be significant in the analysis. The majority of the teachers (78.3%) reported positive answers to Q12 indicating that they are planning to continue teaching for the following five years. It can be inferred that most teachers agree that they will stay as EFL teachers for five years. The positiveness of the teachers can result from either their satisfaction related to their work conditions or from their having no other alternatives to move into, or both. The small percentage of teachers (15.6%) who are uncertain about their future plans related to continuing teaching might indicate some degree of lack of satisfaction related to EFL teaching connected with teachers' considering other job alternatives. Teachers might also be expecting some changes in their work conditions and their continuing or leaving teaching might depend on their expectations being fulfilled in five years' time.

The results of Q13 indicate that again more than half of the teachers (57%) plan to continue teaching for the following 10 years. However, the number of teachers who agreed or strongly agreed that they will continue teaching for the following 10 years has decreased 21% where as the number of teachers who are uncertain about their 10 year plans related to their teaching career has increased 17%.

The number of teachers who disagreed or strongly disagreed that they will continue teaching for the following 10 years has also increased 6%. When the mean values are considered, teachers' willingness to continue teaching for the following 10 years tends to fall below the agreement level (mean = 3.8) whereas teachers' willingness to continue teaching for the following five years was found to be slightly above the agreement level (mean = 4.2).

The decrease in teachers' positive answers for long-term commitment, and the increase in teachers' uncertainty might show that the longer the term for which the plan for continuing teaching is considered, the more uncertain the teachers are of staying in the profession. Teachers might not see teaching as attractive and satisfying enough to perform as a long-term occupation, or they might not be sure of their future plans.

The results do not seem to be alarming for the provincial state university context in Turkey at present unless teachers who are uncertain of their short- and long-term future in their jobs change their opinions to the negative. In that case, over the following five years a 19.5%, and over the following 10 years a 41.7%, decrease might occur in teaching force, which could then be a danger for English language departments in provincial state universities. Also, 15.6% uncertainty for 5 years, and 32.2% for 10 years may have some significance in that ELT departments in Turkish provincial state universities might fail in ensuring teacher retention in the following years. So universities need to find out the reasons causing teachers' uncertainty of staying in the field if teacher attrition is to be prevented.

Effect of Institution, Age, Sex, Length of Experience in ELT in General and Length of Experience Within the Current Institution on Teacher's Commitment

The second section of the data analysis is focused on the demographic characteristics of the teachers and whether teachers' short- and long-term commitment to the profession is related to the institution they work in, their age, sex, length of experience in ELT in general and in their current institution. The questions related to the demographic characteristic of teachers were asked in the first section of the questionnaire, and these were open-ended and multiple-choice questions. The responses from the open-ended questions were categorised and coded to facilitate data analysis. To analyse this section, chi-square values were calculated to see whether there was a statistically significant relationship between teachers' 5 and 10-year commitment (Q 12 and Q 13) and institution, age, and sex. The relation of experience in ELT in general, and experience in the current institution to teachers' 5- and 10-year commitment was analysed through Pearson correlation. It was found that age, sex and experience in general and in the institution did not correlate with teachers' commitment at a significant level. However, institution was found to correlate with both 5 and 10-year commitment significantly (see Table 3).

Table 3

Institution & Short-term commitment

Institution	SD	D	U	A	SA	Total
1	-	1 8.3%	-	7 58.3%	4 33.3%	12 100.0%
2	-	-	3 17.6	7 41.2	7 41.2	17 100.0%
3	2 8.7%	-	3 13.0%	11 47.8%	7 30.4%	23 100.0%
4	-	-	5 33.3%	10 66.7%	-	15 100.0%
5	-	-	4 19.0%	2 9.5%	15 71.4%	21 100.0%
6	2 7.4%	-	1 3.7%	6 22.2%	18 66.7%	27 100.0%
7	-	-	5 20.0%	8 32.0%	12 48.0%	25 100.0%
8	-	2 16.7%	3 25.0%	2 16.7%	5 41.7%	12 100.0%
9	-	-	4 16.7	8 33.3%	12 50.0%	24 100.0%
Total	4 2.3	3 1.7	28 15.9	61 34.7	80 45.5	176 100.0

Note. Chi-square = 68.430; df = 32; p < .001. Institutions: 1 = 18 Mart University, 2 = Zonguldak Kara Elmas University, 3 = Anadolu University, 4 = Niğde University, 5 = Akdeniz University, 6 = Karadeniz Teknik University, 7 = Erciyes University, 8 = İnönü University, 9 = Osman Gazi University.

SD = Strongly disagree; D = Disagree; U = Uncertain; A = Agree; SA = Strongly agree.

The chi-square value was significant for institution and short-term commitment correlation. The results show that teachers working in the above mentioned provincial state universities were planning to stay in the profession for the following five years. Teachers might have strong social relationships as they live in relatively smaller provincial areas and this might play a role in their general satisfaction and commitment. Also teaching at a university might be considered more prestigious in these places, as the well-educated and employed population is

relatively lower than it is in big cities like Istanbul and Ankara, and this might be an important factor affecting teachers' commitment positively.

The fifth and the sixth institutions, Akdeniz University (80.9%) and Karadeniz Teknik University (KTU) (88.9%), were found to be the places where teachers had the highest levels of five-year commitment. Teachers strongly agreed that they were planning to stay in the field at the highest levels in the survey. These two institutions are situated in northern and southern coastal towns in Turkey which are generally considered as beautiful places to live with their natural and touristic attractions. Teachers' commitment might result from their satisfaction with the regional characteristics of these two cities.

Teachers at Niğde University and İnönü University showed the highest degrees of uncertainty about the 5-year commitment among the other institutions involved in the study. 33.3% of the teachers in Niğde and 25% of those teaching at İnönü stated that they were uncertain about staying in the field. Teachers' uncertainty about short-term commitment in these institutions might result from the regional factors as Niğde and Malatya are considered comparatively less popular districts, and/or from the institutional factors, such as poor opportunities for teachers to develop professionally.

As to the correlation between the institution and 10-year commitment, there is shown a decrease in the level of teachers' commitment in general (see Table 4), which was the case also in the previous analysis in the study (see Table 2).

Table 4

Institution & Long-term Commitment

Institution	SD	D	U	A	SA	Total
1	-	1	2	5	4	12
		8.3%	16.7	41.7%	33.3%	100.0%
2	-	2	9	3	3	17
		11.8%	52.9%	17.6%	17.6%	100.0%
3	2	-	10	6	5	23
	8.7%		43.5%	26.1%	21.7%	100.0%
4	-	1	10	4	1	16
		6.3%	62.5%	25.0%	6.3%	100.0%
5	-	-	7	5	10	22
			31.8%	22.7%	45.5%	100.0%
6	1	-	4	9	13	27
	3.7%		14.8%	33.3%	48.1%	100.0%
7	3	1	7	4	10	25
	12.0%	4.0%	28.0%	16.0%	40.0%	100.0%
8	-	3	2	4	3	12
		25.0%	16.7%	33.3%	25.0%	100.0%
9	1	2	7	7	7	24
	4.2%	8.3%	29.2%	29.2%	29.2%	100.0%
Total	7	10	58	47	56	178
	3.9%	5.6%	32.6%	26.4%	31.5%	100.0%

Note. Chi-square = 47.51; df = 32; p = .038. Institutions: 1 = 18 Mart University, 2 = Zonguldak Kara Elmas University, 3 = Anadolu University, 4 = Niğde University, 5 = Akdeniz University, 6 = Karadeniz Teknik University, 7 = Erciyes University, 8 = İnönü University, 9 = Osman Gazi University. SD = Strongly disagree; D = Disagree; U = Uncertain; A = Agree; SA = Strongly agree.

Chi-square value was significant in the analysis. Fewer teachers can be said to be planning to stay in the field in all the institutions in general. The number of teachers who strongly agreed with that they were planning to stay for the following 10 years generally became much smaller in number whereas the number of "uncertain" and "disagree" choices tended to increase in general. Akdeniz, Karadeniz Teknik, and Erciyes seem to be the institutions where EFL teachers are most committed to the profession. The most likely reason for the teachers at Akdeniz and Karadeniz Teknik can be again the teachers' satisfaction with the favourable areas they live in. Commitment of teachers in Erciyes might result from the successfully

designed institutional pattern as Erciyes is known for its effective and well-organized language programs and preparatory school. Teachers at Erciyes might see their occupation more as a career as they feel professionally more involved in the field of language teaching. The questionnaires' having been distributed and collected by one of the coordinators might have had an effect on their being positive as well.

In general, it can be concluded that in six of the institutions out of nine, the majority of EFL teachers stated their willingness to continue teaching for the following 10 years. However in Zonguldak Kara Elmas, and Nigde, the percentage of uncertainty clearly overweighs the percentage of agreement, which might be a sign of discontent among the teachers with their work conditions and/or with EFL teaching in general, or for these teachers 10 years' time might be too long to make plans related to continuing teaching as they might have other job alternatives to consider. For these universities the reasons of teachers' uncertainty should be examined and some measures should be taken to lead those uncertain teachers towards positive commitment if the uncertainty of teachers results from their dissatisfaction with work conditions.

Teachers' Entrance Into Teaching and Current Perceptions of ELT as an Occupation and Teachers' Commitment

Teachers' conscious and willing entrance into the profession and their positive opinions about it can affect teachers' seeing ELT as a long-term occupation. If teachers choose their job being aware of the future that the job of teaching unfolds for them and are still willing to do it, they can be better prepared in terms of the necessities, resources and constraints embedded within the job (Demirel, 1992). When this is together with holding positive opinions about the work being

performed, teachers may become more committed to it. Therefore questions 1 and 2 in Part B in the questionnaire were designed to investigate teachers' entrance into teaching whereas questions 3, 4, 16 and 19 were thought to be the indicators of teachers' current opinions about ELT. Questions 17 and 18 focused on teachers' relatives', friends' and colleagues' feelings and opinions about the job of teaching as these might relate to teachers' perceptions of ELT as a career. Table 5 below shows the results of the correlation between teachers' short-and long-term commitment and their entrance into teaching, and their current perceptions of ELT as an occupation:

Table 5

Short-term and Long-term Commitment & Entrance into Teaching

	Q1	Q 2	Q 3	Q 4	Q 16	Q 17	Q 18	Q 19
Q 12	.288** N=176	.278** N=176	.333** N=176	.273** N=172	.485** N=173	.194** N=176	.305** N=176	.356** N=175
Q 13	.287** N=178	.169* N=178	.257** N=178	.171* N=174	.332** N=175	.078 N=178	.206** N=178	.219** N=177

Note. ** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level. * Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level.

When the relationship between the teachers' plans about staying in the profession for the following 5 years (Q12), and the following 10 years (Q 13) and the teachers' conscious and willing entrance into teaching was investigated the results showed that there was a weak, but statistically significant correlation in all but one case.

In the analysis, correlation values up to + .40, or - .40 are defined as "weak", correlations ranging from + .40 to + .80, or - .40 to - .80 are defined as "moderate", and correlations ranging from + .80 to + 1.0, or - .80 to - 1.00 are defined as "strong" in accordance with Brown's (1988) definition of correlation coefficients.

Teachers' planning to continue teaching both for the following five and 10 years was found to correlate most highly with their feeling proud of their profession (Q16), which is the only factor in this group of questions that has a statistically moderate correlation value for teachers' short-term commitment. Teachers' being satisfied with their current teaching position (Q19) also was found to correlate with teachers' commitment at the second highest level (see Table 5). This might indicate that for a language teacher who has lost his interest and enthusiasm related to the job of teaching attrition can be a likely result. Still, a considerable decrease was detected when the correlation between the teachers' satisfaction with their current teaching position and their long-term commitment was calculated, which might reflect greater general uncertainty about future over a longer time period. Being proud of the job had the highest correlation value for planning to continue teaching both for the following five and 10 years. If teachers feel proud of their profession, their level of commitment can be expected to be high both for the short and the long term.

Teachers' having started the profession consciously and willingly (Q1) was found to relate to their planning to continue teaching for the following five and 10 years, which supports the effect of the positive entry characteristics on strong career patterns which can be explained as the long-term commitment to the profession. Having had positive thoughts and expectations related to the profession (Q2) was again found to play a role on teachers' seeing ELT as a lifelong occupation although the correlation between Q2 and teachers' plans to continue teaching for the following 10 years was relatively lower. The reason for this might be that teachers may have to work under limiting work conditions and think that they are paid inadequate salaries, and this might affect the teachers' commitment negatively even though they might

have been highly positive about the profession when they first started teaching. Teachers' having positive thoughts about the profession at present (Q3), and their expectations being fulfilled (Q4) also were found to play a role on their perceptions of ELT as a career, although the correlation between their expectations' being fulfilled and their planning to stay in the profession was comparatively lower than the correlation between their commitment and their having positive thoughts about the profession at present (see Table 5).

Teachers' relatives', friends' (Q17) and colleagues' (18) feelings and opinions about teaching as an occupation correlate significantly with teachers' commitment. It is striking, though, that relatives' and friends' opinions seem to relate to the career pattern much less than the colleagues'. Relatives' and friends' opinions do not relate to long-term career plans significantly. Even though being an EFL teacher at university is still prestigious in Turkey and teachers' generally agreed that their relatives and friends have positive thoughts and opinions about EFL teaching, teachers might not be much affected by this. Teachers might consider their friends and relatives as people who are unaware of the realities of ELT teachers while their colleagues are exposed to them in their everyday work routine. Teachers might be more concerned with what their colleagues think about their profession than with how their relatives and friends esteem EFL teaching as an occupation because teachers are supposed to be in some kind of interaction with their colleagues when they are at work and their work related opinions might be somehow related to their colleagues'.

Job Satisfaction and Teachers' Commitment

Teachers' satisfaction with the EFL teaching was included in the questionnaire as it is considered as an important factor affecting teachers' perception of ELT as a career. The questions grouped in this section were thought to be directly or indirectly related to teachers' job satisfaction as they were about teachers' being satisfied with teaching EFL as an occupation (Q6), teachers' feelings and opinions about their students (Q7), their administrators (Q8), their colleagues (Q9), and their salaries (Q10 and 11). Whether teachers sometimes feel tempted to leave the profession (Q5) was also investigated due to the significant relationship which was expected to be present within the frame of career pattern. The results of the correlation were displayed in Table 6 below:

Table 6

Short-term and Long-term Commitment & Satisfaction

	Q 5	Q 6	Q 7	Q 8	Q 9	Q10	Q11
Q 12	-. 387** N= 176	. 380** N= 176	. 223** N= 176	. 283** N= 174	. 152* N=175	. 097 N=176	. 159* N=176
Q 13	-. 387** N= 178	. 308** N= 178	. 196** N= 178	. 240** N= 176	. 069 N=177	. 078 N= 178	. 100 N=178

Note. ** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level. * Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level.

The correlation between the teachers' short and long-term commitment and satisfaction was found to have different levels of correlation. Although none of the questions that were thought to be directly or indirectly related to job satisfaction revealed strong correlation values, teachers' general satisfaction with EFL teaching (Q6) was found to have the highest positive level of correlation with their plans to stay in the profession. Teachers' positive feelings and opinions about the students (Q7) and administrators (Q8) also revealed significant correlation values in the

group, however weak they are, whereas relationship with colleagues and remuneration were found to be correlated at lower levels (see Table 6).

The negative correlation between the teachers' feeling tempted to leave the profession (Q5) and the career pattern (Q 12&13) showed the highest value in this group. It can only be accepted natural for those teachers who agreed with the statement in this question to disagree with the statement "I plan to continue teaching for the following 5/10 years." Negative correlation values for Q 5 can be said to show that teachers who see ELT as a long-term career generally do not feel tempted to leave the profession. Teachers' general satisfaction (Q6) appears to be the second most significant factor affecting teachers' commitment. Providing positive work conditions to raise teachers' general satisfaction may be a way to ensure teachers' becoming more committed to the profession.

Teachers' having a close relationship with their colleagues (Q9) was found to be less significantly correlated with the career pattern than teachers' feelings about their students (Q7) and administrators (Q8). In fact, teachers' having a close relationship with their colleagues did not correlate significantly with their long-term commitment at all. Students and administrators might play a major role in teachers' commitment as interaction with students constitutes the very essence of teaching, and administrators are a crucial factor that can shape the whole career of teachers, supporting and encouraging them to develop or constraining and blocking them. Another reason might be that the highly committed teachers either already have close relationships with their colleagues or they have their own way to survive apart from their colleagues. Also, in some institutions where teachers do not have to team teach,

teachers might be able to perform their duties at a satisfactory level no matter how isolated they are from their colleagues.

Teachers' satisfaction with their salaries (Q10) seems to have the lowest statistical correlation value and did not achieve significance. When we consider that earlier results show high levels of short- and long-term commitment, this result seems to imply that teachers are unhappy with their current salaries. However, this does not seem to be causing them to want to leave the field. This result may not be surprising when the high unemployment rate in Turkey is considered. Thus leaving the profession might be seen as a real challenge for teachers. Teachers might be committed also to their current institutions as the private sector in Turkey is not considered a highly preferred alternative, with slightly better salaries offered for EFL teachers in return for considerably more workload and lower quality students.

Teachers' stating that their attitude would be more positive if they were paid more (Q11) also was found to correlate with their commitment, but the correlation was significant only at the 0.05 level. Teachers might not be seeing a rise in their salaries as a sole and direct motivator, and therefore they might not think that better salaries alone would result in more positive attitudes in their profession.

Professional Development and Teachers' Commitment

Teachers' planning to take (additional) qualifications in ELT (Q14), opportunities to improve in the institution (Q15), and teachers' perceptions about the necessity of keeping themselves up-to-date with changes and improvements in ELT (Q21) and about in-service programs (Q 22) were dealt with as possible indicators of teachers' commitment to their profession and the relationship between these variables and the teachers' seeing ELT as a career was investigated and presented in Table 7:

Table 7

Short-term and Long-term Commitment & Professional Development

	Q 14	Q 15	Q 21	Q 22
Q 12	.204** N= 176	.207** N= 173	.277** N= 176	.179** N= 176
Q 13	.366** N= 178	.318** N= 175	.162* N= 178	.135 N= 178

Note. ** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level. * Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level.

Teachers' perceptions about professional development (Q21), opportunities offered in their institutions (Q15), and teachers' planning to take additional qualifications (Q14) seemed to correlate with their short- and long-term commitment significantly, if weakly. Teachers' planning to take additional qualifications (Q14) and feeling that there are opportunities to improve as an EFL teacher in their institution (Q15) seemed to correlate with their long-term commitment to a greater extent than their short-term commitment, and these turned out to be also the factors most correlated with the long-term commitment in the whole questionnaire. In fact teachers' further plans to take additional qualifications may be taken as a direct sign of their planning to invest more in themselves as they have long-term commitment, or the reverse may also be true. This can be said to support the idea that the more teachers are involved in professional development and given a chance to improve themselves as professionals the more they see teaching as a permanent occupation. This issue can gain even greater importance when teachers working in provincial state universities under comparatively limiting conditions in their workplaces associate their careers with growth in their profession. They might feel more involved in their profession when continuing to learn and become more dedicated.

Teachers' opinions about in-service training programs (Q22) have the least correlation with five-year commitment however it was significant at the 0.01 level,

and it did not correlate significantly with the long-term commitment. The reason for this might be teachers' negative opinions about in-service training as it is often imposed from the top. When in-service training programs are not planned according to teachers' needs and preferences and implemented from the top without any consideration for teachers' personal views and opinions, they might give more harm than benefit and may hinder teachers' commitment (Maley, as cited in Roe, 1990). In-service training might also have had some negative associations for teachers in some provincial universities where they have not experienced it before. Teachers might have various expectations from in-service training and might not be very hopeful that their expectations can be fulfilled in their institutions. Türkay (2000) investigated the EFL teachers' expectations from the in-service training programs in Çukurova University, and in Hacettepe University, where ELT and teacher training programs have been implemented for many years, and found that the current teacher training programs in the above mentioned universities did not meet the trainees' expectations completely.

Teachers' Temptation to Leave

So far, teachers' planning to continue teaching for the following 5 (Q12) and 10 years (Q13) have been treated as the direct reflectors of teachers' short- and long-term commitment, namely of whether they see ELT as a career. At this point of the data analysis, the possibility of the fifth statement, which was " I sometimes feel tempted to leave ELT" being another important item in the questionnaire directly reflecting career pattern and commitment became apparent. In the earlier analysis, this item was the only negatively correlated item, and it revealed a relative strength of correlation. Therefore the fifth question was correlated separately with the

questions grouped under teachers' stories about choosing the profession and their perceptions about EFL teaching as an occupation (questions 1, 2, 3, 4, 16, 17, 18, 19), their job-satisfaction (questions 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11), and their perceptions of professional development (questions 14, 15, 21, 22). Table 8 below shows the results of the related analysis:

Table 8

Temptation to leave & Entrance into Teaching

	Q 1	Q 2	Q 3	Q 4	Q 16	Q 17	Q 18	Q 19
Q 5	-.262**	-.214**	-.370**	-.236**	-.371**	-.149*	-.279**	-.284**
	N= 180	N= 180	N= 180	N= 176	N= 177	N= 180	N= 180	N=179

Note. ** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level; * correlation is significant at the 0.05 level.

Teachers' sometimes feeling tempted to leave teaching (Q5) correlated with all the items negatively. When teachers' temptation to leave ELT was correlated with the questions 1, 2, 3, 4, 16, 17, 18, and 19 focusing on teachers' entry into the profession and their current perceptions of ELT as an occupation, the results showed that the most related factors were teachers' currently having positive thoughts about their profession (Q3), and their feeling proud of it (Q16).

The findings of this analysis confirms that teachers' being proud of their profession is the most important factor affecting their commitment as was found earlier (see Table 7). Considering the relatively high negative correlation value we might conclude that if teachers have pride in their job they do not feel tempted to leave their job and they are more likely to see it as a permanent occupation.

The second highest correlation was detected to be the teachers' having positive thoughts about EFL teaching (Q3), which again matches with the previous

findings presented earlier in Table 5. Teachers can be said to commit more when they are positive about their job and they do not feel tempted to leave.

Teachers' feeling tempted to leave the profession (Q5) was correlated negatively with the questions related to their job satisfaction (Q6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11) and showed the results similar to that of teachers' commitment and job satisfaction (see Table 9).

Table 9

Temptation to leave & Satisfaction

	Q 6	Q 7	Q 8	Q 9	Q 10	Q 11
Q 5	-.520**	-.171*	-.406**	-.082	-.062	-.050
	N= 180	N= 180	N= 178	N= 179	N= 180	N= 180

Note. ** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level; * Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level

Teachers' general satisfaction with EFL teaching (Q6), and teachers' having positive relationships with their administrators (Q8) were found to be the only items that have a moderate negative correlations with their temptation to leave within the group, which were also highly significant.

When the findings in Table 6 are compared with the ones in Table 9 above, one can see that teachers' being satisfied with their job (Q6) has the most significant effect on teachers' not feeling tempted to leave and on their short- and long-term commitment. Teachers' feeling tempted to leave (Q5) was also correlated with their perceptions about professional development (Q14, 15, 21, 22), and all the correlations were found to be quite weak in this group (see Table 10).

Table 10

Temptation to leave & Professional Development

	Q 14	Q 15	Q 21	Q 22
Q 5	-.048	-.180*	-.198**	-.156*
	N= 180	N= 177	N= 180	N= 180

Note. ** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level; * correlation is significant at the 0.05 level.

The highest negative correlation was found to be that teachers' thinking they should try to keep themselves up-to-date with changes and improvements in ELT (Q 21), still the correlation was weak. The low negative correlations might result from teachers' giving the priority to some other factors such as their general satisfaction with EFL teaching, their having positive relationships with administrators, and their feeling proud of their profession as was shown in the previous findings.

Teachers' thinking that they should try to keep themselves up-to-date with changes and improvements in ELT was found to be the most correlated factor relating to teachers' short-term commitment earlier in this chapter (see Table 9). Teachers' feeling that there are opportunities to improve in their current institution (Q15) was again significantly correlated with both short- and long-term commitment previously, and it was found to be the second most important factor negatively correlated with teachers' feeling tempted to leave the profession (see Table 10).

Teachers' Reasons for Having Stayed in the Field, for Considering Leaving Teaching, and Mobility Both Within and out of ELT

The reasons participants gave for having stayed as teachers (Q1), for why they might consider leaving teaching (Q2) or moving and teaching in another district (Q3) were collected in Part C in the questionnaire. These were considered to be the

reflectors of teachers' sources of satisfaction and dissatisfaction within their current institution and with EFL teaching in general. To investigate this issue, the frequencies and the percentages of each question were calculated, and the answers for the "other" option for each question were grouped under related issues. In the analysis of the data the statistically valid answers given by the teachers to each question were considered.

Teachers stated various reasons for why they have stayed in the field of EFL teaching as presented in Table 11 below:

Table 11

Reasons for Having Stayed in the Field of ELT

	Frequency	Percentage of all teachers (N=180)
The positive interaction with students	143	79.4%
The friendly atmosphere shared with colleagues	87	48.3%
Flexible work hours	82	45.6%
Manageable workload	66	36.7%
The positive attitudes of the administrators	45	25.0%
Good pay	10	5.6%
Other	30	16.7%

The positive interaction between the teachers and students seemed to be the major reason for teachers' having stayed as EFL teachers. When the teachers' second most important reason, which was "the friendly atmosphere shared with colleagues", is considered together with the positive interaction teachers had with their students

we might conclude that interpersonal relations play an important role on teachers' satisfaction and staying in the field as Sergiovanni pointed out (1975). However teachers' having a close relationship with their colleagues was not found to have a strong correlation with their commitment in the earlier analysis in this chapter. The inconsistency might result from subgroups formed by teachers in their social work atmosphere. Teachers might have quite close relationships with some of their colleagues with whom they socialize as a separate small group, and this might be a source of satisfaction for them. Still, teachers might identify the presence of other subgroups as a negative characteristic of interpersonal relationships at work. The results are similar to the findings of the earlier analysis in this chapter in that teachers' feelings for their students correlate with their commitment (see Table 6) and to the results of previous research. Bayraktar (1996) also found that the most important source of satisfaction for teachers at state universities was 'having motivated bright students'.

Flexible work hours and manageable workload were found to be other important factors making teachers stay, as they were also in Bayraktar's (1996) study. "The positive attitudes of the administrators" was detected to have relatively less importance for teachers' having stayed in the field, but still much more than "good pay" does. Few teachers in the study chose good pay as a reason for which they have stayed in the field, which might be a result of their being paid insufficient salaries, confirming the results reported from the Likert-scale questions earlier (see Table 6).

Other reasons given by the teachers for having stayed as language teachers were found to be idiosyncratic. As the percentages of the suggested reasons were much below than the percentage of the least popular option shown in Table 11 except

for "lack of alternative employment" (stated by 12 of the teachers), and "love for the job and for the field," (stated by six of the teachers) only these two choices are reported here.

A few teachers seem to have stayed as language teachers as they see ELT as the only alternative for their career choice, and they might left the profession if they could see another alternative. Only few teachers mentioned that they have stayed in the field simply for that they love their job.

Teachers' current reasons for which they might consider leaving teaching were found to be diverse, as presented in Table 12 below:

Table 12

Reasons for which Teachers might Leave ELT

	Frequency	Percentage of all teachers (N=180)
Inadequate pay	111	61.7%
The negative attitudes of administrators	42	23.3%
Excessive workload	41	21.8%
Lack of communication and cooperation among colleagues	39	21.7%
Strict work hours	33	18.3%
Lack of interaction with students	26	14.4%
Other	22	12.2%

The most popular reason was found to be the "inadequate pay" stated by the largest number of teachers, which confirms that teachers' salaries have the weakest effect on their having stayed and it is the most powerful reason which might cause

them to leave ELT. In this sense the results are similar to the earlier results in this chapter, which showed that teachers' being satisfied with their salaries did not highly correlate with their commitment. Still it is clear that teachers are not satisfied with their salaries, but are generally committed to teaching, however they see their salaries as a possible reason if they were to consider leaving teaching. "The negative attitudes of the administrators", "excessive workload", and "lack of communication and cooperation among colleagues" were the other important reasons of teachers to consider leaving teaching whereas "lack of interaction" between the teachers and students had the lowest level of popularity.

Teachers' ranking lack of interaction with students as the lowest reason might result from their viewing themselves unlikely to experience this as a problem in their teaching career due to the fact that teachers stated that they have stayed as EFL teachers mostly for the positive interaction they had with their students (see Table 11).

Other reasons stated by the teachers why they might consider leaving ELT were found to be idiosyncratically distributed and therefore were not presented in this analysis except for "the regulations limiting opportunities to improve". Six teachers stated that regulations limiting opportunities to improve professionally would be a reason for them if they were to consider leaving teaching. Teachers might point to the regulations of YÖK (Higher Education Council) preventing EFL teachers at state universities from attending MA and PhD programs offered by other than their own institutions. Teachers might be deprived of improving themselves in their career as few universities involved in the study have ELT departments offering graduate programs. Conferences, seminars, and workshops are also rarely held in the

provincial districts, where the teachers participating in the study work, which might be a hindrance to professional development. In this respect ELT might be seen as an easy occupation to leave for external reasons such as family matters, due to the lack of teachers' self-realisation in their work.

Teachers stated different reasons for which they might consider moving and teaching in another district (see Table 13).

Table 13

Reasons for which Teachers Consider Moving and Teaching in another District

	Frequency	Percentage of all teachers (N=180)
More satisfactory living conditions	118	65.6%
Better social conditions	114	63.3%
Better institutional facilities	97	53.9%
More institutional support for professional growth	97	53.9%
Family matters	71	39.4%
Students of a higher level	42	23.3%
Other	12	0.7%

The majority of the teachers (65.6%) stated that they would move and teach in another district for "more satisfactory living conditions". The second highest percentage rate belonged to the "better social conditions" option chosen by the 63.3% of the teachers participating in the study. "Better institutional facilities" and "more institutional support for professional growth" had the third highest percentage rate

which was stated to be a likely reason for 53.9% of the teachers to consider moving and teaching in another district.

Considering the results of this analysis we might conclude that satisfactory living conditions and social conditions play a role on teachers' considering moving and teaching in another district, which supports the result of the earlier analysis explaining why teachers at Akdeniz University and Karadeniz Teknik University were the most strongly committed to EFL teaching (see Table 3). The provincial cities where the teachers were currently living and working might fail to meet the teachers' expectations in some aspects, and this might be a factor for the teachers to consider changing the place they live and the institution they work for. The district where the teachers live and work might be a source of satisfaction when it offers better living and social conditions.

When the high percentages of better institutional facilities and more institutional support for professional growth are considered, the results seem to be in harmony with the findings of the earlier analysis in the study showing that teachers' planning to take (additional) qualifications, and opportunities to improve in the institution correlate significantly to seeing ELT as a career, especially with their long-term commitment (see Table 7). Lack of opportunities is also stated as one of the major reasons for the high attrition rate in a study conducted by McKnight (as cited in Johnston, 1997). Teachers in provincial state universities might need to be informed more about recent developments in their profession, and be in contact with their colleagues more than teachers working in big cities, as previously suggested in

Chapter 2.

Family matters and having students of a higher level were found not to have reached the popularity of the above mentioned factors in teachers' considering leaving and teaching in another district (see Table 13). The analysis of the other options were left out as their percentage was found to be far below than the percentages of the previous options (see Table 15), and the teachers' answers were idiosyncratic.

This chapter has presented the findings of data analysis related to teachers' short- and long-term commitment, the relation of the demographic factors (age, sex, institution, experience in ELT in general, and in the current institution), and of occupational factors (entrance into teaching and perceptions of ELT as an occupation, job satisfaction, and perceptions of professional development) with teachers' commitment, teachers' reasons for having stayed in the field and for considering leaving ELT, and mobility within and out of EFL teaching.

In the next chapter, the findings of the study will be summarised and discussed. Implications and limitations of the study will also be presented.

CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSIONS

Teachers are the most crucial factor affecting the quality of any education program. The practice of well-designed curricula, successful teaching methodologies and techniques, and fruitful research in ELT all have their roots in teachers and their application of the teaching job (Ar, 1998). For teachers to become effective members of the teaching force and to invest more of themselves in their profession may depend on their perceptions of ELT as a permanent profession.

This chapter will present the research questions and discuss the summary of the findings with respect to the research questions. Pedagogical implications, limitations of the study, and suggestions for further research will also be presented.

This study aimed to investigate whether EFL teachers at Turkish provincial state universities see EFL teaching as a career, and tried to answer the following research questions:

- 1) What are the perceptions of EFL teachers working in provincial state universities in Turkey of ELT as a career in Turkey?
- 2) How do demographic factors (age, sex, length of experience in ELT in general, and length of experience in ELT within the current institution) relate to teachers' perceptions of ELT as a career?
- 3) How do occupational factors (teachers' entrance into teaching and teachers' perceptions of EFL as an occupation, job satisfaction, and teachers' perceptions of professional development) relate to teachers' perceptions of ELT as a career?

The term "short-term commitment" was used to cover teachers' planing to stay in the profession for the following 5 years, and the term "long-term

commitment" was used to cover teachers' planing to stay as EFL teachers for the following 10 years.

Summary of the Findings

Teachers' Perceptions of ELT as a Career

The analysis of the first research question in the study indicated that teachers at Turkish provincial state universities were planning to continue teaching for the following 5 and 10 years. In other words, teachers did see ELT as a long-term career. However, one in every three teachers was uncertain about continuing teaching for the following 10 years. Also in Johnston's study (1997) "leaving teaching was a possibility that was constantly present in the teachers' accounts" (p. 692). Ar (1998) states that "almost half of the teachers stated that they had been tempted to leave teaching" (p. 101), and he points that teachers' intentions to leave the profession resulted from their work conditions. Ar mentions that although EFL teachers in Anadolu University, Balikesir University, and Middle East Technical University were satisfied with teaching as a profession, they were dissatisfied in their work. Four- fifths of the teachers in Ar's study were dissatisfied with "low salaries, administrators' and students' attitudes towards teachers, lack or quality of facilities and teaching materials, limited self-development opportunities, relationships like existence of small groups among teachers, heavy amount of workload, the education system or curriculum" (p. 101). The number of teachers who felt uncertain about their teaching careers may be revealing a matter of some concern to provincial state universities in terms of high teacher attrition unless these teachers do not change their opinions to the positive. Common reasons for provincial state university

teachers' uncertainty about continuing teaching are suggested to be identified and measures to be taken to ensure teachers' commitment to their profession.

Demographic Factors & Teachers' Commitment

Teachers' commitment was not related to their age, sex, their experience in ELT in general, and within the current institution. Institution did play a role on teachers' commitment. Among the nine institutions covered in the study, Akdeniz University and Karadeniz Teknik University are the institutions which have the most teachers who see EFL teaching as a career. Teachers at Erciyes University also are more often planning to stay in the profession for the following 10 years. For Akdeniz University and Karadeniz Teknik University, the favourable districts where these two institutions are located might have played a role on teachers' general commitment as Antalya and Trabzon are two pretty cities by the sea. As for the teachers at Erciyes University, the institution's successfully designed preparatory school, and well-organised administration might have been a factor positively relating to teachers' commitment. Bayraktar (1996) states that EFL teachers at Middle East Technical University, and at Boğaziçi University displayed satisfaction with well-organised pattern of the administration in their institutions that is "efficient in meeting all sorts of demands" (p. 60). Administrations' successful attempts to provide teachers with more satisfactory conditions in their teaching contexts may be an effective motivator for teachers to become more committed to their profession.

Occupational Factors & Teachers' Commitment

Teachers' perceptions of ELT as a career were related to teachers' conscious and willing entrance into teaching, their having had positive thoughts and expectations related to the profession, their currently having positive thoughts about

the profession, and their expectations' being fulfilled. The most significant factors that make teachers stay in the profession were teachers' being proud of their profession, and their being satisfied with their current teaching position. Teachers' colleagues' positive feelings and opinions about teaching as an occupation were related to teachers' commitment much more than their relatives' and friends' feelings and opinions about teaching as an occupation were. In Ar's study (1998), "teaching itself" (p.101) was found to be crucial for teachers to be involved in their work. Teachers' perceptions about the "teaching itself" may be shaped by various factors such as their having started the profession with positive thoughts and opinions and having been able to keep their positiveness through their careers which would result from teachers' satisfaction with their current position, and with teaching in general. It is important that teacher education departments be successful in choosing bright motivated students and in preparing these students for their future responsibilities through fulfilling these young students' expectations. Teachers also should be provided by their institutions with enough support to keep their enthusiasm and positiveness related to their profession. Teachers' work conditions in provincial state universities should be improved so as to lead teachers towards being more committed to their professions.

Teachers' perceptions of ELT as a career are also correlated with teachers' job satisfaction. Teachers' general satisfaction with EFL teaching, teachers' having positive feelings and opinions about their students, and administrators are related to teachers' commitment whereas teachers' relationships with colleagues correlate with teachers' commitment at a relatively lower level. The teachers who do not feel tempted to leave ELT are strongly committed to their job. Teachers' satisfaction with

their salaries does not relate to their commitment at a statistically significant level. Teachers' general satisfaction with their profession and their having positive relationships with their students and administrators seem to be important factors that contribute to teachers' commitment to the field of ELT.

Students and administrators have also been found to be an important reason of teachers' satisfaction with their profession in the earlier studies conducted by Ar (1998), and Bayraktar (1996). Teachers seem to give more importance to their relationships with their students and with their administrators than with their colleagues as students are the most important constituents of teaching, and administrators have the power to shape teachers' careers by granting them opportunities or restricting them.

Just as the fact that salaries have been found to be a major source of dissatisfaction for teachers in the earlier studies conducted by Ar (1998), Bayraktar (1996), Johnston (1997), in this study teachers' commitment did not correlate with teachers' satisfaction with their salaries. Teaching is generally not considered a well-paid occupation in Turkey, as in most of the countries of the world, and teachers might have chosen teaching as a job being quite aware of the fact that they would not be paid high salaries. Therefore, teachers' not being satisfied with their salaries may not be a primary source for them to leave. Instead, teachers may give more importance to their general satisfaction with ELT, their students, and their administrators.

Professional development opportunities is another factor being related to teachers' commitment significantly, if only moderately. If teachers are planning to take additional qualifications and if they are provided with opportunities to improve

by their institutions, they become more committed to their profession as discussed previously in Chapter 2 in this study. Also in Ar's study (1998), teachers stated that "opportunities for attending self-development activities" (p. 101) were a source of satisfaction in their jobs.

However, teachers' opinions about in-service training programs correlate with their commitment at the lowest level as teachers might have high expectations related to in-service training, and might suspect that their expectations cannot be fulfilled by their administrators. According to Turkay's study (2000), teacher trainees had various expectations from in-service training programs ranging from being provided with new methods and trends in ELT, and being motivated for further academic education, to voluntary attendance, and teacher trainees' expectations were not completely met in the current teacher training programs in Hacettepe University and Çukurova University,

Teachers' feeling tempted to leave the profession is correlated negatively with their feeling proud of their job, and their having positive thoughts about it at the highest level in the study, although the correlations are only statistically moderate. If teachers are proud of their job, and positive about it, they are less likely to feel tempted to leave their profession. Teachers' being satisfied with their jobs again is an important factor which makes teachers not to feel tempted to leave. Teachers are also not tempted to leave if they think that they should try to keep themselves up-to-date with changes and improvements in ELT, and if there are opportunities for the teachers to improve in their institutions.

Most of the teachers have stayed as EFL teachers due to the positive interaction they have with their students, the friendly atmosphere they share with their colleagues, flexible work hours and manageable workload.

The most likely reason for which teachers were to consider leaving teaching would be inadequate pay, and teachers would consider moving and teaching in another district mostly for more satisfactory living conditions, better social conditions, better institutional facilities, and more institutional support for professional development.

Implications for Turkish University EFL Context

There are some implications for Higher Education Council, and for institutions to consider if attrition of good teachers is to be prevented, and competent and enthusiastic teacher candidates are to be encouraged for the field of EFL teaching in Turkish state universities.

Professional development is an inseparable part of teachers' becoming effective members of their profession and keeping themselves fresh in the field. Teachers should be systematically provided with opportunities to be informed about recent developments in ELT, to renew themselves and their practices, and be in contact with their colleagues from different EFL/ESL contexts to reflect upon each others' experiences. This is crucial for making teachers feel that they are the performers of a profession, and they belong to a professional community, especially for provincial state universities. Carefully designed, effective bottom-up in-service training programs can be a way to achieve this aim.

Higher Education Council should encourage EFL teachers at universities to continue their professional development, and also their academic education, and

prepare the necessary conditions in universities. The present situation in which teachers cannot find much chance to improve themselves professionally and to advance their academic qualifications should be adjusted.

As students were found to play a crucial role in teachers' job satisfaction and commitment, the quality and the amount of teachers' workload should be carefully designed to free teachers from the unnecessary tasks such as paperwork so as to allow them to spend more time with their students. Teachers should also be provided with enough time to devote more energy to develop themselves to become better teachers individually and with their colleagues. Teachers should be encouraged and supported morally and financially for attendance to professional development activities held in various places by their institutions.

Salaries of EFL teachers should also be improved so as to lift teachers' morale and status to attract young bright population to the profession and to ensure teacher retention.

Limitations of the Study

Due to the time limitation the questionnaires had to be administered within very short periods of time, and this led to a decrease in the return rate of the questionnaires.

A wider range of provincial state universities could not be contacted due to the researcher's limited time and access. This affected the generalizability of the results negatively.

A questionnaire might not have been enough to collect in-depth data from the participants. Interviews could have been held with at least some of the participants from each institution to gather more detailed information about some aspects of the

issues. At least some open-ended questions could have been included in the questionnaire to give teachers an opportunity to express themselves more fully and clearly.

A factor analysis of the data could also not be applied due to the time limitation, which might have revealed different results.

Suggestions for Further Studies

In this study, the perceptions of teachers at 9 Turkish provincial state universities were investigated. The perceptions of EFL teachers at other provincial state universities should also be researched to collect more generalizable data. As a follow-up study, teachers at surban state universities and at private universities could be a subject to investigation to find whether there are any differences between the perceptions of teachers who teach in provincial areas, in urban cities and at private universities. More universities in other countries could also be researched to understand perceptions of EFL/ESL teachers working in different contexts to receive a full picture of the issue.

Interviews also can be conducted to reveal more in-depth data related to the issue as teachers may be given the chance of being more expressive through individual contact.

A longitudinal study also can be done with the participants in this study to find out whether uncertain teachers change their views to the positive, and whether positive teachers keep their position over five years' time and ten years' time.

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APPENDIX
QUESTIONNAIRE

Dear Colleague,

I am an MA TEFL student at Bilkent University. This questionnaire is designed to investigate your perceptions of ELT as a career. Your cooperation would be much appreciated. Your responses will be kept confidential.

I look forward to receiving your replies. Thank you for your participation.

Meltem Coşkuner

PART A: Please complete the following items as appropriate.

Institution :

Department :

Sex :

Place of birth:

Any degrees and / or qualifications held in ELT:

Type of degree / qualification	Institution	Date

1. I am _____ years old.

- a. 20-29 b. 30-39 c. 40-49 d. 50-over

2. I got my BA (undergraduate degree) in _____.

- a. Teaching English as a Foreign Language
b. English Language and Literature

- c. American Language and Literature
- d. Other (Please specify) _____ .
3. I have taught English for _____ years.
4. I have been working at this institution for _____ years.
5. I am teaching English _____ hours a week this semester.
6. I held other types of jobs before I became an English teacher.
- a. YES b. NO
7. I have, or have had, other jobs besides my main one.
- a. YES b. NO

If yes, what kind of job(s) do/have you have/had? _____.

PART B: Please read each statement, then circle the number that most closely corresponds to your opinion.

- SD** Strongly disagree = 1
- D** Disagree = 2
- U** Uncertain = 3
- A** Agree = 4
- SA** Strongly agree = 5

- | | SD | D | U | A | SA |
|---|-----------|----------|----------|----------|-----------|
| 1. Becoming an EFL teacher was a choice I made consciously and willingly. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 2. I had positive thoughts and expectations related to my profession when I started to teach. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 3. I have positive thoughts about my profession now. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

	SD	D	U	A	SA
4. My expectations related to my profession have been fulfilled.	1	2	3	4	5
5. I sometimes feel tempted to leave ELT.	1	2	3	4	5
6. I am satisfied with teaching EFL as an occupation.	1	2	3	4	5
7. I generally like my students.	1	2	3	4	5
8. I believe my administrators try to do as much as they can when I need their help to solve a problem at my institution.	1	2	3	4	5
9. I have a close relationship with my colleagues.	1	2	3	4	5
10. I am satisfied with my salary.	1	2	3	4	5
11. My attitude would be more positive if I were paid more.	1	2	3	4	5
12. I plan to continue teaching for the next 5 years.	1	2	3	4	5
13. I plan to continue teaching for the next 10 years.	1	2	3	4	5
14. I plan to take (additional) qualifications in ELT.	1	2	3	4	5
15. I feel there are opportunities to improve as an EFL teacher in my institution.	1	2	3	4	5
16. I feel proud of my profession.	1	2	3	4	5
17. People I know have positive feelings and opinions about my occupation.	1	2	3	4	5
18. My colleagues have positive feelings and opinions about our profession.	1	2	3	4	5

	SD	D	U	A	SA
19. I am satisfied with my current teaching position.	1	2	3	4	5
20. I plan to move and teach in another district.	1	2	3	4	5
21. I should try to keep myself up-to-date with changes and improvements in ELT.	1	2	3	4	5
22. In-service training programs are a good way to keep up with the field.	1	2	3	4	5

PART C: Please circle the option(s) that are true for you.

1. The reason(s) why I have stayed as an English Language teacher is/are
 - a. the positive interaction between me and my students
 - b. the friendly atmosphere I share with my colleagues
 - c. flexible work hours
 - d. manageable workload
 - e. the positive attitudes of the administrators
 - f. good pay
 - g. other (please specify) _____ .

2. The reason(s) at present why I might consider leaving teaching English is/are
 - a. lack of interaction between me and my students
 - b. lack of communication and cooperation among colleagues
 - c. strict work hours

- d. excessive workload
 - e. the negative attitudes of the administrators
 - f. inadequate pay
 - g. other (please specify) _____ .
3. If I were to move and teach in another district, the most likely reasons would be
- a. better institutional facilities
 - b. more institutional support for professional growth
 - c. students of a higher level
 - d. more satisfactory living conditions
 - e. better social conditions
 - f. family matters
 - g. other (please specify) _____ .