Preface

In-service Education and Training (INSET) has drawn considerable attention in recent years as a result of the growing interest in improving the quality of English instruction at all levels, ranging from the pre-school to the tertiary level (Bates, Swennen, & Jones, 2014; Darling-Hammond, 2000; White, 2014). The concept of INSET refers to the educational and professional practices offered to or initiated by teachers themselves in various educational programmes, educational settings, K12 schools and universities. Such training, in striving for possible improvement in the quality of language teaching, often aims to refresh, review, and renew teachers’ horizons and practices in their professional conduct (Kumaravadivelu, 2013; Sugrue, & Solbrekke, 2014).

INSET is often a voluntary professional engagement that aims to help teachers develop professional learning and understanding, and in return, to improve what they do in the classroom (Darling-Hammond, Barron, Pearson, Schoenfeld, & Stage, 2015). Inasmuch as it is voluntary, there appears to be a sustained need for further development among in-service teachers to keep the professional self up to date with the rapidly-evolving pedagogical principles of teaching. INSET serves as a bridge between teachers and the knowledge generated and disseminated in the field of educational science when they are also involved in practical aspects of teaching (Farrell, 2012; Mann, & Tang, 2012).

The need is also related to the changing profiles of learners of English. One such change concerns skills that learners need to possess outside the classroom. With the presence of a multitude of sources and media, of knowledge and developments in informationtechnologies, possible modes of learning vary immensely (Passeym & Samways, 2016; Watson & Tinsley, 2013). Such an evolution dictates a transformation of teacher skills to be able accommodate new trends of teaching and real life learning in the language classroom, or at least to create opportunities for language learners to make use of what is available outside the classroom to further their knowledge of the language. In-service teachers, however, do not always receive continuous formal training similar to what is offered at the pre-service level. Therefore, they might need to be encouraged to develop their pedagogical understanding and teaching practices within the schools where they are employed.

Teacher learning and development appear to be influenced by a number of issues that inhibit or facilitate in-service teacher learning. These include personal, social, cultural, contextual and theoretical issues which play a critical role in the development of in-service teachers. Potentially constrained by these challenges, teachers usually have concerns of the way they are educated and trained. Therefore, teacher educators need to develop effective strategies, meaningful activities, relevant tasks, and strategic approaches for teachers to create an impact that could be sustained by teachers themselves (Mitchell, 2014).

INSET programmes vary in length, purpose, initiation and continuation, and the roles undertaken by teachers and educators (Roberts, 2016). Longer engagement in learning and development during in-service
teacher education is regarded as being more influential on self-exploration when supported by peers and educators through external and internal support systems (Edwards & Burns, 2016). These support systems might include collaboration practices such as participant sensitive mentoring. Opportunities for learning and development can increase when teachers are immediately supported in overcoming the contextual challenges such as time, workload, and lack of motivation and interest.

The purpose of INSET is also an important factor in shaping the programmes. The specific purpose of a programme determines the type of activities used or strategies followed in the programme implementation. Teacher educators, for example, need to consider whether the programme aims to introduce a change in the curriculum, raise awareness into issues of curriculum and syllabus, help teachers develop particular skills and understandings such as how to integrate technology into the classroom practices, or simply inform teachers of new testing and assessment issues. For example, if major changes in the programme are targeted, then educators might need to create a programme that helps teachers revisit their existing beliefs, question them, understand and learn the underlying principles of the new initiative and develop practical skills to acquire knowledge about the purpose and use.

Initiation and continuation are integral parts of in-service teacher education. The depth of learning and breadth of development in teachers often depend on who the initiator is and how much teachers are encouraged to continue the positive effects of the programme. Initiation by educators and sustained control over the process of engagement in activities and tasks offered could impact the degree and amount of benefits to be gained by teachers. Granting teachers more autonomy by which they can regulate their own learning and development in collegial collaboration with educators has the potential of creating more impact on teachers’ development (Hobson & Malderez, 2013; Wang & Zhang, 2014).

INSET helps teachers build on their existing knowledge and experience by constructing new meanings. Therefore, educators with an agenda to instill new pre-determined skills and knowledge might fail to do so as in-service teachers begin the programmes with a wealth of experiential knowledge which might shape their own learning with little control exerted by educators (Kiraly, 2014; Kolb, 2014). A programme sustained through dominant views and engagement of educators might create less enthusiasm and motivation to learn, whereas if it is initiated and sustained by teachers independently and interdependently (Benson, 2013), the impact on the teacher could be more in-depth and sustainable for future practices.

This edited book was initiated with an understanding that teachers and their professional practice and development are all shaped by numerous factors. The book addresses a gap we have identified in the field of in-service teacher training. We believe there is a need for a complete book that discusses a wide range of sub-themes in INSET. The theme of the book is innovative in terms of the depth and breadth of the content. This reference source, we hope, will give professionals and researchers in the field of in-service teacher education a complete picture of issues in INSET. The book addresses an international audience such as would-be language teacher trainers, currently-working teacher trainers, experienced teacher trainers, language teacher educators at in-service levels, and professional researchers. We also believe that postgraduate students who conduct research for their projects and theses on in-service teacher education can also benefit from the content provided in this volume.

We realize and acknowledge the complexity of the interplay between contextual and individual factors involved in one’s professional development. We also realize that we cannot address all these issues in one volume such as this, and it is beyond the scope and intent of this collection of papers to pursue such an ambitious goal. We therefore aimed to bring together ideas and practices that facilitate in-service teacher training. We have tried to include relevant and related topics in teacher development and INSET. What follows is only a very brief introduction of chapters included in this collection. The chapters are broadly
organized around four main themes. These are how to design and do INSET, research engagement and teacher identity, mentoring teachers, and impact of INSET programmes.

OVERVIEW OF CHAPTERS

Section 1: How to Design and Do INSET

INSET refers to educational programmes and like any case of an educational practice, their success and effectiveness are often predetermined on how well they have been designed. Designing and conducting an educational programme often requires paying attention to both institutional and personal aspects of the programme as well as means and opportunities that are available. Insights into theoretical and practical prerequisites in an INSET program, then, can be beneficial in construing the backstage of such a venture. We, therefore, have tried to include in Section 1 contributions that focus on offering answers and suggestions to the how-to question of designing and carrying out INSET programmes from various contexts such as Turkey, Italy and Brazil. Different aspects of INSET programmes are explored and discussed. In doing this, we hope to provide a general framework of principles of initiating and implementing INSET programmes. Chapter 1, contributed by Selma Deneme and Handan Çelik, investigate planning, delivery and follow-up processes of in-service teacher education programmes in Turkey with a view to explore inhibitive factors in the success of these programmes. They report that these programmes lack a robust needs assessment, provide few hands-on practices, and do not have follow-up activities and tasks as part of training process. Chapter 2 by Giuseppina Rita Mangione, Maria Chiara Pettenati, Alessia Rosa, Patrizia Magnoler and Pier Giuseppe Rossi report on strategies that can facilitate teachers’ process of developing a professional vision for lifelong learning as a mediator between initial and in-service teacher training. The strategic elements they suggest include:

1. A sense of belonging to the institution and continuous engagement in reflective practice,
2. Implementation of tools to facilitate this process such as e-portfolio, and
3. Developing interaction and collaboration among researchers, experts and novices, which can enhance professional learning.

In Chapter 3, Ana Maria Pereira Campanha and Adriana Cruz Carvalho discuss challenges in developing effective in-service teacher training and introduce a detailed programme that is designed to address these challenges. Additionally, they conclude with a discussion of a programme which prioritizes teachers’ individual growth, supported within academic institutions.

Section 2: Research Engagement and Teacher Identity

One important aim of INSET programmes is helping teachers continue with their professional understanding. Active engagement of in-service teachers in research can be instrumental in constructing knowledge and professional development. There is now a consensus that through engagement in research, teachers can and do construct knowledge and facilitate their own professional understanding and practice as research is one and a reliable form of learning. Teachers can become generators of knowledge for their own practical educational needs rather than merely remaining as consumers of pre-fabricated theories by
others. Therefore, we have dedicated Section 2 to chapters where the place and role of research have been explored in professional development and thus teacher identity. In Chapter 4, Ines K. Miller and Maria Isabel A. Cunha contributed to the book with a reflective professional narrative, which discusses three intertwined approaches to Practitioner Research: Reflective Practice, Action Research and Exploratory Action Research. Miller and Cunha highlight the role of these research modes in developing inclusivity, ethics and criticality through Potentially Exploitable Pedagogic/Professional Activities (PEPAs) and Potentially Exploitable Reflexive Activities (PERAs). The chapter concludes with examples and implications for normal classroom activities and classroom research tools. In Chapter 5, Deniz Ortaçtepe and Pınar Kocabaş Gedik review studies on teacher professional identity constructed in communities of practice. The chapter provides an extensive review of how professional identity construction is influenced by emotions and tensions experienced by teachers. Beril Yücel and Meral Güçeri in Chapter 6 investigate long-term effects of collaborative action research engagement by two language teachers who participated in their project. They discuss potential factors that may influence long-term positive effects of action research experience. They go on to argue for various factors that could play a key role in setting up collaborative action research projects in different contexts. Chapter 7 by Jerome Bush provides historical view of development of teacher research as a transformative and empowering movement in in-service teacher education. Bush also highlights the need for developing innovative ways of facilitating teacher research. In addition, Bush places emphasis on the fact that greater insights into the potential positive effects of engagement in teacher research can be better realized through a developed understanding of its historical development.

Section 3: Mentoring Teachers

Mentoring is one of the key components in INSET programmes particularly in terms of facilitation of teacher learning and development. The depth and breadth of teacher development are often characterized by the quality of mentoring offered during the programme as the relationship between the mentor and the mentee can often form a collaborative learning experience. Understanding the properties of effective mentoring can be of practical value to many would-be as well as practising teacher trainers. Chapters 8 and 9 in Section 3 investigate mentoring in professional development of teachers. In Chapter 8 Muzaffer Çetin and Şehnaz Şahinkarakas investigate the effectiveness of a collaborative e-mentoring platform created as a virtual environment. They report on how such a platform facilitates teachers’ learning and understanding of formative assessment practices. The conclusions drawn include the need for various support systems for professional development and the positive impact of e-mentoring on teachers’ learning process though they report contextual constraints. Andrew Johnston in Chapter 9 provides an overview of a mentoring plan for teacher mentors and student-teacher mentees, specifically designed to develop the mentee’s using and teaching communicative language skills in the classroom. In addition, Johnston proposes a detailed outline of a course which aims to promote teachers’ language proficiency and confidence in communicative abilities in the classrooms.

Section 4: Impact of Teacher Training Programmes

Educational programmes are developed, implemented, and evaluated for their effectiveness, which can be particularly informing for potential improvements in programmes. Similarly, one critical issue in the INSET context is the insightful understanding of the potential impact of the conducted INSET pro-
grammes. Chapters in this section provide a wealth of evaluative acts about how teachers benefit from various INSET programmes in various contexts such as Turkey, Cyprus, and America.

In Chapter 10, Derin Atay, Gökçe Kurt and Özlem Kaşhoğlu report on a collaborative INSET initiative which aims to develop teachers’ understandings of World Englishes and investigate how teachers transfer the outcomes of the programme in their classroom under their supervision as researchers. The researchers conclude in their chapter that the participating teachers increased their relevant knowledge of World Englishes and developed critical stance towards how to integrate what they learnt from the INSET initiative into the language teaching. Chapter 11 by Ece Zehir Topkaya and Handan Çelik explore the impact of teachers’ experience in constructing portfolio on in-service English language teachers’ teaching competencies through self-report tools. Two major conclusions reported in the chapter were that teaching competencies were observed to decrease after the programme, which helped them become relatively more realistic about their own levels of teaching competencies and that the teachers became more self-evaluative and self-reflective through engagement in portfolio construction experience. Chapter 12 by Leyla Silman-Karanfil and Mark Ian Payne examine the potential impact of professional development programmes on teachers’ beliefs about in-class code-switching in teaching a foreign language. Carried out in Northern Cyprus, where most teachers acquire English in the family context, the study concludes that cultural frames of language acquisition are integral parts of classroom practices and therefore could be considered as facilitative factors in professional development programmes for language teachers.

Chapter 13 by Enisa Mede and Yeşim Keşli-Dollar evaluate a two-week INSET programme and report the impact of teachers’ engagement in the programme on the classroom practices and the contextual challenges encountered by teachers during the training process. Mede and Keşli-Dollar also provide inhibitive and facilitative factors that play a key role in conducting in-service teacher training with a view to promoting the effectiveness of the future programmes. In Chapter 14, Shufang Shi Strause and Sophia Tan investigate the ways in which in-service teachers can be helped motivate to employ technological tools in teaching. Through a formal course, the researchers facilitate digital immigrants’ (teachers who lack technological literacy) learning and developing strategies to use various tools. They also report challenges they face during the training programme and the strategic ways they follow to overcome these challenges during the implementation. In Chapter 15, Aslı Lidice Göktürk Sağlam reports the potential impact areas of technology-integrated online teacher training in relation to communities of practice. Sağlam provides a comprehensive overview of online communities of practice and elaborates on the role of such communities in in-service teachers’ professional development. Sağlam also focus on the potential challenges that might be encountered during the operationalization of the online communities for teachers’ professional learning and development. Chapter 16 by Valentin Voroshilov discusses the professional designing approach to developing teacher competencies. Voroshilov also highlights how potential challenges in the implementation of this approach can be overcome through teachers’ active engagement in the professional designing process. Finally, in Chapter 17, Servet Çelik discusses the planning and implementation of a responsive in-service training programme that represents a significant departure from the more traditional top-down teacher workshop. His description of the ways that the teachers became actively involved in the training, as well as how they carried elements of the program forward into their practice, emphasizes the impact of engaging teachers in their own development and offers a potential model for trainers who are seeking an alternative to the typical “one-and-done” approach.

Looking in retrospect, it has been equally challenging, entertaining and enlightening to bring together ideas from various contexts. We have gained insights from both the academic discussions and the experiences our contributors have shared in this volume. Therefore, we owe thanks to our contributors,
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REFERENCES


