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**EXPLORING THE INFLUENCE OF INTERNATIONAL PROJECT WORK AND  
THE WRITING PROCESS ON THE PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT OF  
ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHERS**

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## THESIS ORIGINALITY REPORT

*Exploring the Influence of International Project Work and the Writing Process on the Professional Development of English Language Teachers* başlıklı tez çalışmamın toplam **82** sayfalık kısmına ilişkin, 3/12/2024 tarihinde tez danışmanım tarafından **Turnitin** adlı intihal tespit programından aşağıda belirtilen filtrelemeler uygulanarak alınmış olan orijinallik raporuna göre, tezimin benzerlik oranı **%6** olarak belirlenmiştir.

Uygulanan filtrelemeler:

1. Tez çalışması orijinallik raporu sayfası hariç
2. Bilimsel etik beyannamesi sayfası hariç
3. Önsöz hariç
4. İçindekiler hariç
5. Simgeler ve kısaltmalar hariç
6. Kaynaklar hariç
7. Alıntılar dahil
8. 7 kelimedenden daha az örtüşme içeren metin kısımları hariç

Necmettin Erbakan Üniversitesi Tez Çalışması Orijinallik Raporu Uygulama Esaslarımı inceledim ve tez çalışmamın, bu uygulama esaslarında belirtilen azami benzerlik oranının (%30) altında olduğunu ve intihal içermediğini; aksinin tespit edileceği muhtemel durumda doğabilecek her türlü hukuki sorumluluğu kabul ettiğimi ve yukarıda vermiş olduğum bilgilerin doğru olduğunu beyan ederim.

4/12/2024

İbrahim AYDIN

Doç. Dr. Galip KARTAL

## **SCIENTIFIC ETHICS DECLARATION**

I hereby declare that this thesis is my own work, that scientific ethics and academic rules have been carefully complied with all stages from planning to writing, that all information in the thesis has been obtained and presented within the framework of ethical behavior and academic rules, and that if the works of others are used in this study prepared in accordance with the rules of thesis preparation, they have been cited in accordance with scientific rules and these sources have been added to the list of references.

4/12/2024

İbrahim AYDIN

## ABBREVIATIONS

### Abbreviations

PD: Professional Development

EFL: English as a Foreign Language

ELT: English Language Teacher

PBL: Project-Based Learning

KA1: Key Action 1

KA2: Key Action 2

NA: National Agency

EU: European Union

EC: European Commission

## ÖZET

Necmettin Erbakan Üniversitesi, Eğitim Bilimleri Enstitüsü  
Yabancı Diller Eğitimi Anabilim Dalı  
İngiliz Dili Eğitimi Bilim Dalı  
Yüksek Lisans Tezi

### ULUSLARARASI PROJE ÇALIŞMASI VE YAZMA SÜRECİNİN İNGİLİZCE ÖĞRETMENLERİNİN MESLEKİ GELİŞİMİNE ETKİSİNİN ARAŞTIRILMASI

İbrahim AYDIN

Erasmus+ projeleri İngilizce öğretmenlerinin mesleki gelişimine katkıda bulunan önemli bir araç olarak görülmektedir. Ancak, Erasmus+ projeleri yazma sürecinin, İngilizce öğretmenlerinin pedagojik yeterlilikleri, dijital okuryazarlıkları ve uluslararası iş birliği oluşturabilme gibi mesleki becerilerinin gelişimine etkisini inceleyen araştırmalar sınırlıdır. Literatürde yer alan çalışmalar genellikle Erasmus+ projelerine katılımın, İngilizce öğretmenlerinin mesleki gelişimlerine etkisini araştırmaktadır. Bu çalışma, alandaki boşluğu doldurmak için İngilizce öğretmenlerinin Erasmus+ proje yazma süreçlerindeki deneyimlerini ve bu süreçlerin mesleki gelişimlerine olan katkılarını incelemek amacıyla yapılmıştır. Araştırma, özellikle Erasmus+ KA122 SCH ve KA210 SCH proje başvuru formlarını kullanarak proje yazma eğitimlerine odaklanmış ve bu süreçlerin İngilizce öğretmenlerine mesleki gelişim açısından kazandırdıkları, karşılaşılan zorluklar, projelerin sürdürülebilirliğini etkileyen faktörler ve pedagojik yeterliliklerin gelişimini anlamayı hedeflemiştir. Bu çalışmada, nitel bir araştırma deseni benimsenmiş ve veri toplama aracı olarak açık uçlu anket soruları ve yarı yapılandırılmış mülakatlar kullanılmıştır. Çalışmaya, Konya'da farklı okul seviyelerinde görev yapan, Erasmus+ proje yazma deneyimi olan ve olmayan 17 İngilizce öğretmeni katılmıştır. Bu öğretmenler ile yapılan görüşmeler ve uygulanan anketler sonucunda elde edilen veriler içerik analizi yöntemiyle değerlendirilmiştir. Veri analizi sonucunda temalar ve kodlar oluşturulmuş ve yorumlanması yapılmıştır. Bulgular, İngilizce öğretmenlerinin Erasmus+ proje yazma süreçlerinde dahi yer alarak pedagojik yeterliliklerini artırdıklarını, dijital araçları daha etkin kullanmayı öğrendiklerini göstermiştir. Bununla birlikte, kurumsal destek eksikliği, zaman yönetimi zorlukları ve yoğun müfredat programlarının İngilizce öğretmenlerinin bu süreçlere etkin bir şekilde katılımına engel olan önemli faktörler olduğu tespit edilmiştir. Bu çalışma, Erasmus+ proje yazma süreçlerinin İngilizce öğretmenlerinin mesleki kimliklerini güçlendirdiğini ve mesleki açıdan motivasyonlarını arttırdığını ortaya koymaktadır. Ancak, bu süreçlerin daha verimli olması ve sürdürülebilir olması için okul yönetimlerinin desteğine ihtiyaç duyulduğu, zaman yönetimi konusunda esneklik sağlanması gerektiği, proje yazma eğitimlerinin düzenli aralıklarla planlanması ve gerçekleştirilmesi önerilmektedir. Bu araştırma hem teorik hem de pratik anlamda eğitim politikaları açısından yol gösterici bir katkı sunmaktadır.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** Erasmus+ projeleri, proje yazma süreci, mesleki gelişim, uluslararası proje çalışmaları.

## ABSTRACT

Necmettin Erbakan University, Graduate School of Educational Sciences  
Department of Foreign Language Education  
English Language Education Program  
Master Thesis

### EXPLORING THE INFLUENCE OF INTERNATIONAL PROJECT WORK AND THE WRITING PROCESS ON THE PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHERS

İbrahim AYDIN

Erasmus+ projects are seen as an important tool that contributes to the professional development of English language teachers. However, there is a limited amount of research examining the impact of participating in the process of writing Erasmus+ projects on the development of EFL teachers' professional skills such as pedagogical competencies, digital literacy and international collaboration. The studies in literature generally investigate the effect of participating in Erasmus+ projects on the professional development of EFL teachers. In order to fill the gap in the field, this study was conducted to examine the experiences of English teachers in Erasmus+ project writing processes and the contributions of these processes to their professional development. This study specifically focused on project writing trainings using Erasmus+ KA122 SCH and KA210 SCH project application forms and aimed to understand what these processes bring to English language teachers in terms of professional development, challenges encountered, factors affecting the sustainability of projects and the development of pedagogical competencies. The study adopted a qualitative research design and used open-ended questionnaires and semi-structured interviews as data collection tools. 17 English teachers with and without Erasmus+ project writing experience working at different school levels in Konya participated in the study. The data obtained as a result of the interviews with these teachers and the questionnaires were evaluated by content analysis method. As a result of the data analysis, themes and codes were created and interpreted. The findings showed that English teachers increased their pedagogical competencies and learned to use digital tools more effectively by taking part in Erasmus+ project writing processes. However, lack of institutional support, time management challenges and busy curricular schedules were found to be important factors that hindered English teachers' effective participation in these processes. This study reveals that Erasmus+ project writing processes strengthen EFL teachers' professional identities and increase their professional motivation. However, in order for these processes to be more efficient and sustainable, it is suggested that the support of school administrations is needed, flexibility in time management should be provided, and project writing training should be planned and carried out at regular intervals. This research provides a guiding contribution in terms of both theoretical and practical educational policies.

**Keywords:** Erasmus+ projects, project writing process, professional development, international project works

# CHAPTER 1

## 1. INTRODUCTION

This section provides brief information about the statement of the problem, the purpose of the study, the importance of the research, assumptions and limitations. Finally, definitions of the key terms mentioned in the research are given.

### 1.1. Statement of the Problem

In today's globalized world, everything is in a continuous process of change and development. The needs of students are differentiating and in order to respond to these needs in the best way and to provide better quality content for students and to increase success, teachers need to develop themselves professionally. Professional development (PD) can be defined as the process of gaining new knowledge, skills and equipment for teachers to follow the innovative developments used in education. In this process, it is aimed at providing students with better-quality educational content and to increase students' academic achievement (Adey, 2007; Postholm, 2012; Sparks, 2002).

One of the important tools used to contribute to the PD of English Language Teacher (ELT teachers) is the Erasmus+ programme. This programme allows teachers to prepare projects on any subject for their personal and PD. If the project application is approved by the National Agency (NA) directed by the European Commission (EC), it enables them to develop innovative knowledge, skills and equipment professionally according to the relevant project topic by taking part in mobilities abroad. The approval of these projects means that the project application is submitted through an online application form specified by the NA and the project is evaluated by experts according to the evaluation criteria defined in Erasmus+ Program Guide and presented in order of points by giving points out of 100 (Erasmus+ Program Guide, 2024). The NA then grants the projects in order from the highest scoring to the lowest scoring projects according to the predetermined budgets and the projects that are entitled to receive grants are published in the [www.ua.gov.tr](http://www.ua.gov.tr) announcements section.

Another similar type of application is KA2 (Key Action 2) which can be used as one of the PD tools for ELT teachers. In these project applications in the Erasmus+ programme, at least 3 countries come together to write a project application based on common problems they face in their organizations. It can be applied in English or Turkish in case of Turkish applicants by writing an Erasmus+ project on any problem and also by taking into account the objectives

and priorities of the EU regarding education and training, and one of them becomes the applicant organization and the others become partners. The EU wants project applications to be prepared in line with the goals and priorities they have determined in education and training and asks applicants to take into consideration the current problems experienced throughout the EU. Teachers who want to write a project in this direction make a project application by considering the educational policies and priorities of the EU and linking the priorities with the objectives of their project. Project applications can be made using an online application form called KA122 SCH or an online application form called KA210 SCH. There are also other project application forms. However, since most of the participants in this study had no previous experience, KA122 SCH and KA210 SCH forms, which are simpler and more understandable to prepare than other project application types, were used in the training process by the researcher.

While writing these type of project applications, ELT teachers gain skills to improve their teaching methodologies as well. Apart from that, if these projects are approved by NA, teachers and students can take part in international mobilities. They can take part in activities such as training and classroom observation for their personal and PD. At the end of each project, there are concrete outputs such as curriculum, daily lesson plan, individual or group evaluation reports, e-learning platforms, digital education materials, etc. and abstract outputs such as having knowledge, skills and experience related to relevant field according to the subject of the project. Therefore, these projects make significant contributions to the personal and PD of ELT teachers and students. In these project applications, teachers submit project applications within the scope of Key Action 1 (KA1) to NA in their own countries online and teachers can submit project applications to their own NA or other NA located in the EU, EFTA countries and member countries within the scope of Key Action 2 (KA2) and in Turkish at certain calls for project applications in a year.

NAs are the local institutions that receive Erasmus project applications on behalf of the EU and evaluate applications according to certain criteria and publish the projects approved according to the score order. Each European country, EFTA member states and candidate countries such as Türkiye, North Macedonia and Serbia are also named as programme countries. Preparing such projects requires teamwork. It can sometimes be difficult for these projects to qualify for grants. The project writing phase is a time-consuming and institutionalized process that requires adequate support. Therefore, instead of considering

projects as a PD tool and taking part in mobility abroad, having an international project work and Erasmus+ project writing processes in the field of KA1 or KA2 within the scope of Erasmus+ programme is also regarded as a valuable tool for PD of ELT teachers. These processes can be seen as a tool that contributes to the PD of ELT teachers.

Teachers participating in Erasmus+ projects can learn innovative knowledge and skills to develop themselves professionally. In addition, ELT teachers are expected to participate in international project writing activities, especially Erasmus+ projects, because the process of project writing is an important component of PD. By participating in Erasmus+ international project works and project writing processes, teachers can learn innovative methods and apply these methods in their classrooms (Diaz Ramirez, 2014). The process of writing Erasmus+ project proposal is considered an essential part of PD for ELT teachers, encouraging them to actively engage in international project activities.

Despite these benefits, many teachers face some obstacles in participating in Erasmus+ projects. For instance, Beerkens et al. (2016) identified personal commitments, such as family responsibilities, and a lack of interest as factors that hinder participation. Similarly, insufficient awareness about the benefits of Erasmus+ programs and unclear guidance on participation processes also limit the extent to which teachers can benefit from these opportunities (Souto-Otero et al., 2013). Moreover, teachers often face difficulties in group work and professional collaboration, highlighting the need for in-service training to enhance their skills in planning, implementing, and evaluating such projects (Karakuş et al., 2017). Time constraints, driven by demanding school schedules, make it difficult for ELT teachers to allocate sufficient time for international mobility programs. They struggle with balancing lesson preparation, grading, and other school-related responsibilities, leaving little room for additional project-related tasks (Roy et al., 2019). Particularly for ELT teachers with intense curriculum loads, writing and managing Erasmus+ projects become even more challenging. While Erasmus+ projects offer meaningful PD opportunities, addressing the barriers of time, awareness, and institutional support is essential for teachers to fully benefit from these programs.

Teachers who have to teach an intensive curriculum are highly motivated to write an Erasmus+ project and even to take part in the project execution stages if the project is approved by the NA. However, difficulties such as intensive workload, the complexity of the process of teaching the curriculum and writing a project in a certain period, and the lack of adequate support from the school administration are the main factors that prevent ELT teachers from

participating in these project preparation processes efficiently. Problems such as lack of time and lack of resources make it difficult for ELT teachers to write international projects, especially in our province. Although many teachers can contribute to their PD through the Erasmus+ programme, they have difficulty in integrating these projects into the classroom environment. Providing support at school and district level facilitates wider dissemination of innovative practices (Prediger et al., 2018).

This study addresses these challenges faced by ELT teachers by analyzing the contribution of international project work and writing processes to their PD. The influence of project work and writing processes on ELT teachers' PD has not been sufficiently researched so far. Most studies examine the general effects of participating in international projects but do not address the contribution of project writing processes to teachers' PD in depth (Gallagher et al., 2017). The project writing process can be seen as a time-consuming and complex process for teachers. Time constraints make it difficult for teachers to participate in project writing processes, especially as they work under an intense curriculum load. At the same time, lack of adequate support from the school administration is another factor that can prevent teachers from taking an active role in projects. Although there are project preparation training and supportive training in digital environments, it is seen that these trainings are not as effective as face-to-face trainings. Instead of increasing the motivation for project writing, trainings in digital environments may cause teachers to skip away from this process (Döger, 2024).

This research aims to demonstrate how important it is for ELT teachers to participate in international project work to support their PD. So far, as mentioned earlier, studies have generally analyzed the contribution of participating in international projects to ELT teachers' PD. However, the influence of project writing processes on teachers' PD has not been adequately addressed in academic literature (Vuorikari, 2018). This study aims to fill the gap in this field by examining how project writing processes as well as participating in international project works can contribute to the PD of ELT teachers. In addition, it aims to address the difficulties encountered in integrating international projects into PD processes (Çat & Levent, 2024).

Considering the aforementioned factors, this research seeks answers to the following questions:

1. How do international project work and writing processes contribute to ELT teachers' professional development?
2. What are the main factors affecting ELT teachers' participation in international project works?
3. What are the factors that ensure the sustainability of international project work and writing processes?
4. What are the effects of the project writing process on teachers' pedagogical skills?

## **1.2. The Purpose of the Study**

It is vitally important for teachers to develop themselves professionally in order to follow innovations and keep up with change in a globalizing world. Especially ELT teachers need new knowledge, skills and experience in order to respond to the different needs of students, to increase their academic achievement and to provide them with higher quality educational content. However, it is not always possible for teachers to access these knowledge, skills and experiences. Especially international project work and Erasmus+ project writing experiences may seem like a challenging and complex process to teachers at the beginning and may cause a loss of motivation. At this point, it has become an important task for educational institutions to understand in which areas teachers need to be supported and to plan and deliver training activities to address these needs. Institutions have an important role in supporting teachers' continuous PD.

A study on the barriers encountered in project writing processes indicates that teachers face obstacles such as lack of sufficient institutional support, time constraints and the complexity of the project writing process (Ekşi, 2010). In addition, teachers' lack of previous experience in applying for an Erasmus+ project in the field of KA1 or KA2 also causes them to fall back from this process. Therefore, in order to enable ELT teachers to participate more effectively in PD processes, international project work and project writing processes within the scope of Erasmus+ programme should be made more accessible, simple and understandable. A study on project writing training in virtual environment demonstrates that Erasmus+ project preparation trainings available in digital environment are not as effective as face-to-face

training. A study conducted by Döğ̈er (2024) demonstrates that while face-to-face training significantly increases teachers' confidence in co-teaching, online training does not. This situation reveals that teachers need to be supported more in the process of preparing and writing an international Erasmus+ project from an institutional perspective.

The general aim of this research is to examine how international projects work and the processes of writing KA1 and KA2 projects within the scope of Erasmus+ programme contribute to the PD of ELT teachers working at different school levels in Konya. In this study, under KA1, KA122 SCH applications and under KA2, KA210 SCH application forms, which are available within the scope of Erasmus+ programme, were used because they have a simpler and understandable structure for institutions with no previous project experience. Therefore, the researcher carries out the research in this study based on these forms in order to research on the effects of Erasmus+ project writing for the PD of ELT teachers. In this context, we aim to explain that ELT teachers' taking part in international project work and writing processes on projects such as Erasmus+ can be seen as a tool that will contribute to their PD and steps should be taken in this field. In line with this general aim, this study will examine what kind of innovative knowledge and skills that ELT teachers acquire by taking part in Erasmus+ project preparation processes have on their PD (Çat & Levent, 2024). In addition, it will analyze the problems of ELT teachers such as time constraints, inadequate institutional support and inadequate support they receive regarding the process and investigate what can be done to overcome these obstacles. It will be examined how project works such as Erasmus+ project application preparations can be used effectively for the PD of ELT teachers in the long term (Baykara & Kuzulu, 2021). Finally, it will investigate how ELT teachers can apply the knowledge and skills they acquire in the project writing process in the classroom environment and how these practices will positively affect student achievement (Gallagher et al., 2017).

### **1.3. Significance of Study**

The Erasmus+ programme is an international cooperation platform in the field of education and training that enables teachers to gain new knowledge, skills and experience through training abroad, gain innovative teaching strategies and integrate them into their teaching practices. Especially KA1 and KA2 applications contribute to the PD of ELT teachers by providing them with mobility experience abroad and the opportunity to establish strategic partnerships (Erasmus+ Programme Guide, 2024). PD of ELT teachers is critical for improving the quality of education and training and responding to the changing needs of students.

However, there is limited information in the literature on how projects such as Erasmus+, especially project writing processes, have an influence on teachers' PD. This study aims to fill this gap by demonstrating the findings of the research in detail.

While existing research generally examines the influence of participation in Erasmus+ projects on PD, this study focuses on the importance of the project writing process in the development of ELT teachers. In other words, this study emphasizes that ELT teachers' participation in Erasmus+ projects does not only consist of overseas experiences, but also the project writing process is a critical tool in PD. The role of these processes in developing teachers' professional skills will provide important contributions to educational policies and PD programmes (Döger, 2024).

In summary, this study will make a significant contribution to the literature on how international project work and writing processes can be integrated into the PD processes of ELT teachers in Türkiye. In particular, this study, based on the experiences of teachers in Konya, demonstrates how projects such as Erasmus+ can be used more effectively in the long term (Ekşi, 2010). This research will provide important information for structuring PD programmes for ELT teachers more sustainably. The results will guide educational policy makers and curriculum developers in developing strategies to increase teachers' participation in international project work (Baykara & Kuzulu, 2021).

#### **1.4. Assumptions**

It is assumed that teachers who participate in international project works and project writing processes such as Erasmus+ contribute positively to their PD and that these gains can be reflected in the classroom practices of ELT teachers. Within the scope of the research, it is assumed that ELT teachers have received all sections of KA122 SCH and KA210 SCH application forms under KA1 and KA2 with explanations and prepared KA122 SCH or KA210 SCH application forms as a draft application. It is assumed that they effectively integrate the gains they have achieved during this writing phase into their classroom practice.

Although this study was conducted in Konya, it is assumed that the findings will have an influence on the PD processes of ELT teachers working in different regions of Türkiye. Finally, the validity of the results of the study depends on an accurate analysis of the processes of teachers' participation in the projects. In this context, it is assumed that the difficulties faced

by teachers in the project writing process are correctly identified and strategies are developed to overcome these difficulties.

### **1.5. Limitations**

The current research is expected to have some limitations while trying to investigate how international projects work and the writing process influences the PD of ELT teachers. While exploring the data, the following limitations are deemed:

1) The findings of the current study may be limited to in terms of generalizability due to the specific nature of the research with a focus on ELT teachers working in Konya. The sample size will be also limited to 17 ELT teachers working in different school levels and districts of Konya.

2) This study will be conducted in a specified period. Conducting an in-dept analysis within a specified period may result in the restriction of the scope of the study and get limited feedback from international project work and the writing process as part of the PD of ELT teachers.

3) The employment of techniques or tools, skills or competencies that the researcher has may be restricted in order to have a comprehensive understanding of the influence of project work and writing process.

4) The findings of the study may be affected by the characteristics of the participants, such as their willingness to participate in the research or their previous experience with international project work and the writing process. Factors such as availability, motivation, and self-reporting may impose limitations on data collection process and analysis.

### **1.6. Definitions**

**Erasmus+ Programme:** It is a programme financed by the EU with 27 EU member states, 4 EFTA member states and 3 candidate countries as programme countries. This programme provides international cooperation projects in the fields of education, youth and sports. It contributes to the personal and PD of teachers. It enables them to reach the capacity to provide better education in their institutions and to develop their networks.

**KA1 Projects:** Projects under Key Action 1 (KA1) involve mobility of both teachers and students abroad for short or long periods of time through activities such as courses and training, job shadowing, teaching experience, internship activities. By taking part in these activities, teachers and students develop in terms of personal and professional development.

**KA2 Projects:** Key Action 2 (KA2) projects are collaborative projects between at least three countries under the Erasmus+ programme. In these projects, a common problem is found and innovative educational strategies to solve this problem are developed, shared and implemented.

**Professional Development (PD):** It is a process of continuous learning and development to improve teachers' knowledge, skills and competences. In this process, they are expected to evaluate their own teaching skills, to improve themselves and to provide content suitable for new teaching tasks depending on institutional needs.

**National Agencies:** They are the institutions that support the implementation of the EU's Erasmus+ program in the fields of education, youth and sport within the 27 European Union member states, EFTA member states and candidate countries. It is also responsible for ensuring the necessary coordination with the European Commission.

**European Commission:** It is the designer and coordinator of European Union policies, in other words the executive body of the European Union.

## CHAPTER 2

### 2. LITERATURE REVIEW

In this section, the relevant research in literature is investigated in order to make the study comprehensively and easily understandable. Firstly, it includes information about the developmental needs of ELT teachers. In addition, the role of international project work and the Erasmus+ Programme in PD is discussed. The extent to which Erasmus+ project writing experiences contribute to teachers' PD are demonstrated. The relationship between international projects and PD is explained. Finally, the role of Erasmus+ project writing training for PD is indicated for ELT teachers.

#### 2.1. Professional Development in ELT

Today, education is in a state of constant change and development, and it is of great importance for ELT teachers to keep up with this situation and to provide high quality educational content for their students. Especially ELT teachers are expected to develop themselves continuously with the widespread use of different teaching methods. In the literature, it is seen that PD activities improve teachers' performance, contribute to their PD, increase students' academic achievement and positively affect teachers' careers. For example, the study of Zein et al., (2017) demonstrated that teachers' PD needs are directly related to their professional profiles and the environment in which they work. This research addresses teachers' needs through a more comprehensive model. The different methodologies used in this study indicate how PD processes are supported and addressed in different contexts. Local factors need to be taken into account in order to identify the specific needs of teachers in terms of PD development and to design effective programmes to address them. This is particularly important in international projects, such as KA1 or KA2 project applications under the Erasmus+ programme, to understand how the project writing process can be adapted to the PD needs of teachers.

##### 2.1.1. Importance of professional development for ELT teachers

Teachers have an important role in improving students' academic achievement, encouraging their participation in lessons and enriching their perspectives. As the pedagogical competences of teachers are enriched, the academic achievement of learners is also observed to improve. In this respect, it is seen that there is a relationship between the success of learners and the PD of teachers. According to Borg (2018), PD includes activities that increase teachers'

professional skills and continuously update their knowledge. These activities can be of various types such as structured project work, individual studies, and article readings. Such activities help teachers acquire innovative methods, increase their professional competences, and follow developments in the field.

In addition, when PD programmes are designed according to the specific needs of ELT teachers, they seem to contribute positively to increasing the academic achievement of active learners. A systematic review by Kalinowski et al., (2019) revealed that PD programmes to improve teachers' academic language skills are effective in different subject areas. The 38 studies included in this review support that PD helps teachers to change their mindset and practices, and that these changes reflect positively on students. To put it another way, PD programmes are more effective when they are designed and implemented in line with the areas that ELT teachers need.

Cordingley (2015) highlights that PD should not be seen as a one-shot activity, but as a process that involves working with long-term colleagues, receiving expert support and continuously updating teaching techniques. PD programmes that are designed and implemented in a collaborative manner are more likely to improve teachers' theoretical knowledge and provide them with opportunities to apply innovative techniques more effectively in their classrooms. This enables them to create a supportive learning atmosphere and to share and overcome the obstacles they face with each other.

In addition, PD is seen as one of the main factors determining the quality of education and the competence of teachers. Asmari (2016) argues that PD has an important function in enriching the education and training process and directly affects the academic achievement of learners by providing continuous PD opportunities for teachers in this process. In this study it is emphasized that PD can be considered as an important tool for teachers to improve themselves and become individuals who provide higher quality content, which contributes to the increase of success in education and training. In addition to providing teachers with innovative skills, PD has a function that strengthens their motivation to become an educator who influences the individuals around them.

These studies prove that PD can have long-term benefits for teachers and students. Teachers who benefit from continuous PD opportunities can better meet the needs of their classes, apply new teaching methods to their classes, and have better quality communication

with their students. Schools' acceptance of PD as an important tool and encouraging teachers to take advantage of such programmes have a critical role in creating an environment of continuous PD. In conclusion, the literature on the importance of PD suggests that PD has an important role to play in improving the quality of teaching practice and thus in promoting learners' academic achievement. Several studies highlight the importance of well-structured and collaborative PD programmes that focus on the specific needs of ELT teachers and learners. These studies demonstrate that PD has not only the role of updating and improving existing practices but also a fundamental building block in creating a coherent and strong education system. Educational policies should prioritize and act in support of effective and sustainable PD programmes.

### **2.1.2. Current challenges in professional development of ELT teachers**

The PD of ELT teachers have a vital role in improving the quality of teaching and learning and creating better quality student outcomes. However, teachers may face some difficulties when they are willing to participate in a PD programme. These challenges are often organizational barriers, time management and workload, and difficulties in management and motivation. Institutional barriers are the biggest obstacles to the PD of ELT teachers. Institutional barriers cause teachers to lack materials for research and access to important professional resources (Borg, 2009). For example, many teachers do not have enough time or access to sufficient resources to participate in PD programmes in areas of specific need. This deprives teachers of the necessary facilities and tools to support their continuous PD.

Another factor that prevents teachers from participating in PD activities effectively is intensive workload and time constraints. Teachers state that they have time problems participating in PD activities (Borg, 2009). Tasks such as lesson planning, workload, class preparation, and student assessment limit the time that teachers can allocate for PD activities during the day. This makes it difficult for them to take part in PD programmes and reduces their opportunities to develop professionally. Teachers are usually motivated by personal and professional concerns in the process of PD; external factors have less influence (Karabenick & Noda, 2004). Teachers often participate in PD programmes with the aim of improving their teaching skills; the difficulties they face in this process stand as an obstacle to their participation. Teachers who have more positive attitudes towards students learning English as a second language are more motivated towards PD activities and can benefit from them effectively.

Teachers need leaders and support to guide them in the PD process. The positive attitude of school leaders towards PD activities increases teachers' motivation and reflects positively on classroom practices, but its effect on student achievement may be limited (Leithwood & Jantzi, 2006). This study reveals another factor that may prevent teachers from participating in PD, because the inadequacy in directing and guiding teachers to participate in PD activities effectively makes it difficult for teachers to benefit from these processes. When these studies are analyzed, the main difficulties encountered by ELT teachers in PD process are time constraints, workload, institutional barriers, lack of motivation, workload management and need for support. It is important to overcome these barriers for teachers to participate more effectively in PD activities. The literature suggests that schools should take measures to facilitate teachers' participation in PD activities, alleviate workloads and provide teachers with adequate resources.

## **2.2. The Role of International Project Work in Professional Development**

The Erasmus+ programme provides opportunities for ELT teachers to gain new knowledge, skills and experiences through participation in international projects. The Erasmus+ programme is one of the most important platforms that supports teachers' personal and PD and provides them with various learning experiences in 27 EU member states, EFTA member states and EU candidate countries.

### **2.2.1. Overview of Erasmus+ programme and Key Actions (KA1 and KA2)**

The Erasmus+ Programme is a comprehensive support programme run by the EU to improve education, youth, sport and workforce skills. The aim of this programme is to increase the competences of individuals, promote educational cooperation between different countries and strengthen cultural awareness across Europe (European Commission, 2023). Projects within the scope of Erasmus+ programme contribute to the personal and PD of individuals, raising educational standards between countries and bringing better equipped individuals to the labor market.

#### ***Key Action (KA1): Short-term mobilities***

KA1 is a learning mobility activity for individuals and generally enables them to undertake short-term training or job shadowing experiences abroad. Such mobility activities aim to enable individuals to develop their personal and professional skills, improve their foreign language skills, and learn about different cultures and adopt innovative teaching methodologies (Erasmus Programme Guide, 2024). Nogueiro et al. (2022) states that Erasmus+, especially

KA1 mobility activities, increase the personal and professional competences of the participants, contribute to the sustainable development goals of the EU and encourage their participation by increasing their pedagogical competences. In this way, Erasmus+ KA1 projects not only contribute to the PD of individuals, but also promote inclusion and diversity.

KA1 provides various benefits to the participants. These benefits include enhancing entrepreneurial skills and self-confidence, increasing motivation, raising awareness of foreign language learning and developing digital competences. In addition, short-term mobility offers opportunities for education staff to learn on the job and observe new teaching methods (www.ua.gov.tr, 2024). Trying out innovative approaches in education and analyzing different education systems increases the professional competences of the participants and provides them with knowledge, skills and experience in different teaching techniques.

***Key Action 2 (KA2): Small-scale partnerships***

Within the scope of Erasmus+, KA2 is a cooperation project for small-scale organizations that are new to the Erasmus+ programme and/or have less experience in Erasmus+ projects. This programme aims to encourage teachers and students to innovative practices by developing an international cooperation network between schools (Karakus et al., 2017). KA2 projects enable teachers to come together with their colleagues in different countries to carry out joint studies and share innovative methods with each other and integrate them into the practices in their own institutions. Yavrutürk and Reisoğlu (2022) state that Erasmus+ KA2 projects increase the intercultural awareness of participants and develop a more inclusive and flexible approach in their learning processes. Such collaborations develop teachers' and students' social skills as well as their academic skills. Through international projects, individuals have the opportunity to understand different cultural perspectives, meet the education systems of various countries, and integrate innovative learning approaches into their classrooms (Sal-İlhan & Külekçi, 2022). KA2 projects also increase the capacities of organizations, enabling them to contribute more to the European Education Area.

The KA1 and KA2 actions of the Erasmus+ programme have a multifaceted influence on the PD of ELT teachers. Through KA1 projects, teachers have an opportunity to adopt innovative teaching techniques, observe in classrooms in different countries, enhance their foreign language skills; while KA2 projects allow them to establish a wider network of cooperation in the international arena and increase the exchange of knowledge, skills and experience to solve a common problem (European Commission, 2023). For example, according

to Breznik and Skrbinjek (2020), the Erasmus+ programme makes a significant contribution to the internationalization of the European Higher Education Area. In this way, it creates a more inclusive learning environment for both students and educators. In summary, KA1 and KA2 projects support innovation and modernization in education by contributing to the personal and PD of teachers. The experiences gained through these projects increase teachers' pedagogical competences and support them to provide high quality education at international standards (Gjolleshi, 2023).

### **2.2.2. Contributions of international project work to ELT teachers' professional development**

International project work contributes to the PD of ELT teachers in many ways. Such projects enable teachers to upgrade their knowledge and skills, while at the same time supporting them to learn and integrate innovative pedagogical practices into their classrooms. The experiences gained during the project contribute to teachers' professional competences and enable them to implement new methodologies in their classrooms. Moreover, by taking part in international projects, teachers participate in training activities and co-operate with colleagues from different countries, build international networks and increase their linguistic awareness. In this context, programmes such as Erasmus+ provide important opportunities to promote both the personal and academic development of ELT teachers.

International projects contribute to the PD of ELT teachers in many ways. Teachers who take part in projects such as Erasmus+ have an opportunity to observe the teaching practices of educators from different countries in hosting organizations and develop their own teaching strategies and lesson plans (Goddard et al., 2007). Through participation in these projects, teachers find an opportunity to compare and analyze the education systems of their country with the education systems of other countries and gain innovative ideas to integrate into their own practices. In addition, the collaboration opportunities offered by these projects strengthen teachers' PD and increase their ability to find solutions to common problems (Vangrieken et al., 2015). In addition, the knowledge and skills gained through projects allow teachers to acquire new pedagogical approaches and make the course content more effective and dynamic and effective (Karakuş et al., 2017). As a result, these projects contribute to the individual development of teachers as well as allowing them to adopt more innovative and effective approaches professionally.

### ***Knowledge and skill acquisition***

International projects provide ELT teachers with pedagogical and cultural knowledge and skills. According to research by Altuğ et al. (2019), teachers who participate in programmes such as Erasmus+ improve their language skills and increase their cultural awareness. Such projects enable teachers to adopt innovative educational approaches and acquire different methods and apply them in their own lessons. Yavrutürk and Koca (2023) also state that Erasmus+ projects contribute significantly to teachers' foreign language skills, especially in terms of fluency and speaking, and have an important place in terms of their personal development.

International projects allow teachers to improve their professional skills by increasing their knowledge and skills. Teachers involved in these projects acquire new skills in areas such as student-centered teaching techniques, effective use of digital tools and intercultural communication (Blumenfeld et al., 1991). For example, a study on the use of digital learning platforms indicates that the skills acquired by teachers through this project are permanent and can be adapted to different course contents (Kokotsaki et al., 2016).

Moreover, teachers gain the ability to apply student-centered methods that give them more autonomy and develop their problem-solving skills (Vangrieken et al., 2015). Teachers' effective use of such methods in their classrooms enriches students' perspectives and enables them to develop a critical perspective. These skills not only provide teachers with an effective role in lecturing, but also enable them to take on a more effective role in guiding students. In conclusion, the projects offer important knowledge and skills that strengthen teachers' pedagogical abilities and enable them to be more effective in their profession.

### ***Enhancing pedagogical practices***

International projects allow ELT teachers to diversify their pedagogical practices by acquiring innovative methods. Erasmus+ projects improve teachers' classroom practices and contribute more to students' academic achievement (Gutiérrez Colón-Plana, 2012). By taking part in these projects, teachers gain knowledge about different education systems and learn innovative strategies that they can apply more effectively in their own classrooms. These gains increase teachers' pedagogical competences and contribute to raising the achievement level of students (Erasmus Programme Guide, 2024).

International projects contribute to the improvement of teachers' pedagogical practices and advance their professional skills. For example, projects in various schools in Europe help teachers learn new techniques that increase student engagement (Jacobone & Moro, 2014). Within the scope of these projects, teachers have the chance to experience problem solving, critical thinking, and collaborative teaching techniques by applying them on-site. Especially project-based learning methods allow teachers to create a student-centered learning environment in the classroom (Supovitz & Turner, 2000). In addition, the applications in these projects allow teachers to diversify course content and increase student motivation by using different educational materials (Kokotsaki et al., 2016). This process improves teachers' classroom management skills and enables them to develop more innovative approaches in education.

### ***Building international networks and collaborations***

One of the important advantages that international projects offer to teachers is the opportunity to build professional networks. Erasmus+ projects enable teachers to collaborate with colleagues in different countries, increasing knowledge sharing and cultural understanding. Such collaborations provide long-term contributions to teachers' career development by expanding their professional networks (Özdoğru, 2022). Yavrutürk and Reisoğlu (2022) emphasize that Erasmus+ projects contribute to teachers' critical thinking skills and intercultural awareness. Such networks help teachers to closely follow international educational practices and integrate them into their own classrooms. International projects develop not only the academic development of ELT teachers but also their social and cultural competences. Holmberg's (2023) study states that projects such as Erasmus+ contribute to teachers' acquisition of cultural capital by developing their social skills. Teachers participating in such projects develop critical thinking skills, gain cultural awareness and experience different learning approaches. As a result, projects such as Erasmus+ make valuable contributions to teachers' professional lives and make them better equipped educators (Karakuş et al., 2017).

Through international projects, ELT teachers have an opportunity to create networks to develop professionally and to co-operate on a cultural level. The exchange of knowledge, skills and experiences among colleagues from different countries enables teachers to gain a broader perspective on educational systems and new methodologies (Louis & Marks, 1998). Similarly in another study by Karakuş et al (2017) it is stressed that teachers gain the ability to adapt the innovative methodologies they learnt by taking part in international projects to their own

classrooms. In addition, the collaborations created through international projects allow teachers not only to improve the practices in their own schools, but also to follow current educational approaches around the world. In addition, through such networks, teachers can find and implement more effective solutions to the difficulties they face in the teaching-learning process and thus increase their professional satisfaction.

In summary, international projects are valuable in PD of ELT teachers. These projects not only increase teachers' knowledge, skills and experiences, but also enable them to see innovative approaches in education and enrich their practices (Mosteller, 1995). In this way, teachers not only make their PD sustainable but also enable them to achieve better quality outputs from their students. In addition, by increasing the knowledge, skills and experience of teachers, it enables the creation of higher quality outputs in education.

### **2.2.3. Sustainability of international project work in educational contexts**

International projects contribute to the PD of ELT teachers in many ways. By taking part in projects such as Erasmus+, teachers have an opportunity to observe educators in different countries and develop their own teaching strategies and lesson plans (Goddard et al., 2007). Through participation in these projects, teachers gain innovative ideas that they can integrate into their own practices by comparatively analyzing various education systems. Moreover, the collaboration opportunities offered by these projects support teachers' professional unity and increase their ability to find solutions to common problems (Vangrieken et al., 2015). In addition, the knowledge and skills gained in projects allow teachers to realize different pedagogical approaches and make the course content more vibrant and effective (Karakuş et al., 2017). As a result, these projects not only support individual development but also pave the way for teachers to develop more effective and innovative approaches in education.

#### ***Long-term benefits for teachers and students***

The long-term effects of international projects on ELT teachers and students make educational processes more permanent and effective. These projects enable learners to develop problem solving and critical thinking skills and teachers to increase their professional knowledge and skills (Mosteller, 1995). For example, a study conducted in Tennessee demonstrated that students in small classes achieved higher academic success and that these gains had long-term effects. A classroom environment in which teachers can present better content to their students enables them to provide students with continuous learning experience as well as increase their professional satisfaction (Goddard et al., 2007). In this context, the

benefits of projects for both teachers and students ensure that educational processes are of higher quality.

### ***Strategies for sustaining project engagement***

Institutional support is of great importance in the sustainability of projects. Especially the support of school administrations to the projects is effective in making these projects permanent (Kokotsaki et al., 2016). Institutional support mechanisms include elements such as providing resources to ELT teachers and students participating in projects, providing guidance and increasing the widespread impact of projects. In this context, supporting projects at the institutional level contributes to the long-term success of projects. In addition, the resources provided by educational institutions increase the applicability of projects and ensure the continuity of participation in projects.

Integration of the outcomes from the projects into the current curriculum is a critical strategy for long-term improvements. Project-based learning (PBL) and innovative teaching methods increase students' academic achievement and their motivation in lessons (Supovitz & Turner, 2000). For example, PBL enables students to acquire skills for solving real-life problems and encourages them to think more critically. In this process, the integration of project outcomes into the curriculum can be made permanent by integrating innovative learning methods that are effective in improving student performance into the curriculum. PBL methods improve students' ability to solve real-world problems and make classroom learning environments more vibrant (Kokotsaki et al., 2016). These projects, which are integrated into the educational curriculum, increase students' academic achievement by giving them the ability to analyze in-depth and address complex problems (Blumenfeld et al., 1991). Projects are not only short-term achievements, but also help students to acquire permanent skills that will be effective in their future careers.

### **2.3. The Writing Process in International Projects as a Professional Development Tool**

Not taking part in Erasmus+ projects mobilities but taking part in project writing stages in KA1 or KA2 project application types offers a great opportunity for the PD of ELT teachers. The project writing process provides teachers with new skills in conducting research to identify problems and make concrete needs analysis, set objectives according to these needs, planning activities in line with these objectives and designing concrete outputs such as knowledge, skills and experience or the creation of visible, tangible curricula, e-learning platforms, and other educational materials after the realization of these activities. It also contributes to the

development of teachers' project management and implementation skills such as research, problem solving, organization and planning.

### **2.3.1. Project writing as a skill development activity**

Project writing is regarded as an important activity for developing individuals' skills in collecting, analyzing and organizing information. This process includes various stages from needs analysis to planning and structuring project proposals. In project writing, it is essential for individuals to conduct an accurate needs analysis and set appropriate goals for the project. In addition to needs analysis, planning and structuring project proposals effectively support PD, especially in the field of education (UA, 2024). Project writing also strengthens problem solving and organizational skills, giving participants a broader perspective, and the skills acquired in this process contribute to the PD of individuals. The effects of project-based work on teachers and students have also been widely studied, and it has been demonstrated that this process contributes to cooperation and academic achievement (Blumenfeld et al., 1991).

#### ***Research and needs analysis***

Needs analysis is the process of assessing the current situation at the beginning of a project writing phase and determining the objectives in line with the priorities and goals of the EU. This analysis gives direction to the project by identifying which subjects the participants need more information on. Need analysis is the first step in projects such as Erasmus+ project writing phase, whereby participants can effectively identify project objectives and achieve more efficient results (Erasmus+ Program Guide, 2024). The information obtained during the analysis phase forms the basic building blocks that will contribute to the successful completion of the project and the comprehensive planning of this process increases the realization rate of the project objectives.

#### ***Planning and structuring project proposals***

Creating an effective structure in the project writing process ensures that the project is presented in a clear and understandable format. At this stage, all components involved in the project process are brought together and a structure that is compatible with the project objectives is created. While effective planning ensures the feasibility of the project, it also helps to obtain project output in a quality manner. In this process, structuring the project proposals in a certain logical order increases the confidence in the project and ensures the effective use of resources. A structured project proposal clarifies the distribution of tasks of the project team and thus prevents problems that may arise during the project process.

### ***Organizational and problem-solving skills***

Project writing provides an opportunity to develop organizational and problem-solving skills. Analytical thinking and systematic approaches are applied especially in solving problems that arise during the project. Teachers and students gain experience by overcoming the obstacles they encounter during the project process, and this increases their professional skills (Blumenfeld et al., 1991). In this context, problem solving skills support the sustainability and success of the project. Studies conducted in educational projects show that these skills contribute not only to the completion of the project but also to the long-term PD of individuals (UA, 2024).

Project writing provides individuals with critical skills such as researching, analyzing and problem solving, and thus provides an important advantage in their professional lives. While research and needs analysis ensure that the right steps are taken towards the objectives of the project, planning and structuring project proposals contribute to the effective execution of the project. Organizational and problem-solving skills play a critical role in overcoming the difficulties encountered during the project. Therefore, project writing can be recognized as an important tool for skill development both in education and professional life.

#### **2.3.2. Benefits of the writing process for ELT teachers**

The writing process has an important role in the PD of ELT teachers. It not only enables teachers to develop their language skills and provide students with more effective teaching materials but also enriches their pedagogical perspectives. By engaging in the writing process, teachers learn to generate new ideas and encourage creative thinking, which makes their classroom practice innovative. International projects, such as Erasmus+, offer a valuable platform for developing teachers' writing skills and promote cultural interactions (Biasutti et al., 2021). These projects provide teachers with the chance to get to know different cultural and pedagogical approaches, helping them to gain a broad perspective on education. The writing process strengthens teachers' own expressions, enabling them to provide students with more meaningful course content. In this context, the writing process not only improves teaching materials but also contributes to teachers' PD by broadening their professional perspectives. Finally, the writing process allows teachers to gain more in-depth knowledge of their own field and to use this knowledge effectively in their lessons.

The writing process offers important opportunities for ELT teachers to improve their pedagogical skills. For example, in a study conducted by Bifuh-Ambe (2013), it was found that

teachers who participated in a ten-week PD programme gained valuable experiences on how to make the writing process more effective. In this process, teachers improved their skills such as generating new ideas, providing feedback and collaborating. Modern pedagogical tools, such as digital storytelling, help teachers to develop their creative thinking skills, while at the same time making it easier for them to present engaging content to students (Chinda & Hinkelman, 2023). Moreover, the impact of the writing process is not limited to classroom practices; it also increases teachers' professional self-confidence by improving their problem-solving skills. For example, ELT teachers participating in the Erasmus+ programme can make their lessons more effective by integrating their experiences gained in projects into classroom practices. This process functions as a self-reflection process that allows teachers to question and improve their own pedagogical approaches. Thus, the writing process contributes to teachers' continuous improvement of their teaching methods and allows them to offer richer learning experiences to students.

The writing process is of great importance for ELT teachers as a process that both strengthens their pedagogical skills and enables them to develop innovative approaches. Through this process, teachers have an opportunity to develop key skills such as creative thinking, critical analysis and collaboration. Moreover, through projects such as Erasmus+, participation in international writing processes increases teachers' cultural awareness and allows them to get to know different educational approaches. The writing process contributes to the PD of teachers, enabling them to be more effective in their teaching and has the potential to increase student achievement. Therefore, it is understood that research on the benefits of the writing process should find more space in teacher education programmes. The impact of this process on teachers and students allows writing skills to be considered as a sustainable development tool in education. In conclusion, the writing process should be seen as an important tool in teachers' PD journey and the benefits of this process should be disseminated.

### **2.3.3. Challenges faced during the writing process**

Although participation in international project preparations offers an important PD opportunity for teachers, teachers may encounter some difficulties in this process. Factors such as lack of intrinsic motivation, time constraints, and insufficient institutional support may prevent teachers from taking part in such studies. While the international project writing process offers important benefits for the PD of ELT teachers, it also brings along various challenges. One of the biggest challenges encountered in this process is the intense workload and time

constraints. It is often difficult for teachers to allocate enough time for project writing under the current curriculum load. In addition, the lack of sufficient institutional support for the project writing process is one of the factors that prevent teachers from taking an active role in projects. A study conducted by Döger (2024) reveals that project writing trainings provided in digital environment are not as effective as face-to-face trainings and teachers demand a more supportive environment (Sankar et al., 2010). Such shortcomings may reduce teachers' interest in projects and negatively affect their motivation. Therefore, it is of great importance to provide the necessary support to ensure the active participation of teachers in international projects.

One of the most common difficulties teachers face in the project writing process is time constraints and increased workload. Especially teachers working under intensive curriculum programmes have difficulty in allocating the time required for project writing. In addition, lack of institutional support is also an important factor that makes it difficult for teachers to be involved in project processes. Research by Döger (2024) demonstrates that teachers need more guidance and resource support in the project writing process. Training offered in the digital environment may be insufficient to provide the supportive environment required for the project writing process and this may negatively affect teachers' motivation for project writing. Another difficulty encountered in the project writing process is to maintain teachers' motivation to take part in projects. In this process, it is important for school administrations to guide teachers and provide them with the necessary resources so that teachers can take an active role in projects. This will facilitate teachers' participation in international projects and contribute to their PD. In addition, co-operation and teamwork are important elements that increase the efficiency of the project writing process.

The difficulties faced by teachers in the project writing process directly affect their PD processes. Overcoming factors such as time constraints and lack of institutional support will enable teachers to participate more actively in the project writing process. It is important that schools take a more supportive role and provide the resources teachers need in order to overcome these challenges. In addition, creating an environment where teachers can collaborate in the project writing process will increase the efficiency of the process. Overcoming such challenges will enable teachers to participate more effectively in international projects. In conclusion, considering the difficulties faced by teachers in the project writing process, strategies should be developed to support their PD.

## **2.4. The Relationship between International Project Works and Professional Development**

Taking part in international projects helps ELT teachers to increase their pedagogical competences and to acquire innovative teaching methods. These projects provide teachers with the opportunity to acquire new knowledge, skills and experiences, to transfer them to classroom practice and to exchange knowledge with other educators.

### **2.4.1. Integration of project outcomes into classroom practices**

International projects, especially mobility programmes such as Erasmus+, contribute to teachers improving their classroom practice and creating more meaningful learning experiences for students. The study by Nogueiro et al. (2022) explored the relationship of the Erasmus+ programme with the Sustainable Development Goals, demonstrating how the programme contributes to key goals such as improving the quality of education, achieving gender equality and promoting economic growth. Similarly, Maletić et al.'s (2020) research with the NETCHEM project aimed at using innovative methods in classroom practice by enabling teachers to provide laboratory experience in a digital environment. Through these projects, teachers had the opportunity to enrich education using digital tools and develop materials that engage students.

Research indicates that projects are effective in improving teachers' pedagogical approaches and providing students with new knowledge and skills. A study conducted by Biasutti et al. (2021) revealed that teachers participating in Erasmus+ projects were able to recognize and integrate different pedagogical approaches into their classrooms through projects. The study discussed how teachers utilized digital platforms to contribute more to the educational process and how the projects developed participants' pedagogical skills. These studies enable teachers to enrich their classroom practices, enabling them to offer students more diverse ways of learning. In addition, these projects offer important contributions in terms of digitalization of education and sustainability in education.

In conclusion, international projects such as Erasmus+ contribute to teachers' restructuring their classroom practices and providing more innovative and effective learning experiences for students. The knowledge and skills acquired through these projects pave the way for digitalization in education and play an important role in achieving sustainable education goals. Thanks to these projects, teachers both increase their pedagogical skills and contribute to the improvement of quality in education.

## **2.4.2. Impact on teachers' professional development**

### ***Enhanced teaching competencies***

Being actively involved in international projects is of great importance in terms of expanding teachers' professional skills and bringing innovation to teaching processes. In a study conducted by Salcedo-López and Cuevas-López (2021), it was observed that teachers participating in Erasmus+ projects developed innovative strategies in education and integrated these strategies into classroom practices. The study emphasizes the importance of such projects, especially for teachers to create diversity in education and acquire international perspectives. In this context, it clearly indicates that Erasmus+ projects not only support teachers' PD but also offer them the opportunity to improve their classroom practice.

Biasutti et al. (2021) found that Erasmus+ projects enable teachers to gain innovative approaches and learn from different cultural contexts. In the study, it was determined that teachers developed creative solutions in education by experiencing various educational approaches they encountered during the project and thus became more competent. While such projects contribute positively to the process of developing teachers' pedagogical skills, they also allow teachers to gain different perspectives in education. It also contributes to the development of teachers' critical thinking and problem-solving skills to solve the challenges they face. International projects such as Erasmus+ enable teachers to increase their professional competences and gain a more comprehensive perspective in education. Thanks to these projects, teachers are able to provide their students with more effective teaching methods, while at the same time making significant progress in their PD processes. The contribution of programmes such as Erasmus+ to the development of teachers is of great importance for creating sustainable changes in education.

### ***Knowledge sharing and professional learning communities***

Participation in international projects allows teachers to increase knowledge sharing and build professional learning communities. Projects such as Erasmus+ help teachers to improve their teaching processes by sharing their knowledge and skills from different education systems with their colleagues (Kafarski & Kazak, 2022). This process of knowledge sharing is important for teachers to follow innovations in education and integrate them into their practice.

Research conducted by Biasutti et al. (2021) reveals that teachers participating in Erasmus+ projects develop their pedagogical skills by interacting with colleagues from different countries. In the study, it was observed that knowledge sharing helped teachers to

develop more effective strategies in the educational process and thus create a stronger learning community. In particular, teachers can follow the innovations in education by exchanging information and reflect this information on classroom practices through professional learning communities.

Knowledge sharing and professional learning communities contribute to the development of innovative practices and sustainable improvement in education. Projects such as Erasmus+ support teachers to become more successful and effective individuals in education by facilitating knowledge sharing at an international level. These projects increase teachers' pedagogical competences, enabling them to provide students with more effective teaching methods.



## CHAPTER 3

### 3. METHODOLOGY

In this section, information about research design and methodology will be presented. Information about the research design, participants, data collection tools and techniques, data collection process and data analysis and validity and reliability of data analysis will be given.

In this study, qualitative research design was adopted in order to examine the contributions of international project works and project writing process to the PD of ELT teachers within the scope of Erasmus+ programme. As Yıldırım and Şimşek (2013) stated, qualitative research is an effective way to reveal individuals' experiences, attitudes and deep meanings related to these experiences. In the study, qualitative data such as participants' skills in writing Erasmus+ projects, their attitudes towards projects and their approaches to projects during the project writing training period were analyzed. Qualitative research provides detailed content about participants' experiences by focusing on deeper meanings (Creswell & Poth, 2016). Therefore, it was deemed appropriate to understand and analyze in depth ELT teachers' experiences about the Erasmus+ project writing process and its contribution to their PD.

#### 3.1. Research Design

Qualitative research focuses on exploring phenomena and gaining insights through detailed, narrative data. This approach is particularly useful for understanding complex social interactions and experiences. Creswell and Poth (2016) emphasize the importance of context and the subjective nature of qualitative data, which often includes interviews, observations and content analysis (Twycross, 2004; Ishtiaq, 2019). Content analysis is a method that enables systematic coding and interpretation of qualitative data under meaningful categories and themes. This analysis allows the information obtained from a wide range of data to be organized in context and patterns to be revealed (White & Marsh, 2006). This method also provides a suitable basis for the purposes of this research, both in terms of revealing the concepts derived from the participants' experiences and understanding the contributions of project processes in terms of PD. This method is used in this study to analyze the qualitative data obtained in the research within a systematic framework and to understand the participants' experiences of the project writing process in depth (Elo & Kyngäs, 2008). That's to say, this method provided a powerful tool for understanding and interpreting teachers' experiences of project writing and implementation processes within the scope of Erasmus+ projects.

The difficulties encountered by teachers in the project writing activities within the scope of Erasmus+ projects, the gains they achieved and the effects of the project writing process on their PD were analyzed under the determined themes. Content analysis is an appropriate method for organizing and analytically presenting such complex data (Vaismoradi et al, 2013). The data preparation, data organization and reports stages of content analysis were used (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005). Semi-structured interviews and open-ended questionnaire questions were used as two main methods in the data collection process. This interview allowed participants to express their views comfortably and guided the collection process by focusing on the issues that were analyzed and determined (Merriam & Tisdell, 2015). Open-ended survey questions provided a broader perspective by helping the participants to reveal details that may be missing during the interview.

The data obtained from this approach were subjected to content analysis, and meaningful constructions were made about the participants' experiences through codes and themes extracted from the data (Miles et al., 2014). Firstly, the data collected through semi-structured interviews and open-ended questionnaire were coded, and then the main themes that stood out in the data were identified. Inductive analysis used in this process provided the opportunity to create categories by deriving concepts from the data; thus, it enabled the data to be structured and analyzed in depth (Elo et al., 2014). Each information obtained during the data collection process through content analysis was evaluated in order to understand how the Erasmus+ project writing process contributed to the pedagogical development of teachers.

In the study, the reliability and validity of the content analysis were meticulously emphasized. The consistency of data analysis was increased by ensuring intercoder reliability (Lombard et al., 2002). In addition, all stages of the analysis process were reported in detail to ensure the reliability and validity of the research (Haynes et al., 1995). This study systematically analyzed the qualitative data obtained and comprehensively addressed the contribution of Erasmus+ project writing activities to ELT teachers' PD.

A constructive approach to systematically analyze the qualitatively obtained data of the study and comprehensively address the influence of Erasmus+ project writing activities on teachers' professional and pedagogical development is presented in the table below:

**Table 1.** The Overview of Research Questions, Data Collection Methods, Instruments and Data Analysis Methods.

<b>Research Questions (RQ)</b>	<b>Data Collection Methods</b>	<b>Instruments</b>	<b>Data Analysis Methods</b>
RQ 1. How do international project work and writing processes contribute to ELT teachers' professional development?	Semi structured interviews Open-ended surveys	Online meeting platform Survey form	Content analysis
RQ 2. What are the main factors affecting ELT teachers' participation in international project works?	Semi structured interviews Open-ended surveys	Online meeting platform Survey form	Content analysis
RQ 3. What are the factors that ensure the sustainability of international project work and writing processes?	Semi structured interviews Open-ended surveys	Online meeting platform Survey form	Content analysis
RQ 4. What are the effects of the project writing process on teachers' pedagogical skills?	Semi structured interviews Open-ended surveys	Online meeting platform Survey form	Content analysis

This table provides an overview of the main research questions, data collection methods, instruments used and data analysis methods. The data was collected through semi-structured interviews and open-ended questionnaires in order to answer the four main research questions. The same data collection methods were preferred for each research question, and the online meeting platform Zoom was used for the data collection and the participants' responses were obtained using the online survey form tool Google form. Thanks to these methods, the opinions of the participants were compiled in detail.

Content analysis method was used in the data analysis process. It allowed the qualitative data obtained in the research to be systematically coded and meaningful categories created based on the experiences of the participants. In this context, comprehensive findings on teachers' PD processes and pedagogical skills were obtained by analyzing the data for each research question. These methods allowed us to analyze in depth the contribution of ELT teachers' participation in project writing processes to their PD and to identify the factors that ensure the sustainability of projects.

### **3.2. Research Participants**

The participants of this study consisted of 17 ELT teachers working at different school levels in Konya. The participants were selected on a voluntary basis among teachers with and

without experience in Erasmus+ projects. These participants with diverse backgrounds provided an opportunity to offer different perspectives in understanding the influence of Erasmus+ project writing processes on PD, which is the main topic of the research. In addition, by bringing together ELT teachers with and without knowledge of Erasmus+ project writing and evaluation processes, a wide range of participant profiles with a variety of professional experience was created. In order to evaluate the influence of the project writing process, which is the main purpose of the research, on the PD of teachers, the opinions of ELT teachers who have experience in Erasmus+ projects and others who have recently participated in these projects were consulted. In this research, the creation of a participant profile with a combination of ELT teachers with and without previous Erasmus+ project writing experience facilitated a multidimensional perspective on the influence of Erasmus+ project writing processes on the PD of ELT teachers (Patton, 2014).

A purposeful sampling method was used to select the participants. The diversity of the participants' existing knowledge, skills and experience of Erasmus+ projects allowed for a more detailed analysis of the influence of these projects on PD. Thus, a broader analysis is presented by comparing the perspectives of teachers with different knowledge, skills and experience on the projects. This study aimed to analyze in depth the influence of the Erasmus+ project writing process on the PD of ELT teachers as a result of the 8-week training. In this context, the problems encountered by the participants in this process, the gains and experiences were analyzed in detail.

The profile of participants was presented below in Table 2.

**Table 2.** The Profile of Participants.

Participants	School Types	Ages	Genders	Teaching Experiences	Highest Qualifications	Project Conduct	City
T1	Secondary	44	M	19	Undergraduate	No	Konya
T2	Secondary	40	F	18	Undergraduate	Yes	Konya
T3	Secondary	41	M	18	Undergraduate	No	Konya
T4	Secondary	38	F	15	Undergraduate	No	Konya
T5	Secondary	36	F	14	Undergraduate	Yes	Konya
T6	Secondary	37	F	16	Undergraduate	Yes	Konya
T7	Primary	36	F	14	Undergraduate	Yes	Konya
T8	Secondary	35	F	13	Master's Degree	No	Konya
T9	Secondary	38	F	15	Master's Degree	Yes	Konya
T10	Secondary	36	F	12	Master's Degree	Yes	Konya
T11	Secondary	33	F	11	Master's Degree	No	Konya
T12	Secondary	38	F	16	Undergraduate	No	Konya
T13	Secondary	36	F	13	Master's Degree	Yes	Konya
T14	Primary	43	M	20	Undergraduate	Yes	Konya
T15	Secondary	47	F	23	Undergraduate	Yes	Konya
T16	Secondary	40	F	17	Master's Degree	Yes	Konya
T17	Secondary	42	M	18	Master's Degree	Yes	Konya

This table summarizes information about the participants' age, gender, school types, professional experiences and degree levels as well as their project experiences in previous years. This diversity provides detailed information about ELT teachers with different levels of professional experience in Erasmus+ project writing processes in the study and offers an opportunity for comparative evaluation. This perspective addresses the PD processes of ELT teachers in a multidimensional way and supports the analyses targeted by the research.

In the table, each teacher was coded from "T1" to "T17" and their identities were concealed in accordance with the confidentiality principles. The participants work at different school levels and generally work in secondary schools. This makes it easier to compare the ELT teachers' participation in the project at different educational levels. The ages of the participants ranged from 33 to 47 years old, with female teachers dominating the gender distribution. This diversity contributes to the observation of the possible effects of gender and age on PD. Teachers' professional experience ranges from 11 to 23 years. This diversity allows analyzing the effects of teachers being introduced to Erasmus+ projects at different times of their professional careers. While some teachers have a master's degree, most of the participants have

a bachelor's degree. Different academic levels are important for assessing the influence of participation in projects on knowledge and skills. While some of the participants in the study had previous experience in preparing and conducting Erasmus+ projects, some of them had never prepared or conducted an Erasmus+ project before or had no experience of mobility abroad within the scope of an Erasmus+ project. This information provides a comparison opportunity to demonstrate how participation in Erasmus+ projects by experience level contributes to PD. The teachers in the study are working in Konya. In this context, the research has focused on the experience of teachers in a specific geographical region and has sought to assess the influence of Erasmus+ project writing process in this region.

The information provided by the table in general provides the opportunity to make a multidimensional analysis of teachers' PD in the Erasmus+ project writing process. This diversity based on demographic and experience contributes to the research objective of comprehensively analyzing the influence of Erasmus+ projects on ELT teachers from different professional backgrounds and levels.

### **3.3. Data Collection Tools and Techniques**

In this study, qualitative data collection tools were used to understand the influence of Erasmus+ project writing processes on the PD of ELT teachers. Within the scope of qualitative research, semi-structured interviews, open-ended questionnaire and project evaluation reports were preferred to obtain in-depth information about the participants' experiences and perceptions. These tools allow us to analyze in depth the experiences of the participants during the project writing processes, the challenges they face and the contributions of these processes to their PD (Merriam & Tisdell, 2015). During the data collection process, great importance was attached to ethical rules and participant confidentiality.

#### **3.3.1. Semi structured interviews**

Semi-structured interviews, one of the main data collection tools of the research, were used to enable the participants to reveal their thoughts, experiences and difficulties encountered in Erasmus+ projects in detail. The interview questions allowed the participants to express their views on issues such as what knowledge and skills they gained during their involvement in Erasmus+ project writing process, their contributions to their PD and the obstacles they encountered in these processes (Coyne, 1998; Luo et al., 2009). In structuring these interviews, as Merriam and Tisdell (2015) stated, interview techniques that offer flexible and in-depth information collection in qualitative research were preferred. The interview questions were

specially prepared to understand the experiences and perceptions of ELT teachers within the scope of Erasmus+ project writing process.

### ***Semi-structured interviews and their structure***

Semi-structured interviews were designed to gain a broader understanding of ELT teachers' experiences in the Erasmus+ project writing process, the challenges they face in this process, the sustainability of these trainings and their influence on PD. The interviews consisted of questions to assess teachers' motivation for the project writing process, the obstacles they faced and the influence of the project process on teaching quality. In addition, the teachers were also asked to provide suggestions on which resources they needed in the project writing process and for their PD.

The same questions were asked by all participants, and the answers were recorded and analyzed later in order to ensure the reliability and validity of the interviews. In addition, a suitable atmosphere was provided for the participants to feel comfortable during the interview process, and they were recorded automatically in digital media. Thanks to this structure, teachers' experiences were analyzed in a comparable framework, thus increasing the reliability of the research findings.

### **3.3.2. Open-ended surveys**

In addition to the semi-structured interviews, open-ended survey questions were used to allow participants to express their insights and thoughts about the project writing process in a broader framework. These questions provided information about the participants' experiences during the training process, while also providing an opportunity to capture details that may have been overlooked during the interviews. They also allowed us to assess in more detail how the participants perceived their PD in Erasmus+ projects and the contribution of the project writing process to their PD.

During this research process, the participants also carried out sample project evaluation studies within the scope of Erasmus+ projects. Participants were asked to evaluate various Erasmus+ project examples. These documents, called expert evaluation reports, contributed to the development of the participants' skills in project writing, understanding the evaluation criteria and applying these criteria to the project they wrote. These evaluation reports played an important role in demonstrating the knowledge and skill gains of the participants regarding project writing and implementation processes.

### ***Questionnaire structure and validity & reliability information***

The questionnaires used in the study consist of three main sections in order to obtain comprehensive information about teachers' Erasmus+ project writing processes and their contributions to their PD. The first part deals with teachers' demographic information and school background, the second part deals with their PD and project experiences. The last part includes questions to explore teachers' views and experiences about the project writing process. This structure makes it possible to evaluate ELT teachers' personal and professional characteristics as well as their perceptions and experiences about the project writing process in detail. The questions prepared for ELT teachers were first piloted by two teachers in order to ensure the validity and reliability of the questionnaires. Through this pilot application, the comprehensibility and functionality of the questionnaire were tested, and the questions were finalized in line with the feedback. Thus, the validity of the questionnaire was increased, and reliability was ensured.

### **3.3.3. Project evaluation reports**

During this research process, the participants also carried out sample project evaluation works within the scope of Erasmus+ project writing sessions. During this process, the participants were asked to evaluate various Erasmus+ project examples. These documents, called expert evaluation reports, contributed to the development of the participants' skills in project writing, understanding the evaluation criteria and applying these criteria to the project. These evaluation reports were used as an important tool to demonstrate the knowledge and skill gains of the participants on project writing and implementation processes.

The data collection tools used in this study enabled us to analyze in depth the contribution of Erasmus+ project writing processes to the PD of ELT teachers. Semi-structured interviews and open-ended questions reflected the participants' individual views and experiences of the project processes, while project evaluation reports enabled a concrete evaluation of these experiences. Thanks to these tools, it was possible to analyze in a multidimensional way the difficulties faced by ELT teachers in project writing processes in Erasmus+ projects, the gains they achieved and the contributions of these processes to their PD. These qualitative data collection techniques used in the study helped us to comprehensively reveal the influences of ELT teachers' participation in Erasmus+ projects on their PD. It also enabled us to understand ELT teachers' insights into project writing processes in a broader

framework and to increase the validity and reliability of the data obtained (Meria & Tisdell, 2015).

### **3.4. Data Collection Procedures**

The data collection process started in January 2024 and lasted until May 2024; each step was conducted in accordance with the ethical principles of the research. The participants consisted of 17 volunteer ELT teachers who were enthusiastic about Erasmus+ project preparation. These teachers were randomly selected, some of them were experienced in writing and running Erasmus+ projects, while others had never been involved in these processes. Questionnaire with open-ended questions, semi-structured interviews and project evaluation reports were used for data collection.

At the beginning of the study, participants were informed both verbally and in writing about the purpose, processes and confidentiality principles of the study and their consent to participate was obtained. Each participant was assigned a code to ensure anonymity. In this process, the participants filled in and signed the consent forms indicating their willingness to gain new knowledge and skills in the Erasmus+ project writing process and started the training process. All participants were coded to ensure their anonymity. In accordance with the ethical dimensions of the research, all questions of the participants regarding the research process were answered and their contact information was provided to learn the findings. After the approval of the ethics committee, the open-ended questionnaire questions, which are data collection tools, were shared via Google form to the WhatsApp group established within the scope of this study and to the e-mail addresses of the participants. The questionnaires were first piloted with two ELT teachers and then finalized to test their validity and reliability. Throughout the training process, training materials and information about the research were regularly shared with the participants via WhatsApp group and Google Drive. This enabled participants to ask questions to the researcher when needed. In addition, after the training, participants were provided with contact information for questions regarding the findings.

Within the scope of the research, a detailed 8-week training program on Erasmus+ project writing processes was implemented. The training program aimed to contribute to the PD of ELT teachers by detailing the use of KA122 SCH and KA210 SCH application forms and project writing processes. Each week a different topic was covered in the training and the knowledge and skills of the participants were developed step by step and they gained experience. At the end of each day during the training, teachers were asked questions about the

content of the training and feedback on the process was collected. In this way, the level of understanding of each participant was measured and additional explanations were provided where necessary. The table below provides a detailed agenda for the 8-week Erasmus+ project writing training programme:

**Table 3: Detailed Agenda of 8-week Training Programme.**

<b>Week</b>	<b>Topic Title</b>	<b>Objective</b>	<b>Training Content and Flow</b>	<b>Acquirements</b>
1 <sup>st</sup> week	Introduction to Erasmus+ Programme	To provide general information about Erasmus+ program and project writing process	Introducing the purpose, importance, opportunities and application processes of the Erasmus+ program.	Teachers get to know the Erasmus+ program in general terms and acquire basic knowledge about the application and project writing processes.
2 <sup>nd</sup> week	KA122 SCH Application Form (Part 1)	To have knowledge about the first half of the KA122 SCH application form	Explanation and elaboration of the fields in the first half of the KA122 SCH application form.	Participants acquire the skills to fill in the first half of the KA122 SCH form.
3 <sup>rd</sup> week	KA122 SCH Application Form (Part 2)	To have knowledge about the second half of the KA122 SCH application form	Explaining the remaining fields of the KA122 SCH form, practicing filling the form with examples.	Participants can fill in the full KA122 SCH form.
4 <sup>th</sup> week	KA210 SCH Application Form (Part 1)	To have knowledge about the first half of the KA210 SCH application form	Explaining the fields in the first part of the KA210 SCH form and supporting with examples of how to fill them in.	Participants can fill in the first part of the KA210 SCH form.
5 <sup>th</sup> week	KA210 SCH Application Form (Part 2)	To have knowledge about the second half of the KA210 SCH application form	Explanation of the fields in the second part of the KA210 SCH form, elaboration with examples.	Participants can complete the KA210 SCH form.
6 <sup>th</sup> week	Needs Analysis and Goal Setting	To develop the ability to analyze needs and set SMART goals in the project process	How to conduct needs analysis; SMART goal setting methods and sample applications.	Participants can conduct appropriate needs analysis and create SMART objectives for the project.
7 <sup>th</sup> week	Expert Evaluation and Sample Project Analysis	To gain the ability to analyze the KA210 SCH project using an expert evaluation report	Analyzing a sample KA210 SCH project by working on the expert evaluation report.	Participants can analyze projects according to expert evaluation criteria.
8 <sup>th</sup> week	Sample Project Writing and Technical Assistance	Getting support by practicing project writing, eliminating deficiencies	Participants work on writing their own projects and receive technical support; questions are answered, and suggestions are presented.	Participants practice Erasmus+ project writing by applying what they have learned and receiving technical support.

## **Week 1: Overview of Erasmus+ Program and Project Writing Process**

In the first week, information about the general structure of the Erasmus+ program was provided. Detailed information was given about the structure of the Erasmus+ program, priorities, general objectives of the program, expectations from individuals and institutions, definition of the project, project structure and types. In addition, the differences between KA122 SCH and KA210 SCH project application types were explained. In this session, the participants were provided with general information about Erasmus projects and the main steps of the application process and gained a general awareness of the program. At the end of the week, verbal feedback was received from the participants on what they had learned about the program, and any points they did not understand or needed more information were identified and necessary support was provided.

## **Week 2: First Half of the KA122 SCH Application Form**

The second week focused on the first half of the KA122 SCH application form. In this section, detailed information was given about the processing of the information of the applicant organization and the hosting organizations, information about the applicant organization, project objectives section. At the end of this session, the participants were able to effectively present information about their organizations, find hosting organizations, formulate and justify project objectives and link them to EU policies. After the training, teachers were asked about what they understood and did not understand about the form and daily evaluations were made. This feedback supported teachers' active participation in the learning process.

## **Week 3: Second Half of the KA122 SCH Application Form**

The third week was dedicated to the remaining sections of the KA122 SCH form. They learned about critical areas such as appropriate project activities, budget management, project management and implementation, Erasmus Quality Standards, monitoring and evaluation, participant selection process, preparations before mobility abroad, project outcomes, internal and external dissemination and sustainability activities and finally project summary. In this week, they grasped the importance of project quality standards, learned how to manage and implement projects and how the budget was created in Erasmus+ projects, monitoring and evaluation, preparation, dissemination and sustainability activities. All sections of the application form were shown to the participants. After this training, the researcher asked the participants questions and evaluated whether the participants had any questions about the

second half of the application form and the missing aspects. This method ensured that the teachers mastered all stages of the application form.

#### **Week 4: First Half of the KA210 SCH Application Form**

The fourth week was dedicated to the first half of the KA210 SCH application form. Detailed information was provided on the importance of partnership structure, formulation of project objectives, Erasmus+ priorities, activities and budget structure. At the end of this session, participants learned strategies for establishing an appropriate partnership structure, developing cooperation, and gained skills to set project objectives in line with common needs and taking into account EU policies and priorities in the field of education. The main components of the KA210 SCH form were presented in detail this week. At the end of each day, feedback was collected to see how much they understood the topics covered, contributing to the participants' understanding of the first half of the application form.

#### **Week 5: Second Half of the KA210 SCH Application Form**

In the fifth week, the remaining sections of the KA210 SCH application form were covered. They learned about the sections on quality assurance, monitoring and evaluation strategies, internal and external dissemination and sustainability. In this session, the participants gained skills on how to fully fill in the KA210 SCH application form. At the end of each day, teachers were asked questions about what they had learned during the day and their opinions on the topics were collected. By analyzing the feedback, points that were missing or needed further explanation were identified and immediate support was provided.

#### **Week 6: Needs Analysis and Creating SMART Goals**

The sixth week was dedicated to needs analysis and goal setting, an important step in the project writing process. Participants were taught how to conduct a needs analysis and identify common problems in line with EU policies and priorities and specifically how to formulate project objectives according to SMART (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, Time-bound) criteria. Examples from participants who have already passed the project were listened to and participants were provided with detailed knowledge and skills. Conducting a needs analysis and creating SMART objectives in the right way is an important step in the success of Erasmus+ projects. Participants learned how to analyze the needs for the project, how to interpret data and how to formulate project objectives according to SMART

criteria. Through daily feedback, teachers' understanding of the needs analysis and goal setting processes was monitored and more detailed explanations were provided when necessary.

### **Week 7: Review of KA210 SCH Project with Expert Evaluation Report**

In the seventh week, sample expert evaluation reports were created for the participants to better understand the structure of the projects, to comprehend the important points that should be written for each section in the application form, and to understand the project evaluation process. These reports were developed by the researcher based on the criteria in the Erasmus Program Guide and the criteria in the expert guide documents of the relevant year. Participants were presented with a sample KA210 project that scored 93 points in the evaluation phase and were asked to fill in the sample expert evaluation report. The participants learned to evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of the project and had the opportunity to comprehend the evaluation criteria more effectively. This analysis contributed to the participants improving their own project preparation process. At the end of the weekly training, feedback was received on the difficulties teachers encountered during the analysis process, deficiencies were addressed, and participants' critical thinking skills were supported.

### **Week 8: Sample Project Writing Process and Technical Support**

In the last week, the participants were provided with a practical work environment for writing projects. The participants used the knowledge and skills they learned to prepare KA122 SCH projects. During this process, the researcher provided technical support to the participants and offered solutions to the problems they encountered. The aim of this week was to reinforce the participants' project writing skills and to build their confidence in the Erasmus+ project application process.

This 8-week Erasmus+ project writing process has been carefully structured to provide ELT teachers with detailed knowledge and skills on the Erasmus+ project application process. At each stage of the training program, the participants were guided step by step to learn every detail of the application process. The researcher has been working as a project expert and coordinator in Konya Provincial Directorate of National Education PEK team since 2015. He has written and successfully implemented many projects in the fields of KA1 and KA2. Through the knowledge, skills and experiences he gained in this process, all kinds of support to the participants were provided and participants were supported to increase their knowledge and skills effectively by providing immediate feedback. Through this training, a solid data set

was obtained to deeply investigate the influence of Erasmus+ project writing processes on ELT teachers' PD.

### **3.5. Data Analysis**

This study is based on the content analysis method and the interview and questionnaire data for each research question were analyzed systematically. In this way, it aims to examine the effects of ELT teachers' experiences of writing and implementing Erasmus+ projects on their PD. This was preferred as an appropriate method to provide more in-depth meaning by identifying the prominent themes in the data obtained from the participants' views and grouping them under main categories (Creswell & Poth, 2016).

#### **Research Question 1: What are the contributions of Erasmus+ projects to professional development?**

Data on teachers' achievements in international project work and Erasmus+ project writing processes were analyzed to address this question. Semi-structured interviews and open-ended survey questions were analyzed and coded under the themes of "knowledge and skills", "cooperation", "international experience" and "motivation".

**Coding:** In this analysis process, ELT teachers' statements about the development in their professional knowledge, skills and pedagogical approaches were coded. For example, codes such as "personal satisfaction" were used.

**Theme Creation:** As a result of coding, the main themes were identified that Erasmus+ project writing process improve teachers' professional knowledge and skills, enable them to apply innovative methods in the classroom, and give them an international perspective.

**Interpretation:** In line with the data obtained, it was stressed that project works made significant contributions to ELT teachers' pedagogical competencies. Participants talked about their experiences of learning different educational approaches through the projects and integrating these approaches into their classrooms.

#### **Research Question 2: What are the Main Factors Affecting ELT Teachers' Participation in International Project Works?**

The factors that encourage or hinder teachers' participation in projects were analyzed in order to answer this question, Coding was done under the themes of "time management", "institutional support" and "lack of knowledge".

**Coding:** The challenges mentioned by the participants in the interviews, such as intense workload, lack of time, lack of administrative support, and training needs, management contributions were coded.

**Theme Creation:** During the coding process, factors that encourage (personal development) and hinder (institutional barriers, lack of time) participation were identified as the main themes.

**Interpretation:** As a result of the analysis of the data, it was found that the most important factor affecting ELT teachers' participation in the projects was the desire to manage time and balance daily tasks and project writing processes. On the other hand, institutional barriers, lack of training on project writing and time constraints were found to be the main factors limiting teachers' participation.

### **Research Question 3: What are the Factors that Ensure the Sustainability of International Project Studies and Writing Processes?**

Within the scope of this research question, pedagogical and institutional factors supporting the sustainability of Erasmus+ projects were examined. Data were coded under the themes of "management support", "education continuity", "curriculum flexibility" and "stakeholder collaboration".

**Coding:** Statements such as administration engagement, regular training, project-oriented flexibility and international partnership were coded.

**Theme Creation:** As a result of the coding, it was determined that getting management support and providing regular training plays a critical role in ensuring the sustainability of their projects.

**Interpretation:** The data demonstrates that the support provided by the institutions and periodic training offered to ELT teachers is decisive for the sustainability of Erasmus+ projects. Participants emphasized the need for more institutional support and less curriculum intensity to take part in project work.

#### **Research Question 4: What are the Effects of the Project Writing Process on Teachers' Pedagogical Skills?**

This research question aims to examine the contribution of project writing processes to teachers' classroom practice skills. The data was coded under the themes of "pedagogical knowledge and methods", "digital tool usage" and "self-assessment", "professional self-confidence" and "communication and cooperation".

**Coding:** Pedagogical gains such as creative teaching techniques, technology skills, improving myself, creative solutions and joint work were coded.

**Theme Creation:** The main themes were that the project writing process improved pedagogical skills and provided ELT teachers to develop their digital and problem-solving skills.

**Interpretation:** According to the results of the analysis, it was seen that the pedagogical skills that teachers gained during the project writing process positively affected their classroom practices. Participants stated that thanks to the projects, they were able to develop their group work skills and enrich their course content with innovative methods.

#### **3.5.1. Reliability and validity**

In this study, several methods were used to increase reliability and validity. First, different data collection tools (semi-structured interviews, open-ended questionnaires and expert evaluation reports) were used to ensure data diversity, and these data were compared and analyzed. In addition, the accuracy of the information was shared and verified with the participants through member checking. All stages of the research process are explained in detail, making it easier for readers to evaluate the findings.

The consistency of the data analysis was increased; in this context, the consistency of the analysis was strengthened by ensuring inter-coder reliability (Lombard et al., 2002). In addition, all stages of the analysis process were reported in detail, thus supporting the reliability and validity of the study (Haynes et al., 1995). Concepts were derived from the data obtained using the inductive analysis method and categories were created through these concepts. This method allowed the data to be structured and analyzed in depth (Elo et al., 2014).

Purposive sampling was used for participant selection. This approach allowed for analyzing the diversity of participants' existing knowledge, skills and experience of Erasmus+ projects. Participants were selected on a voluntary basis, with and without experience in Erasmus+ projects. This allowed for a more detailed examination of the impact of the projects on professional development.

As a result, through the methods and data analysis processes used, the effects of Erasmus+ project writing and implementation processes on ELT teachers' professional development, pedagogical competence and motivation towards project writing were deeply understood. This systematic approach ensured that the data obtained was reliable and valid.



## CHAPTER 4

### 4. FINDINGS

Around the four main questions in the study, data on the PD of ELT teachers' Erasmus+ project writing processes, the factors affecting participation in projects and ensuring the sustainability of projects, and the effects of the project writing process on pedagogical skills were analyzed. The findings were organized within the framework of themes, codes and sub-codes by content analysis method and supported by frequency and percentage distributions for each research question and quotations from the participants. In this way, the findings of the study are presented in a clear and systematic structure and the different dimensions of teachers' experiences in Erasmus+ projects are discussed in detail.

#### 4.1. Findings Related to the First Research Question

**Research Question 1:** *How do international project work and writing process contribute to ELT teachers' professional development?*

This section presents the findings on the contribution of the process of writing Erasmus+ projects to ELT teachers' PD. The analysis aims to understand how teachers experienced changes in terms of knowledge and skills, collaboration, international experience and motivation. These data are based on the interview and open-ended questionnaire data collected from the participants. Participants' responses were organized under four main themes: knowledge and skills, collaboration, international experience and motivation. The content of each theme was supported with participant quotes and frequencies, and the gains obtained in this process were explained in detail. Table 4 summarizes the factors contributing to teachers' professional development under four main themes: knowledge and skills, collaboration, international experience and motivation.

**Table 4:** The Contribution of Being in the Process of Writing Erasmus+ Projects to Professional Development.

Themes	Codes	Sub-codes	Participant Quotes	Participant Code	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)
Knowledge and Skills	Pedagogical Knowledge	Innovative methods	T1: "There was a big change in teaching methods." T4: "I gained methods for effective teaching."	T1, T4, T5, T9, T14, T18	12	30%
	Technological Competence	Use of technological tools	T2: "It was useful to learn new digital tools during project writing." T6: "I learned to use digital platforms effectively."	T2, T6, T7, T10, T16	10	25%
Cooperation	Professional Solidarity	Teamwork	T3: "Working with other teachers inspired me." T2: "Working as a team increased our pedagogical skills."	T3, T8, T12, T17	8	20%
International Experience	Cultural Awareness	Diversity and tolerance	T5: "Understanding different cultures added value to my teaching." T15: "Cultural awareness improved my quality of education."	T5, T9, T13, T15	7	17,5%
Motivation	Personal Satisfaction	Professional advancement	T6: "The projects motivated me and increased my self-confidence." T17: "This process has been a professionally satisfying experience."	T6, T8, T11, T17	5	12,5%

**Knowledge and Skills:** 30% of the participants (f=12) stated that Erasmus+ projects contributed greatly to their pedagogical knowledge and innovative methods. For example, participant T1 emphasized the impact of the process on their course practices by saying "*There has been a big change in teaching methods*". Similarly, a group of 25% (f=10) stated that they

gained digital competence, especially in the use of digital tools. Participant T6 shared this gain with the statement "*I learned to use digital platforms effectively*".

**Cooperation:** Under the theme of collaboration, 20% (f=8) participants stated that professional solidarity increased. They stated that sharing experiences with other teachers through teamwork improved their pedagogical skills. For example, T3 said, "*Working with other teachers inspired me,*" while T2 said, "*Working as a team increased our pedagogical skills.*"

**International Experience:** Under the theme of international experience, 17.5% (f=7) participants stated that recognizing different cultures added value to their teaching. T5 said, "*Understanding different cultures added value to my teaching*" while T15 said, "*Cultural awareness improved my quality of education*" emphasizing that cultural diversity and tolerance made a significant professional contribution.

**Motivation:** 12.5% (f=5) of the participants stated that the process of writing Erasmus+ projects provided personal satisfaction and increased their motivation. T6 said, "*The projects motivated me and increased my self-confidence*" while T17 expressed their satisfaction with the process by saying, "*This process offered a professionally satisfying experience.*"

These findings show that participating in Erasmus+ projects improve ELT teachers' professional knowledge and skills, collaboration and international experiences. Moreover, this process increases teachers' personal motivation and provides a professionally satisfying experience. Participants' views on this issue clearly reveal that participation in such projects contributes to both professional and personal development of teachers.

#### **4.2. Findings Related to the Second Research Question**

**Research Question 2:** *What are the main factors affecting ELT teachers' participation in international project works?*

In this section, the factors affecting ELT teachers' participation in Erasmus+ projects are discussed in detail. The research findings are grouped under the main themes of time management, institutional support and lack of information. The data were obtained from teachers' opinions and analysis. The percentage distribution of participants and the effects of these factors on participation in Erasmus+ project writing process are explained. In Table 5, the factors affecting participation are analyzed under four themes.

**Table 5:** Factors Affecting Participation in Writing Erasmus+ Projects.

Themes	Codes	Sub-codes	Participant Quotes	Participant Code	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)
Time Management	Curriculum Load	Lack of Time	T9: "The intensity of the curriculum makes it difficult to allocate time for projects." T5: "I can't plan my time properly."	T1, T4, T5, T6, T10, T15	15	35%
	Work Intensity	Excess teaching hours	T11: "It was difficult to balance my other tasks during the project writing."	T2, T3, T7, T8, T11, T13	10	23%
Institutional Support	Management Contribution	Lack of administrative support	T12: "We need more support from the school administration."	T12, T14, T15, T16	8	18%
Lack of Knowledge	Training Needs	Lack of project writing training	T13: "I hesitate because I have no experience in project writing."	T13, T16, T17	6	14%

**Curriculum Load:** The intensity of the curriculum was one of the most important reasons why teachers could not allocate enough time for projects. 35% (n=15) of the participants expressed this situation. For example, T9 stated, "*The intensity of the curriculum makes it difficult to allocate time for projects*", expressing how busy schedules limit their participation in projects. Similarly, T5 emphasized his personal time management difficulties by saying "*I cannot plan my time properly*".

**Work Intensity:** The excessive number of class hours also increases the difficulties in time management. 23% (n=10) of the participants stated that they had difficulty balancing their other duties during project writing. T11 clearly expressed this difficulty by saying, "*It was difficult to balance between my other tasks during project writing*".

**Management Support:** 18% of the participants (n=8) complained about the lack of support from the school administration. T12 emphasized the impact of administrative support on the projects by saying "*More support from the school administration is needed*". This view is especially critical to increase the general acceptance of the projects within the school.

**Training Needs:** Lack of knowledge of project writing was mentioned by 14% (n=6) of the participants. T13 clearly stated the need for information and training by saying "*I am afraid because I have no experience in project writing*".

As shown in Table 5, the most important factors affecting participation in Erasmus+ projects are time management (35%), work intensity (23%) and institutional support (14%). Curriculum load and excessive teaching hours were the most challenging factors for time management. Lack of management support and insufficient knowledge in project writing reduced participants' willingness to participate in projects. These findings suggest that in order to increase participation in Erasmus+ projects, time management strategies should be developed, institutional support should be increased and training in project writing should be more widespread.

#### **4.3. Findings Related to the Third Research Question**

**Research Question 3:** *What are the factors that ensure the sustainability of international project work and writing process?*

This section focuses on the factors that ensure the sustainability of Erasmus+ projects. The research findings are presented with themes, codes, sub-codes, frequencies and percentages reflecting the participants' views on project sustainability. In the explanation of the findings, factors that are effective at both individual and organizational level are evaluated. The findings categorized the factors suggested by the participants to ensure project sustainability under four main themes: Management Support, Training Continuity, Curriculum Flexibility and Stakeholder Collaboration. In Table 6, the factors that ensure sustainability are presented under four main themes.

**Table 6:** Factors Ensuring Project Sustainability.

Themes	Codes	Sub-codes	Participant Quotes	Participant Code	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)
Management Support	Administration Engagement	Process facilitation	T14: "Management support is very important for the continuation of the projects."	T1, T4, T5, T6, T12, T15	14	37%
Education Continuity	Regular Training	Periodic trainings	T15: "Regular trainings ensure better preparation for projects."	T2, T3, T8, T11, T13	10	26%
Curriculum Flexibility	Project Oriented Flexibility	Less curriculum intensity	T16: "Curriculum flexibility increases the sustainability of projects."	T7, T9, T10, T13, T16	8	20%
Stakeholder Collaboration	International Partnership	Long-term cooperation	T17: "Cooperation with different countries contributes greatly to the continuity of projects."	T5, T9, T13, T14	6	17%

**Management Support:** 37% (f=14) of respondents indicated that management support is important for sustainability. In particular, participants indicated that facilitation of processes and active involvement of the administration are essential for sustainability. For example, T14 underlined this issue by saying "*Management support is very important for the continuation of the projects*".

**Education Continuum:** 26% (f=10) stated that regular and periodic training facilitates the preparation process for projects. T15 stated that "*Regular training helps to prepare for projects better*". It was suggested that training should be continued in a continuous and planned manner.

**Curriculum Flexibility:** 20% (f=8) stated that the intensity of the curriculum should be reduced. T16 drew attention to this need by saying "*Curriculum flexibility increases the sustainability of projects*".

**Stakeholder Collaboration:** 17% (f=6) stated that international cooperation contributed to the sustainability of the projects. T17 emphasized the importance of international cooperation by saying "*Cooperation with different countries contributes greatly to the continuity of the projects*".

The findings indicate that various factors are important to ensure the sustainability of Erasmus+ project writing process. While management support and training continuity stand out as the factors with the highest frequency in terms of sustainability, curricular flexibility and stakeholder cooperation also play a key role in the continuity of project writing processes. These findings shed light on the identification of strategies that can be implemented at both individual and organizational levels.

#### **4.4. Findings Related to the Fourth Research Question**

**Research Question 4:** *What are the effects of project writing process on teachers' pedagogical skills?*

This chapter analyzes how the Erasmus+ project writing process contributed to ELT teachers' pedagogical skills. This analysis assesses the impact of the methods learned during the project writing process on teachers' lessons and their overall PD. The findings are based on qualitative data from the participants and are elaborated through five main themes. In Table 7, the effects of the project writing process on pedagogical skills are analyzed under five main themes.

**Table 7:** The Effects of Project Writing Process on Pedagogical Skills.

Themes	Codes	Sub-codes	Participant Quotes	Participant Code	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)
Pedagogical Knowledge and Methods	Creative Teaching Techniques	Adoption of different methods	T6: "I applied the methods I learned during project writing in the classroom." T12: "I started to use different teaching methods more creatively."	T2, T3, T6, T8, T9, T12, T14	10	25%
Digital Tool Usage	Technology Skills	Preparing digital material	T3: "I learned how to use digital tools, and this helped me to teach my lessons more effectively." T13: "I can present more interesting materials to students."	T3, T4, T5, T7, T13, T15, T17	8	20%
Self-Assessment	Improving Myself	Recognizing shortcomings	T5: "Project writing made me realize where I was lacking." T11: "In this process I was able to look at myself from an outside perspective."	T5, T9, T11, T13, T16	6	15%
Professional Self-confidence	Creative Solutions	Develop innovative ideas	T10: "The projects encouraged me to find different solutions to problems." T14: "This process has increased my self-confidence; I am more confident in myself."	T2, T6, T10, T12, T14, T17	8	20%
Communication and Cooperation	Joint Works	Group work skills	T1: "Group work helped me communicate more effectively with my students." T9: "I became a better leader in collaborative projects."	T1, T7, T8, T9, T13, T15	6	15%

**Pedagogical Knowledge and Methods:** Pedagogical knowledge and creative teaching methods are among the most important skills that teachers gain during project writing. 25% of the participants (f=10) stated that they applied the methods they learned during the project writing process in their lessons. For example: T6: "*I applied the methods I learned during project writing in the classroom*" and T12: "*I started to use different teaching methods more creatively*" This finding suggests that creative teaching techniques are used by teachers to enrich the course content and to attract students' interest.

**Digital Tool Usage:** Technological competencies are another important skill that teachers acquire during the project writing process. 20% of the participants (f=8) stated that they improved their skills in preparing digital materials and using digital tools effectively. Sample excerpts:

T3: "*I learned how to use digital tools, and this helped me to process my lessons more effectively*"

T13: "*I can present more interesting materials to students*"

This finding suggests that the project writing process enhanced teachers' technology integration skills.

**Self-Assessment:** The project writing process enabled teachers to make self-evaluation and 15% of the participants (f=6) stated that they realized their own shortcomings in this process. For example:

T5: "*Project writing made me realize where I was lacking*"

T11: "*In this process I was able to look at myself from the outside*"

This suggests that the project writing process is an important tool for teachers to evaluate their PD. The project writing process contributed to the development of ELT teachers in important areas such as pedagogical knowledge, digital skills and self-evaluation. Table 7 presents a detailed analysis of these findings through themes, codes and participant quotes.

## CHAPTER 5

### 5. DISCUSSION, CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS

This chapter presents a comprehensive blend of the study's findings, emphasizing their effects for the PD of ELT teachers. In the Discussion section, the study's findings are analyzed and interpreted in relation to existing literature. This includes exploring how Erasmus+ project writing processes contribute to ELT teachers' professional and pedagogical development, the challenges that hinder effective participation, the factors ensuring sustainability, and the transformative impacts on pedagogical practices. The Conclusion section summarizes the study's main outcomes, emphasizing the significance of Erasmus+ projects in enhancing ELT teachers' skills, motivation, and cross-cultural competencies. This section also acknowledges the study's limitations, providing a balanced perspective on its scope and applicability. Finally, the Suggestions section offers practical recommendations for stakeholders, including education policymakers, school administrators, and teacher trainers, aiming to enhance the accessibility, effectiveness, and sustainability of Erasmus+ project initiatives. The chapter concludes by outlining potential directions for future research to build upon the findings and address identified gaps. This comprehensive structure ensures a holistic understanding of the study's implications, making it a valuable resource for improving teacher development programs in international educational contexts.

#### 5.1. Discussion

The main aim of this study was to examine how ELT teachers' participation in Erasmus+ project writing processes contributed to their PD. Specifically, the effects of the knowledge, skills and experiences gained in the process of preparing Erasmus+ KA122 SCH and KA210 SCH application forms on ELT teachers' pedagogical skills, collaboration capacities and international experiences were investigated. In this context, as well as the effects on ELT teachers' PD, the obstacles encountered in preparing projects and the factors that ensure the sustainability of these processes were also analyzed.

The findings of the study proved that the Erasmus+ project writing process improves ELT teachers' professional knowledge and skills, increases their pedagogical competencies and provides opportunities for international collaboration. However, factors such as time management, lack of institutional support and demanding curricula were found to make it difficult for ELT teachers to participate in project writing process effectively. Moreover, the

importance of factors such as management support, regular training and curriculum flexibility were emphasized for sustainability. It was found that the project writing process had a positive influence on ELT teachers' pedagogical skills and led to significant improvements, especially in creative teaching techniques and the use of digital tools.

In this section, the findings obtained in line with the research questions were discussed:

1. 1. What are the contributions of Erasmus+ project writing processes to ELT teachers' professional development?
2. 2. What are the main factors affecting ELT teachers' participation in Erasmus+ projects?
3. 3. What are the factors that ensure the sustainability of Erasmus+ project processes?
4. What are the effects of the project writing process on ELT teachers' pedagogical skills?

In this section, each research question is addressed under a separate sub-heading. Firstly, the interpretation of the findings and then the comparison of these findings with other studies in the literature were presented. Finally, the theoretical and practical contributions of the findings were evaluated. All these discussions were presented in a balanced manner in the context of the limitations and results of the study.

### **5.1.1. Contributions to professional development**

The findings of this study reveal that ELT teachers' participation in the process of writing Erasmus+ projects provided innovative pedagogical knowledge and methods, which enriched their classroom practices. For example, teachers' statements that they renewed their classroom methods (T1: "*There was a big change in teaching methods.*") support Diaz Ramirez's (2014) findings that international projects provide innovative teaching techniques (Diaz Ramirez, 2014). Gaining the ability to use digital tools effectively was in line with Beerkens et al.'s (2016) study on the positive effects of international projects on digital literacy. The participants' statements about learning and applying digital tools (T6: "*I learned to use digital platforms effectively.*") confirmed these results (Beerkens et al., 2016). This observation is further supported by the findings of Lung (2022), who demonstrated that project-based approaches in Erasmus+ programs significantly improve teachers' and students' use of digital tools and 21<sup>st</sup> century competencies. Increased professional cooperation and cultural awareness were in line with the findings of Karakuş et al. (2017), who prove that Erasmus+ projects support social learning processes. Participants' views that understanding different cultures and

tolerating diversity improved their competencies (T5: "*Understanding different cultures added value to my teaching.*") indicated that international collaborations could increase teachers' social skills (Karakuş et al., 2017). These findings also resonate with Biasutti et al. (2021), who found that intercultural education policies This research has demonstrated that participation in Erasmus+ projects not only provided teachers with pedagogical knowledge, but also increased their motivation and strengthened their sense of professional satisfaction. In particular, the following statement of one of the participants, T6: "*The projects motivated me and increased my self-confidence*" supported the idea that professional motivation can be increased through Erasmus+ projects, which is often emphasized in the literature (Roy et al., 2019).

The findings demonstrate that the process of writing Erasmus+ projects contributed significantly to the PD of ELT teachers. These findings, which are consistent with the literature, reveal that participation in international projects included important gains such as learning innovative pedagogical methods, developing digital competencies and cultural awareness. As an additional contribution to literature, this study suggested that participation in international project writing process improves not only classroom practices but also teachers' professional identities.

### **5.1.2. Factors affecting participation**

The challenges faced by teachers in participating in Erasmus+ project works play a decisive role in maximizing the benefits and lasting impact of the projects. The findings exhibited that the main barriers such as lack of knowledge, lack of time, workload and lack of support make it difficult for ELT teachers to participate in project works. In this section, the findings were compared with similar studies in literature and the factors affecting participation were discussed in detail.

#### ***Lack of time and workload***

Lack of teachers' time was one of the most frequently reported problems in participating in Erasmus+ project works. The findings suggested that due to increased teaching hours and demanding curricular schedules, ELT teachers are not able to devote enough time to the Erasmus+ project writing process. For example, one participant stated, "*It was difficult to balance my other duties during project writing*" (T3). This issue is frequently highlighted in existing literature. Roy et al. (2019) stated that intensive curriculum programs limit participation in international projects. Similarly, Karakuş et al. (2017) stated that teachers had difficulty in group work and PD processes due to lack of time (Roy et al., 2019). While the

findings revealed that teachers cannot spare time for project writing due to workload, it was seen that this situation may also affect the success of the projects. The research suggests that having flexible time frames can enable ELT teachers to benefit from project writing experiences in terms of their PD.

### ***Lack of support and institutional barriers***

Lack of institutional support was identified as another important factor hindering ELT teachers' participation in Erasmus+ project writing process. The findings revealed that if school administrations do not provide sufficient support, it decreases teachers' motivation. One participant expressed this situation by saying, "*More support is needed from the school administration*" (T12). This problem is also emphasized in literature. The study conducted by Souto-Otero et al. (2013) demonstrated that lack of adequate information and management support negatively affected participation in Erasmus+ projects (Souto-Otero et al., 2013). This finding suggested that school administrations should take a more active role in the PD of ELT teachers. It is critical for the sustainability of the projects that school administrations develop mechanisms to encourage ELT teachers to be more involved in project activities.

### ***Lack of knowledge and need for training***

Lack of knowledge on project writing is another factor limiting ELT teachers' participation in Erasmus+ project writing process. One of the participants expressed this deficiency by saying, "*I hesitate because I have no experience in project writing*" (T13). This finding was in line with Karakuş et al.'s (2017) study. Research emphasizes the necessity of special training programs to increase teachers' participation in projects (Karakuş et al., 2017). The findings demonstrated that organizing project writing trainings in certain periods can overcome the lack of knowledge. This may increase teachers' confidence in projects and encourage active participation.

The findings obtained within the scope of research question 2 revealed various factors that hinder participation in Erasmus+ project writing process. It is seen that barriers such as lack of time, lack of support and lack of knowledge restrict teachers' participation in projects. In line with the studies in literature, the importance of time management trainings, institutional support mechanisms and special training programs for project writing are emphasized to solve these problems. In this direction, it will be possible for Erasmus+ projects to reach a wider audience and increase their influence on the PD of ELT teachers.

The findings demonstrate that the process of writing Erasmus+ projects contributed significantly to the PD of ELT teachers. These findings, which are consistent with the literature, reveal that participation in international projects included important gains such as learning innovative pedagogical methods, developing digital competencies and cultural awareness. As an additional contribution to literature, this study suggested that participation in international project writing process improves not only classroom practices but also teachers' professional identities.

### **5.1.3. Sustainability factors**

The sustainability of Erasmus+ project writing process is critical to ensure their long-term impact and continued benefits for participants. In this section, key factors such as curriculum flexibility, management support, international cooperation and training continuity were discussed. The findings exhibited the impact of these factors on the sustainability of projects and were compared with similar studies in literature.

#### ***Management support and corporate engagement***

The findings demonstrated that the support provided by the school administration is critical for the sustainability of Erasmus+ project writing process. One of the participants clearly expressed the role of this support by saying, "*The support of the administration is very important for the continuation of the projects*" (T14). Management support enables more efficient management of processes and more effective use of resources. This factor is frequently emphasized in literature. For example, Souto-Otero et al. (2013) stated that strong management support is essential for the sustainability of projects.

Active involvement of school administration in the planning and implementation of projects could increase teachers' trust in the projects. Moreover, participants' experiences suggested that lack of management support limits the success of projects. This suggests that the cooperation between the school administration and ELT teachers should be increased.

#### ***Curriculum flexibility***

The intensity of the curriculum stands out as an important obstacle affecting the sustainability of the projects. One of the participants expressed this situation by saying "*Curriculum flexibility increases the sustainability of projects*" (T16). Making the curriculum adaptable to the projects may enable ELT teachers to allocate more time to the projects. In the literature, this factor has been emphasized in studies where intensive curricula limit teachers'

participation in projects (Roy et al., 2019). In this context, project-oriented curriculum flexibility can enable teachers to take a more active role in both classroom activities and international projects. This may increase the benefits that both ELT teachers and students derive from projects.

### ***Training continuity and periodic training***

The impact of regular training programs on the sustainability of Erasmus+ project writing process was another important finding of the research. One of the participants expressed this need by stating that "*Regular training enables better preparation for projects*" (T15). Periodic training allows teachers to continuously improve their knowledge and skills in project writing and management. This finding is in line with other studies in literature. For example, Karakuş et al. (2017) emphasized that regular trainings that support teachers' PD increase the success rate of projects. This situation revealed the importance of systematic planning of training programs.

### ***International cooperation***

International partnerships were found to be an important factor for sustainable projects. One of the participants emphasized this point by saying, "*Cooperation with different countries contributes greatly to the continuity of projects*" (T17). International collaboration allows teachers to gain different perspectives and projects to have a wider impact. In the literature, it is stated that long-term collaborations increase the success of projects (Diaz Ramirez, 2014). In this context, fostering international collaborations was seen as a critical strategy to increase the sustainability of Erasmus+ project works. These partnerships allow teachers and students to engage more actively at the global level.

The findings under research question 3 clearly revealed the key factors affecting the sustainability of Erasmus+ projects. Elements such as administrative support, regular training programs, curriculum flexibility and international cooperation appear to be critical to ensure the long-term impact of project writing processes. These findings, which are in line with the literature, emphasized the need to develop various strategies to increase the sustainability of Erasmus+ project writing process. In this regard, it is recommended that projects should be more integrated into education systems and cooperation between stakeholders should be strengthened.

#### **5.1.4. Impacts on pedagogical skills**

The effects of Erasmus+ project writing process on ELT teachers' pedagogical skills were considered as one of the most important outcomes of the projects. Within the scope of the research, teachers' acquisitions such as improving the use of digital tools, gaining self-assessment skills and adopting creative teaching techniques were identified. This section aimed to discuss these outcomes in detail and compare them with literature.

##### ***Use of digital tools***

According to the research findings, the use of digital tools was an important area of PD for ELT teachers who participated in Erasmus+ project writing processes. One of the participants emphasized this achievement by stating, "*I learned how to use digital tools, and this enabled me to teach my lessons more effectively*" (T3). Another participant emphasized the contribution of the project writing process to classroom practices by saying, "*I can present more interesting materials to my students*" (T13).

These findings are in line with studies in literature. For example, a study by Diaz Ramirez (2014) emphasized that digital tools play an important role in enhancing teachers' pedagogical effectiveness. Erasmus+ project writing provides teachers with the opportunity to use technology-based tools effectively, enhancing their digital competencies. This has enriched the learning experiences of both ELT teachers and students.

##### ***Self-assessment and professional development***

Project writing processes increased ELT teachers' self-evaluation skills. One of the participants stated that "*Project writing helped me understand where I was lacking*" and emphasized the awareness that this process brought to her (T5). Another participant emphasized the importance of the self-evaluation process by saying, "*In this process, I was able to look at myself from an outside perspective*" (T11). This finding is in line with other studies in literature. For example, Karakuş et al. (2017) stated that the self-assessment process was effective in increasing teachers' professional skills. Self-assessment supports teachers' PD by allowing them to recognize their strengths and weaknesses.

##### ***Creative teaching techniques***

The research findings revealed that Erasmus+ project writing process offered ELT teachers the opportunity to adopt creative teaching techniques. One of the participants stated this gain by saying, "*I applied the methods I learned during project writing in the classroom*"

(T6). Another participant emphasized the contribution of the project preparation process to classroom practices by saying, "*I started to use different educational methods more creatively*" (T12). These findings are also widely discussed in literature. For example, Roy et al. (2019) stated that creative teaching techniques play an important role in increasing students' motivation to learn. Erasmus+ project writing process has made the teaching process more effective by enabling ELT teachers to diversify their classroom practices.

The findings obtained within the scope of research question 4 indicated that Erasmus+ project writing process have a significant influence on ELT teachers' pedagogical skills. Improving the use of digital tools, acquiring self-assessment skills and adopting creative teaching techniques were among the contributions of the projects to teachers' PD. These gains are in line with the studies in literature and reveal that Erasmus+ project writing process is an important tool to increase ELT teachers' pedagogical competencies. Accordingly, it is recommended that projects should be designed and implemented in a way to support ELT teachers' professional skills.

The findings of this study reveal that ELT teachers' participation in the process of writing Erasmus+ projects provided innovative pedagogical knowledge and methods, which enriched their classroom practices. For example, teachers' statements that they renewed their classroom methods (T1: "*There was a big change in teaching methods.*") support Diaz Ramirez's (2014) findings that international projects provide innovative teaching techniques (Diaz Ramirez, 2014). Gaining the ability to use digital tools effectively was in line with Beerkens et al.'s (2016) study on the positive effects of international projects on digital literacy. The participants' statements about learning and applying digital tools (T6: "*I learned to use digital platforms effectively.*") confirmed these results (Beerkens et al., 2016). This observation is further supported by the findings of Lung (2022), who demonstrated that project-based approaches in Erasmus+ programs significantly improve teachers' and students' use of digital tools and 21<sup>st</sup> century competencies. Increased professional cooperation and cultural awareness were in line with the findings of Karakuş et al. (2017), who prove that Erasmus+ projects support social learning processes. Participants' views that understanding different cultures and tolerating diversity improved their competencies (T5: "*Understanding different cultures added value to my teaching.*") indicated that international collaborations could increase teachers' social skills (Karakuş et al., 2017). These findings also resonate with Biasutti et al. (2021), who found that intercultural education policies This research has demonstrated that participation in

Erasmus+ projects not only provided teachers with pedagogical knowledge, but also increased their motivation and strengthened their sense of professional satisfaction. In particular, the following statement of one of the participants, T6: "*The projects motivated me and increased my self-confidence*" supported the idea that professional motivation can be increased through Erasmus+ projects, which is often emphasized in the literature (Roy et al., 2019).

## **5.2. Conclusion**

This study comprehensively examined the contributions of participation in Erasmus+ project writing process to ELT teachers' PD, the factors influencing participation in project writing processes, the potential for impact on pedagogical skills and sustainability aspects. The findings demonstrated that Erasmus+ projects improved ELT teachers' pedagogical knowledge, use of digital tools and international experiences. At the same time, barriers to participation such as lack of institutional support and lack of time were identified. Furthermore, sustainability factors such as regular training support, administrative support, and curricular flexibility were found to be critical for the success of the project writing process. It was also found that the project writing process encouraged ELT teachers to adopt creative teaching techniques and self-evaluation.

The study had some limitations. Firstly, only ELT teachers in a specific geographical region were studied during the data collection process, so the results may not be generalizable to different regions or cultural contexts. Secondly, the data collection methods were limited by qualitative research design. Although the data collected through questionnaires and interviews provided in-depth information, they could not be supported by the results that could be obtained from a wider group of participants through a quantitative approach.

This research makes a significant contribution to literature by addressing the theoretical and practical implications of the experiences gained in the process of writing Erasmus+ projects on ELT teachers' PD. Theoretically, it supports and extends previous research on the influence of the project writing process on developing ELT teachers' pedagogical skills. In practical terms, it draws attention to important factors such as institutional support and time management mechanisms to increase ELT teachers' involvement in writing Erasmus+ projects. These findings provide guidance for education managers and policy makers. In particular, they provide concrete recommendations for practices such as providing curricular flexibility and scheduling regular in-service training.

### **5.3. Suggestions**

This study provides significant insights into the contributions of the Erasmus+ project writing process to the PD of ELT teachers and serves as a foundation for future research. To enhance the scope and depth of understanding in this area, future studies could involve larger and more diverse sample groups of ELT teachers from various regions and cultural contexts, allowing for increased generalizability of findings. Employing a mixed-methods approach that integrates both quantitative and qualitative methods would yield more comprehensive results. Longitudinal studies could investigate the long-term impacts of participation in Erasmus+ project writing processes on teachers' career development, students' achievements, and intercultural competencies. Furthermore, exploring the cross-disciplinary impacts of project writing processes on teachers from fields beyond ELT could provide broader educational insights. Research could also focus on institutional dynamics, examining the role of school management in creating environments that support project participation. Additionally, longitudinal evaluations of student outcomes would shed light on how teachers' involvement in Erasmus+ projects influences students' learning experiences and intercultural skills. In conclusion, this research has underlined the substantial contributions of the Erasmus+ project writing process to the professional and pedagogical growth of ELT teachers, identified the challenges faced, and emphasized strategies for enhancing sustainability. Future studies in this domain will not only broaden perspectives but also inform educational policies and implementation strategies to maximize the benefits of such initiatives.

## GENİŞLETİLMİŞ TÜRKÇE ÖZET

Necmettin Erbakan Üniversitesi, Eğitim Bilimleri Enstitüsü  
Yabancı Diller Eğitimi Anabilim Dalı  
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### ULUSLARARASI PROJE ÇALIŞMASI VE YAZMA SÜRECİNİN İNGİLİZCE ÖĞRETMENLERİNİN MESLEKİ GELİŞİMİNE ETKİSİNİN ARAŞTIRILMASI

İbrahim AYDIN

Bu çalışma, İngilizce öğretmenlerinin Erasmus+ proje yazma süreçlerine katılımlarının mesleki gelişimlerine nasıl katkı sağladığını incelemek amacıyla yapılmıştır. Günümüz eğitim sisteminde öğretmenlerin sadece bilgi aktaran birer rehber olmaktan çıkıp, küresel eğitim politikalarına uyum sağlayarak dijital araçlar ve yenilikçi yöntemleri öğrenmeleri beklenmektedir. Erasmus+ projeleri, öğretmenlere bu türden bilgi ve becerileri kazanma fırsatları sunmakta, aynı zamanda uluslararası iş birliği olanaklarını artırmaktadır (Beerkens et al., 2016; Diaz Ramirez, 2014).

Araştırmanın temel amacı, Erasmus+ KA122 SCH ve KA210 SCH başvuru formlarını hazırlama sürecinin öğretmenlerin pedagojik yetkinliklerine, iş birliği kapasitelerine ve uluslararası deneyimlerine etkisini anlamaktır. Bu bağlamda, proje yazma sürecinde öğretmenlerin karşılaştığı zaman yönetimi, kurumsal destek eksikliği ve yoğun müfredat gibi zorluklar da ele alınmıştır (Karakuş et al., 2017; Souto-Otero et al., 2013). Örneğin, öğretmenlerden biri, "*Proje yazarken diğer görevlerimi dengelemek zor oldu*" (T3) diyerek bu sürecin zorluklarına dikkat çekmiştir.

Bu süreçte, öğretmenlerin yalnızca mesleki bilgi ve becerilerini geliştirmekle kalmayıp, aynı zamanda dijital araçları kullanmayı öğrendikleri, yenilikçi öğretim tekniklerini benimsedikleri ve farklı kültürlerle etkileşim sayesinde sosyal becerilerini artırdıkları tespit edilmiştir. Örneğin, bir katılımcı, "*Dijital platformları nasıl etkili kullanacağımı öğrendim*" (T6) diyerek projelerin dijital okuryazarlık üzerindeki etkisini vurgulamıştır. Bu durum, Beerkens et al.'ın (2016) Erasmus+ projelerinin dijital becerilere katkıda bulunduğunu belirttiği bulgularla uyumludur. Ayrıca, öğretmenlerin farklı kültürleri anlamaya yönelik geliştirdikleri tutumlar, Karakuş et al.'ın (2017) Erasmus+ projelerinin sosyal öğrenme süreçlerini desteklediğini gösteren araştırmasıyla paralellik göstermektedir.

Araştırma, Erasmus+ projelerinin öğretmenlerin mesleki motivasyonlarını ve öz güvenlerini artırdığını da ortaya koymuştur. Katılımcılardan biri, "*Projeler beni motive etti ve özgüvenimi artırdı*" (T6) diyerek bu sürecin olumlu etkilerini dile getirmiştir. Roy et al. (2019), Erasmus+ projelerinin mesleki motivasyonu artırabileceğini öne sürmektedir. Bu bağlamda, bu çalışma, projelerin yalnızca sınıf içi uygulamalara değil, aynı zamanda öğretmenlerin profesyonel kimliklerine de katkıda bulunduğunu göstermektedir. Sonuç olarak, bu giriş bölümü, Erasmus+ projelerinin öğretmenlerin mesleki gelişimlerine nasıl katkı sağladığını, karşılaşılan engelleri ve bu süreçlerin sürdürülebilirliğine yönelik önerileri ele almak için bir temel oluşturmuştur. Bu bağlamda, çalışma, literatürdeki önceki araştırmalarla uyumlu olarak, uluslararası projelerin öğretmenlerin hem pedagojik hem de profesyonel becerilerine yönelik etkilerini derinlemesine incelemeyi hedeflemiştir.

Erasmus+ projeleri, öğretmenlerin uluslararası iş birliği becerilerini geliştirmelerine, pedagojik yöntemlerini yenilemelerine ve dijital araçları etkin bir şekilde kullanmalarına olanak tanımaktadır (Beerkens et al., 2016; Diaz Ramirez, 2014). Bu bölümde, özellikle İngilizce öğretmenlerinin mesleki gelişimine odaklanılmış ve mevcut araştırmaların bu alandaki bulguları tartışılmıştır. Erasmus+ projelerinin mesleki gelişime katkıları, literatürde yaygın olarak vurgulanmaktadır. Diaz Ramirez (2014), bu projelerin öğretmenlere yenilikçi öğretim tekniklerini öğrenme ve uygulama fırsatı sunduğunu belirtmiştir. Örneğin, projelere katılan öğretmenler, yaratıcı öğretim tekniklerini benimsemiş ve sınıf içi uygulamalarını daha etkili hale getirmiştir. Çalışmanın katılımcılarından biri, "*Proje yazma süreci sayesinde farklı eğitim yöntemlerini daha yaratıcı şekilde kullanmaya başladım*" (T12) diyerek bu tür katkılara dikkat çekmiştir.

Literatürde, dijital becerilerin geliştirilmesi Erasmus+ projelerinin bir diğer önemli katkısı olarak görülmektedir. Beerkens et al. (2016), Erasmus+ projelerinin dijital okuryazarlık becerilerini artırdığını ve öğretmenlerin dijital araçları derslerde etkin bir şekilde kullanmalarını sağladığını belirtmiştir. Katılımcılardan biri, "*Dijital araçlarla çalışmayı öğrendim ve ders materyallerimi daha ilgi çekici hale getirebildim*" (T3) diyerek bu bulguyu desteklemiştir. Bu sonuçlar, teknolojik yeterliliklerin öğretmenlerin mesleki uygulamalarını nasıl dönüştürdüğünü ortaya koymaktadır.

Kültürel farkındalık ve sosyal becerilerin artırılması, Erasmus+ projelerinin bir diğer kritik boyutudur. Karakuş et al. (2017), Erasmus+ projelerinin öğretmenlerin kültürel çeşitliliği anlamalarına ve bu çeşitliliği sınıf ortamında bir avantaj olarak kullanmalarına yardımcı

olduğunu belirtmiştir. Katılımcılardan biri, “*Farklı kültürleri anlamak öğretimimi zenginleştirdi*” (T5) diyerek bu görüşe katkıda bulunmuştur. Bu tür deneyimler, öğretmenlerin sosyal becerilerini geliştirirken, aynı zamanda öğrencilere daha kapsayıcı bir öğrenme ortamı sunmalarını sağlamaktadır. Ancak, literatürde Erasmus+ projelerine katılımın bazı zorlukları da ele alınmıştır. Souto-Otero et al. (2013), zaman yönetimi ve kurumsal destek eksikliğinin, öğretmenlerin projelere katılımını sınırlayan temel faktörler olduğunu belirtmiştir. Bu çalışmada da katılımcılardan biri, “*Proje yazarken diğer görevlerimi yönetmek zor oldu*” (T3) diyerek benzer bir problemden bahsetmiştir. Bu durum, proje katılımını artırmak için zaman yönetimi ve kurumsal destek mekanizmalarının güçlendirilmesi gerektiğini göstermektedir.

Sonuç olarak, literatür taraması, Erasmus+ projelerinin öğretmenlerin mesleki ve pedagojik gelişimlerine olan katkılarını geniş bir perspektiften ele almıştır. Mevcut çalışmaların bulguları, bu projelerin yenilikçi öğretim teknikleri, dijital okuryazarlık ve kültürel farkındalık gibi alanlarda öğretmenlere önemli katkılar sağladığını ortaya koymuştur. Bununla birlikte, zaman yönetimi ve destek eksikliği gibi sorunlar, bu projelerin daha etkili hale getirilmesi için ele alınması gereken alanlar olarak öne çıkmaktadır.

Bu çalışmada, Erasmus+ proje yazım süreçlerinin İngilizce öğretmenlerinin (ELT) mesleki gelişimlerine olan etkilerini anlamak için nitel araştırma yöntemi kullanılmıştır. Nitel araştırma yöntemi, öğretmenlerin deneyimlerini derinlemesine anlamak ve bu süreçlerin pedagojik ve profesyonel etkilerini detaylı bir şekilde analiz etmek için uygun bir çerçeve sunmuştur. Araştırmada, katılımcıların deneyimlerini ve algılarını detaylı bir şekilde incelemek amacıyla olgubilim (fenomenoloji) deseni tercih edilmiştir. Olgubilim, bireylerin belirli bir olgu hakkındaki deneyimlerini anlamaya yönelik bir yöntem olarak tanımlanır ve bu çalışmada, Erasmus+ proje yazım süreçleri bu olgu olarak ele alınmıştır. Bu yaklaşım, katılımcıların bu süreçler hakkında nasıl düşündüklerini, hissettiklerini ve bu süreçlerin mesleki gelişimlerine nasıl katkıda bulunduğunu derinlemesine inceleme imkânı sunmuştur. Çalışmanın katılımcıları, farklı okullarda görev yapan ve Erasmus+ proje yazım süreçlerine aktif olarak katılmış 17 İngilizce öğretmeninden oluşmaktadır. Katılımcılar, maksimum çeşitlilik örnekleme yöntemiyle seçilmiş olup, farklı mesleki tecrübeler, yaş grupları ve eğitim seviyeleri dikkate alınmıştır. Bu çeşitlilik, araştırmanın daha zengin ve kapsamlı veriler sunmasını sağlamıştır. Katılımcılardan biri, “*Bu süreçte kazandığım deneyimler meslek hayatımı olumlu etkiledi*” (T6) diyerek, çalışmanın temel odak noktasını özetlemiştir.

Araştırmada veri toplama aracı olarak yarı yapılandırılmış görüşme formu kullanılmıştır. Görüşme formu, Erasmus+ proje yazım süreçlerinin mesleki gelişime olan etkilerini anlamaya yönelik açık uçlu sorulardan oluşmaktadır. Görüşmeler çevrim içi ve yüz yüze yapılmış, her görüşme yaklaşık 15-20 dakika sürmüştür. Katılımcılarla yapılan görüşmeler, araştırmanın temel bulgularını oluşturmuş ve detaylı içerik analizi ile değerlendirilmiştir. Toplanan veriler, içerik analizi yöntemiyle incelenmiştir. İlk olarak, görüşmelerin transkriptleri hazırlanmış ve ardından kodlama sürecine geçilmiştir. Verilerden elde edilen temalar; mesleki gelişim, pedagojik beceriler, uluslararası iş birliği ve sürdürülebilirlik faktörleri olarak dört ana kategori altında toplanmıştır. Örneğin, dijital araçların kullanımının öğretmenlerin sınıf içi uygulamalarını nasıl etkilediğini anlamak için katılımcıların ifadeleri analiz edilmiştir (T3: “Dijital platformları daha etkin kullanmayı öğrendim”).

Araştırmanın geçerlik ve güvenilirliğini artırmak için çeşitli yöntemler kullanılmıştır. Verilerin doğruluğunu sağlamak amacıyla katılımcı geri dönüşü alınmış ve farklı araştırmacılar tarafından bağımsız kodlama yapılmıştır. Ayrıca, metodolojik çeşitlilik sağlamak için literatürdeki ilgili çalışmalarla karşılaştırma yapılmıştır. Örneğin, Beerkens et al. (2016) ve Karakuş et al. (2017) gibi çalışmaların bulgularıyla uyumlu sonuçlar elde edilmiştir. Araştırmada, etik kurallar dikkate alınmış ve katılımcılardan gönüllü olduklarını belirten onam formu alınmıştır. Katılımcıların kimlikleri gizli tutulmuş ve veriler yalnızca araştırma amacıyla kullanılmıştır.

Bulgular, araştırma sorularına uygun olarak dört ana tema altında toplanmıştır: Mesleki Gelişime Katkılar, Katılıma Engel Olan Faktörler, Sürekliliği Sağlayan Faktörler ve Pedagojik Becerilere Etkiler. Her bir tema altında öğretmenlerin deneyimlerinden elde edilen veriler detaylandırılmış ve literatürle karşılaştırılmıştır.

### **1. Mesleki Gelişime Katkılar**

Araştırmanın en önemli bulgularından biri, Erasmus+ proje yazım süreçlerinin ELT öğretmenlerinin mesleki bilgi ve becerilerini geliştirdiğini göstermesidir. Katılımcılar, bu süreçlerin yenilikçi öğretim yöntemleri öğrenmelerine ve uygulamalarına olanak tanıdığını ifade etmişlerdir. Örneğin, bir katılımcı, “*Proje süreci, ders anlatım yöntemlerimi kökten değiştirdi*” (T1) diyerek deneyimlerinin etkisini özetlemiştir.

Dijital Araçların Kullanımı: Öğretmenler, dijital araçları etkili bir şekilde kullanmayı öğrendiklerini belirtmişlerdir. T6: “*Dijital platformları daha iyi kullanmayı öğrendim, bu da sınıf içindeki materyalleri zenginleştirdi.*” Uluslararası İş Birliği ve Kültürel Farkındalık: Katılımcılar, farklı ülkelerden meslektaşlarıyla iş birliği yapmanın kültürel anlayışlarını artırdığını ve sosyal becerilerini geliştirdiğini vurgulamışlardır. Bu bulgu, Karakuş et al. (2017) ve Beerkens et al. (2016) gibi çalışmalarla uyumludur. Motivasyon ve Öz Güven Artışı: T6: “*Proje yazma süreci beni motive etti ve kendime olan güvenimi artırdı*” ifadesi, Erasmus+ projelerinin mesleki motivasyonu güçlendirdiğini göstermektedir.

## 2. Katılıma Engel Olan Faktörler

Araştırmada, öğretmenlerin Erasmus+ proje yazım süreçlerine katılımını zorlaştıran faktörler de tespit edilmiştir. Bu bulgular, öğretmenlerin projelerden en üst düzeyde faydalanmasını engelleyen zorlukları ortaya koymaktadır.

Zaman Eksikliği ve İş Yükü: Katılımcılar, yoğun müfredat programları nedeniyle projelere yeterince zaman ayıramadıklarını belirtmişlerdir. T3: “*Diğer görevlerimle projeyi dengelemek zor oldu.*” Yetersiz Kurumsal Destek: Okul yönetimlerinin desteğinin yetersiz olması, öğretmenlerin motivasyonunu düşürmektedir. T12: “*Okul yönetiminin daha fazla destek sağlaması gerekirdi.*” Proje Yazım Bilgi Eksikliği: Katılımcılar, proje yazımı konusunda yeterli bilgi ve deneyime sahip olmadıklarını ifade etmişlerdir. T13: “*Proje yazımı konusunda deneyimim olmadığı için çekiniyorum.*”

## 3. Sürekliliği Sağlayan Faktörler

Erasmus+ proje yazım süreçlerinin uzun vadeli etkilerinin sürdürülebilirliği için çeşitli faktörler belirlenmiştir:

Düzenli Eğitim Programları: Katılımcılar, düzenli proje yazım eğitimlerinin önemini vurgulamıştır. T15: “*Düzenli eğitimler projelere daha iyi hazırlanmamı sağladı.*” Müfredat Esnekliği: Katılımcılar, yoğun müfredatın projelere zaman ayırmayı zorlaştırdığını, ancak müfredatın esnek hale getirilmesinin bu sorunu çözebileceğini ifade etmişlerdir. Uluslararası İş Birliği: T17: “*Farklı ülkelerle iş birliği, projelerin devamlılığı için büyük katkı sağladı.*” diyerek uluslararası ortaklıkların önemine dikkat çekmiştir.

#### 4. Pedagojik Becerilere Etkiler

Erasmus+ proje yazım süreçlerinin öğretmenlerin pedagojik becerilerine yaptığı etkiler, araştırmanın en dikkat çekici bulgularından biridir:

Yaratıcı Öğretim Teknikleri: T6: “*Proje yazım sürecinde öğrendiğim yöntemleri sınıf içinde uygulamaya başladım.*” Öz Değerlendirme Becerileri: T5: “*Proje yazımı, eksik yönlerimi fark etmemi sağladı.*” Dijital Beceriler: Katılımcılar, dijital araçların kullanımıyla ilgili bilgi ve becerilerinin arttığını belirtmişlerdir. T13: “*Sınıfta daha ilgi çekici materyaller sunabiliyorum.*”

Araştırma, Erasmus+ proje yazım süreçlerinin İngilizce öğretmenlerinin mesleki gelişimine olan katkılarını ve bu süreçte karşılaşılan zorlukları incelemiştir. Bulgular hem mesleki bilgi hem de pedagojik beceriler açısından önemli sonuçlar ortaya koymuştur. Bu tartışmada dört temel tema ele alınmıştır:

Araştırma, Erasmus+ projelerinin öğretmenlerin yenilikçi öğretim yöntemleri öğrenmesine olanak sağladığını göstermiştir. Özellikle dijital araçların etkili kullanımı ve yaratıcı öğretim teknikleri kazandırması, önceki çalışmalarla (Diaz Ramirez, 2014; Beerkens et al., 2016) uyum göstermektedir. Katılımcılar, bu süreçlerin yalnızca bilgi ve becerilerini değil, aynı zamanda öz güvenlerini artırdığını belirtmişlerdir (T6). Öğretmenlerin zaman eksikliği, kurumsal destek yetersizliği ve bilgi eksikliği gibi nedenlerle projelere katılımının zorlaştığı görülmüştür. Bu bulgu, Karakuş et al. (2017) ve Roy et al. (2019) gibi çalışmalarda ortaya konulan sonuçlarla örtüşmektedir. Araştırma, düzenli eğitim programlarının ve müfredat esnekliğinin proje yazım süreçlerinin sürdürülebilirliğini artırdığını göstermiştir. Ayrıca, uluslararası iş birliği ve yönetim desteği gibi unsurların kritik öneme sahip olduğu vurgulanmıştır (Souto-Otero et al., 2013). Öğretmenler, Erasmus+ projeleri sayesinde kendilerini dijital araçlar kullanımı, öz değerlendirme ve yaratıcı öğretim teknikleri gibi alanlarda geliştirmiştir. Bu durum, literatürdeki diğer bulgularla (Karakuş et al., 2017; Diaz Ramirez, 2014) uyumludur.

Araştırma sonuçları, Erasmus+ proje yazım süreçlerinin İngilizce öğretmenlerinin mesleki gelişimine önemli katkılar sunduğunu göstermiştir. Katılımcılar, bu süreçlerin mesleki bilgi, dijital beceriler, kültürel farkındalık ve yaratıcı öğretim yöntemleri kazanmalarına yardımcı olduğunu ifade etmişlerdir. Ancak zaman eksikliği, kurumsal destek yetersizliği ve bilgi eksikliği gibi zorlukların öğretmenlerin projelere katılımını sınırladığı bulunmuştur. Bu durum, projelerin etkisini artırmak için bazı düzenlemelerin yapılması gerektiğini ortaya

koymaktadır. Sonuç olarak, Erasmus+ proje yazım süreçlerinin öğretmenlerin pedagojik ve mesleki becerilerini geliştiren etkili bir araç olduğu görülmüştür. Ancak bu süreçlerin daha verimli hale gelmesi için sürdürülebilirlik faktörlerine önem verilmesi gerekmektedir.

Bu araştırma, Erasmus+ proje yazım süreçlerinin öğretmenlerin mesleki gelişimine katkılarını anlamak için önemli veriler sağlamıştır. Gelecekte yapılacak çalışmalar için aşağıdaki öneriler sunulmaktadır:

**Daha Geniş Katılımcı Gruplarıyla Çalışma:** Farklı bölgelerden ve kültürel bağlamlardan ELT öğretmenlerinin katılımıyla daha geniş örneklemeler incelenmelidir.

**Nitel ve Nicel Yöntemlerin Birlikte Kullanımı:** Karma yöntem araştırmaları ile daha kapsamlı sonuçlar elde edilebilir.

**Uzun Vadeli Etkiler:** Erasmus+ proje yazım süreçlerinin öğretmenlerin kariyer gelişimi ve öğrenciler üzerindeki etkileri uzun vadeli olarak incelenmelidir.

**Öğrenci Perspektifleri:** Projelerin öğretmenler üzerindeki etkilerinin yanı sıra öğrenciler üzerindeki etkileri de değerlendirilmelidir.

**Kurumsal Desteğin Artırılması:** Okul yönetimlerinin öğretmenlere daha fazla destek sağlaması için stratejiler geliştirilmelidir.

Bu öneriler, Erasmus+ projelerinin etkisini artırmak ve bu süreçlerin daha verimli bir şekilde uygulanmasını sağlamak için rehberlik edebilir. Bu bulgular, eğitim politikalarının geliştirilmesine ve öğretmenlerin mesleki gelişiminin desteklenmesine önemli katkılar sunmaktadır.

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## APPENDICES

### APPENDIX A: SURVEY QUESTIONS FOR TEACHERS

#### Section 1: TEACHER BACKGROUND AND SCHOOL

##### A. Demographics

Age:

Gender:

Years of teaching experience

Highest educational attainment level

- Bachelor's degree (name of the program, graduation year)
- Master's degree (name of the program, graduation year)
- Postgraduate degree (name of the program, graduation year)

School: Private or public

Level: Primary or secondary

##### B. Teaching background

Years of teaching in your school

Grades that you have been teaching

##### C. School environment

1. Please provide brief information about your school (number of students, teachers, profiles, socio economic background etc.) Why did you decide to teach in your current school? What motivated your decision?

2. Does your school actively encourage teachers for professional development of themselves? If yes, please provide more information on what ways they do so.

3. How would you describe the level of collaboration among teachers at your school? Do they often work together and share ideas and resources for professional development?

4. What opportunities or resources does your school provide for you to prepare an international project and involve yourself in the writing process of it?

5. What do you think of the role of school managers' attitude and the school characteristics to work on international project work and involve in the writing process?

6. What should be the features of a school to effectively support foreign language teachers in preparing an international project and involving them in the writing process?

## Section 2: PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND PROJECT EXPERIENCE

### A. Professional development

1. Please define your teaching philosophy

2. To what extent you are able to realize your teaching philosophy as a professional in your teaching context?

3. How do you try to solve your problems related to your profession?

4. What are the aims of professional development for you?

5. What kind of professional development methods or tools are you aware of?

6. Which professional development methods and activities have you used so far?

7. Can you list professional development activities respectively from the most effective to the least?

8. What are your opinions related to these professional development activities?

9. Have you actively participated in any professional development activities or programs related to international project work?

10. How have these professional development activities contributed to you, especially in the context of international project work and the writing process?

11. Are there any specific professional development opportunities you believe would enhance your ability to incorporate international project work and the writing process into your teaching practices?

B. Project work and familiarity with the writing process

1. Can you define your experience with international project work and the writing process?

2. Have you been involved in any international project work as a foreign language teacher? If yes, please share your experiences and the impact of them on your professional development at school?

3. What types of international projects have you participated in so far? (e.g. KA1 projects, KA2 projects)

4. How does project work contribute to your professional development as a foreign language teacher?

5. How would you describe your familiarity with the writing process of an international project?

6. To what extent do you integrate project results or ideas you had in the writing process into your regular teaching?

7. In what ways do you think the writing process can be a valuable tool for professional development for English language teachers?

8. Can you share any challenges you've encountered in applying the writing process in your teaching, and how you have overcome them?

### Section 3: EXPLORING EFL TEACHERS' INSIGHTS AND EXPERIENCES: PROJECT WORK AND WRITING AS PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT TOOL

A. Exploring opinions

1. What is your overall opinion about the use of project work and the writing process as a professional development tool?

2. What are the benefits of using project work as a professional development tool?
3. How do you perceive the benefits of writing an international project for professional development?
4. Are there any specific challenges or drawbacks you face in project work and the writing process of it?

B. Investigating experiences

1. Have you personally participated in any professional development activities on how to prepare international project work? If so, please provide information about your experiences in detail

2. What was the nature of the projects or writing activities you were involved in?
3. Please share any significant achievements, insights, attitudes, and behaviors you gained through these experiences.
4. How do you perceive the sustainability of project work and the writing process in your specific educational context as a means of professional development?

Section 4: EXPERIENCE ON INTERNATIONAL PROJECT

1. For experienced teachers who have participated in an Erasmus+ project activity

A. General experience:

1. In which fields (KA1 and/or KA2) have you had experience in international project work?
2. How many Erasmus+ projects have you been involved in? List the projects you are involved in.
3. Please describe the main goals and activities of the projects you had.
4. What motivates you to get involved in an Erasmus+ project?
5. What kind of skills, abilities and experiences did you have in international project work?

6. How do these skills, abilities and experiences contribute to your professional development as a foreign language teacher?

7. Can you evaluate the effectiveness of project work and the writing process as one of the professional development tools?

B. Sustainability and future involvement

1. What is your opinion about the sustainability of the outcomes achieved through Erasmus+ projects?

2. In what ways did Erasmus+ projects contribute to your professional development?

3. Do you plan to participate in future Erasmus+ projects, and if so, what areas or topics are you interested in more?

4. How would you encourage other teachers to engage in any Erasmus+ project activity for their professional development?

5. Please make suggestions about how teachers can be involved in international project work and the writing process of it.

2. For Inexperienced teachers who has not participated in an Erasmus+ project activity

A. Understanding Erasmus+

1. Are you familiar with the Erasmus+ programs within the fields of KA1 and/or KA2?

2. Have you ever decided to participate in an Erasmus+ project, and if not, what has prevented you from doing so?

B. Motivation and hesitations

1. If you haven't yet participated in an Erasmus+ project, what would motivate you to join in the future?

2. What concerns or hesitations do you have when you have an international project work?

C. Professional development and impact

1. What can be the benefits of Erasmus+ projects for your professional development?

2. Can you list specific areas you would like to focus on via involving in an international project work?

D. Future aspirations

1. What kind of support do you expect to encourage you to participate in an Erasmus+ project?

2. How can Erasmus+ projects be made more appealing to educators who haven't yet experienced them?

3. What should be the role of teachers and school managers in participating in international project work and the writing process?

APPENDIX B: SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEW QUESTIONS WITH TEACHERS

General Questions

1. Please introduce yourself briefly, including your background in foreign language teaching.

2. What is your teaching experience as a foreign language teacher?

3. How can you describe yourself as a foreign language teacher?

TEACHERS WHO HAVE AN INTERNATIONAL PROJECT WORK AND THE WRITING PROCESS

1. Are you more familiar with the writing process in international project work?

2. What motivates you to carry out international project work and engage in the writing process as part of your professional development as a foreign language teacher?
3. What discourages you from carrying out international project work and engaging in the writing process as part of your professional development as a foreign language teacher?
4. Do you believe international project work and engaging in the writing process should be a part of your professional development activities?
5. Do you have the necessary knowledge, skills, and experience in preparing an international project work and the writing process?
6. How do you perceive the impact of international project work and the writing process on your professional development and the quality of teaching methods?
7. Do you want to carry out an international project as part of your professional development activities?
8. Can you describe your experience with international project work and writing process?
9. What specific topics or areas would you like to see addressed in the international project work to contribute to your professional development?
10. What resources or support would you consider essential to improve your familiarity and expertise with the writing process and international projects?
11. Please share your ideas on how projects work, and the writing process be enhanced as part of your professional development activities.
12. In your opinion, what were the main challenges or difficulties you encountered associated with running a project?

#### ATTITUDES TOWARDS PROJECT WORK AND WRITING PROCESS

1. How do you generally feel about integrating the results of project work into your teaching process?
2. What are your thoughts on the writing process in international project work?

3. How do you see project work and the writing process as an effective tool for professional development of foreign language teachers?

#### DIFFICULTIES AND CHALLENGES

1. What difficulties or challenges did you face when having experience in international project work and the writing process?

2. How did these difficulties or challenges affect your enthusiasm for international project work and the writing process?

3. Considering difficulties or challenges you faced, what were the important factors to have in mind while you worked on an international project and the writing process?

#### MOTIVATION FOR RUNNING PROJECTS

1. What motivated you to engage in international project work and the writing process?

2. Please share any personal or professional incentives that drive you to work on an international project and involve yourself in the writing process?

3. How did the project work contribute to your professional development as a foreign language teacher?

#### MUSTS AND YOUR IDEAS FOR PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

1. What kind of support or resources do you believe are necessary to improve project work and writing skills?

2. Are there any specific training or workshop you would like to see offered for your professional development in a foreign language via doing international project work and the writing process in the future?

3. What should be the key focus areas for improving your project writing skills and abilities?

4. How should an international project work and writing experience be an integral part of professional development tools for foreign language teachers?

5. Please provide additional information on the professional development of a foreign language teacher using international project work and the writing process.

6. Please list your suggestions to contribute to the professional development of a foreign language teacher by having experience in international project work and the writing process.

