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Volunteering Participation in a Professional Development Initiative on Teachers' Self-efficacy and Their Perceived Proficiency

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Abstract

This article reports an experimental study on the effect of volunteering on the effectiveness of a professional development initiative involving 90 English teachers. Two training groups were studied at the start of their training and three months later. The only difference between these two groups was in the kind of their participation: volunteers vs. non-volunteers. A control group of English teachers received no training and was studied in the same way. The evidence is reported on the changes in teachers' self-reported self-efficacy and their perceived English proficiency based on two measures including teachers' self-reported proficiency (Chacon, 2005) and Ohio State Teacher Efficacy Scale (Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2001). Evidence indicates a range of positive changes in training teachers from the volunteer training group, and contrasting lack of change, or negative changes, in the participants in both the non-volunteer training group and the untrained group.

Keywords: Perceived proficiency, Professional development, Self-efficacy, Teacher training, Volunteering.

I | INTRODUCTION

Professional development is an "intentional, ongoing and systematic" (Guskey, 2000, p. 16) process and is considered crucial for teachers' improvement in their knowledge and instructional skills (Lee, 2013; Walker, 2010). There is no consensus on the definition of professional developement (Lee, 2013); however, Morgan (2007) defines professional development as the opportunities provided for professionals to improve their skills and knowledge. A tremendous amount of research has probed how a professional development course canchange teachers' performance (e.g., Aminudin, 2012; Desimone, 2011; Hauck, 2012; Karimi & Hosseini Zade, 2019; Laughridge, 2011; Sixel, 2013). Scholars have also investigated different features of an effective professional development course (e.g., Clarke & Hollingsworth, 2002; Darling-Hammond & Richardson, 2009; Desimone, 2009; Guskey, 2002; Hanushek, 1971; Treheam, 2010).

Among the different characteristics proposed for an effective professional development course, four core features are considered related to the enhancement of teachers' knowledge and skills, including

focus on teachers' content knowledge, their opportunities for active learning, coherence with other activities, the activity duration, and collective participation of teachers (Desimone, 2009; Garet et al., 2001). Although some professional development initiatives have the core features required for their effectiveness, they do not lead to the intended results. Guskey (2002) states that there are two crucial factors underlying the success of every professional development initiative. These two factors, which should be considered in designing professional development courses, are both "what motivates teachers to engage in professional development programs" and "the process of teacher change" (Guskey, 2002, p. 382). The factors did not get due attention in the prior research on professional development.

Reviews of research on professional development have also concluded that there is little evidence for the association of active teacher change and professional development courses (Laughridge, 2011) as well as less evidence, if any, for the likely impact of teachers' voluntary participation in teacher change (Desimone, 2009; Wayne et al., 2008). To address the above gap in the related literature and to support teacher education programs, the current study investigates the effect of a professional development initiative on volunteer and non-volunteer teachers' self-efficacy beliefs and their perceived proficiency, and it includes a control group to measure the effect of voluntary participation on changes in teacher beliefs.

As a component of teacher beliefs, teacher self-efficacy is defined as teachers' "judgments of how well one [a teacher] can execute courses of action required to deal with prospective situations." (Bandura, 1982, p. 122). It also influences teachers' motivation (Bolduc, 2000; Wentzel & Wigfield, 2009) and consequently their behavior in the class (Guskey, 1986). Bandura (1977) proposes four major sources for individuals' efficacy beliefs, specifically performance accomplishments, vicarious experience, verbal persuasion, and physiological states. Mastery experience is proposed to have the utmost influence on teachers' self-efficacy (Tschannen-Moran et al., 2007; Zimmerman et al., 2017). Since professional development improves teachers' knowledge and skills (Lee, 2013), professionals in the field take participation in professional development initiatives as a source of teachers' self-efficacy (e.g., Karimi, 2011; Ross & Bruce, 2007; Rutherford et al., 2017; Tschannen-Moran et al., 2007; Tschannen-Moran & McMaster, 2009). However, a meticulous review of prior research reveals some conflicting results (e.g., Karimi, 2011; Zimmerman et al., 2017). To shed light on the issue, the present study focuses on the likely impact of participating in a professional development initiative on teachers' self-efficacy and volunteering as a contributing factor. Prior research also suggests that perceived proficiency correlates to self-efficacy significantly (e.g., Chacon, 2005). So, the current study also concerns the potential effect of a professional development course on teachers' perceived English proficiency and, to support the findings of previous studies, the relationship between the two factors is probed.

II. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

1. Professional Development and Teachers' Self-Efficacy

Research on teacher self-efficacy abounds in the realm of teacher education to the extent that it is considered to be "on the verge of maturity" (Tschannen-Moran et al., 1998, p. 202). However, recent studies suggest the need for investigating the effect of intervention on enhancing teachers' self-efficacy (Karimi, 2011; Zimmerman et al., 2017). Probing the effect of different factors on professional development initiatives is another ignored area of research in the literature (Hauck, 2012; Ingvarson et al., 2005). There has been, however, a little research exploring the topic.

The first related study to mention is by Rutherford et al. (2017) who explored the relationship between teacher value for Spatial-Temporal Mathematics (ST Math) professional development and teacher self-efficacy for implementing ST Math. They examined 431 teachers all of whom were asked to complete a four-hour ST Math teacher professional development course. The teacher participants were provided

with a 45-item questionnaire to measure their self-efficacy for teaching with ST Math and their perceptions of its usefulness before and after the course. The results showed a positive relationship between teacher self-efficacy and their value for the professional development.

In their article aiming to review the studies on teacher professional development, Seneviratne et al. (2019) discussed whether prior research indicated that professional development programs impact teachers' self-efficacy beliefs. They included 46 articles which were cited in two databases, namely ERIC and PsycINFO, and published after 2004. The results of their review indicated that high-quality professional development programs have the potential to influence teachers' self-efficacy beliefs.

Another study is conducted by Ravandpour (2019) who investigated the relationship between Ininan English teachers' continuing professional development and their self-efficacy. To fulfill the aim of the study, 247 EFL teachers were selected through convenience sampling. Two questionnaires, including continuing professional developemt questionnaire (Tabatabaee Yazdi et al., 2017) and self-efficacy scale (Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2001) were applied to collect the data. Pearson's correlation coefficients and structural equation modelling were also used to analyze the data. The results indicated that continuing professional development significantly predicts teachers' self-efficacy.

Zimmerman et al. (2017) investigated the effect of professional development on teachers' self-efficacy for implementing reform-based teaching practices. They carried out their study with 58 female teachers who were selected from 12 different schools in Qatar and assigned to control and treatment groups for the experiment. The teachers in the treatment group took part in a professional development program designed to provide first-hand experiences with reform-based pedagogical approaches. Teacher efficacy was measured before and after the intervention using *Teacher Efficacy Scale* (TSE) designed by Gibbson and Dembo (1984). The results showed a statistically non-significant rise in the teacher efficacy level due to participating in the professional development program.

Karimi (2011) also probed the effect of a professional development initiative on teacher self-efficacy level. The data were gathered from a sample of 60 volunteer teachers who were divided into treatment and control groups. The teacher participants in the treatment group attended three 16-session professional development courses which provided professional development opportunities using five professional development models, namely In-service Training, Fellow Observation/Assessment, Development/Improvement Process, Mentoring, and Study Groups. Teachers' sense of self-efficacy was measured before and after the treatment using the *Teacher Sense of Efficacy Scale* designed by Tschannen-Moran and Hoy (2001). The distinguishing feature of this study was its delayed post-test to investigate whether the results last. The results indicated a significant impact of professional development initiative on teacher efficacy beliefs which remained profound even after a lapse of time.

2. Professional Development and Teachers' Perceived Proficiency

Language proficiency is considered so crucial in foreign language teaching (Chacon, 2005) that professionals in the field refer to it as the most important qualification of successful language teachers (e.g., Banno, 2003; Butler, 2004). Since language improvement is a major teachers' need (Berry, 1990), it is among the main concerns of English teachers (Cullen, 1994). Berry (1990) suggests five components of a training program, including skill, methodology, theory, subject matter, and language improvement. Furthermore, he posits that language improvement boosts teacher confidence, eases the application of target language in the class, and also expands the choice of methodology (Berry, 1990). Surprisingly, however, despite the fact that language improvement should be the central element in teacher professional development programs (Cullen, 1994), a review of the literature indicates that it has received little attention (Berry, 1990; Chacon, 2005; Cullen, 1994).

For example, Pearson et al. (2006) examined various issues related to the development of teachers' advanced language proficiency. They refer to the current curricula and the available institutional resources.

In a study about teachers' language proficiency, Fraga-Canadas (2010) investigated 106 Spanish teachers, including native and non-native speakers. He aimed to probe how teachers practice the language inside and outside the school. The results suggested that the most common target language activity in which teachers engage outside the school setting is listening to music. Regarding in-school setting activities, teachers speak the target language in the class in accordance with their teaching level. However, most of the teachers do not use the target language while speaking with their colleagues. The findings also reveal that, although nearly half of the teachers thought that their language proficiency had not improved, the majority of them had not participated in any professional development in the previous three years.

III. RESEARCH QUESTIONS

In summary, prior research into professional development is limited mainly to volunteer teacher participants who are definitely more highly motivated (Berry, 1990; Desimone, 2009). The review of the literature also depicts contradictory results on the impact of training on teachers' self-efficacy. Additionally, as stated earlier, research into teachers' language proficiency is lacking. To partially bridge this gap, the current study aims to explore the likely different impacts of teachers' voluntary and non-voluntary participation in a professional development initiative on their self-efficacy and perceived English proficiency. Particularly, the study is designed to provide answers to the following research questions:

1. Does voluntary participation in professional development initiatives increase teachers' general self-efficacy?
2. Does voluntary participation in professional development initiatives increase teachers' perceived English proficiency?
3. Are teachers' self-efficacy and perceived English proficiency significantly related?

IV. METHODOLOGY

1. Participants

The participants of the study consisted of 90 (three groups of 30) EFL teachers in six different language schools. The participating teachers were from 25 to 47 years of age, and they included both male and female English teachers. There were three groups of teachers in the current study, two treatment groups and a control group. The treatment groups received two similar professional development initiatives, both of which focused on developing teachers' listening skill. The teacher participants in the first treatment group accepted to participate in the professional development initiative, while the participants of the second treatment group had to attend the professional development initiative. So, the only difference between the two courses was in the kind of teachers' participation: the first treatment group included volunteers, but the teacher participants of the second treatment group were non-volunteers.

2. Instruments

2.1. Ohio State Teacher Efficacy Scale (OSTES)

Teachers' self efficacy was estimated using *Ohio State Teacher Efficacy Scale* (Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2001, p. 800). The questionnaire consists of 24 items in Likert type, ranging from "Nothing" (1) to "A Great Deal" (9) (See Appendix 1). This standard instrument was employed to measure teachers' efficacy level because it has had high reliability in its previous administrations. Previous research also suggests

the concurrent validity of the OSTES scale with the Rand Items and Gibson & Dembo (1984) scales (Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2001). In previous research, the reliability of the scale ranged from .92 to .95 (Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2001).

2.2. Teachers' Self-Reported Proficiency Scale

This tool (Chacon, 2005, p. 263) was used to measure teachers' perceived proficiency of English. The scale comprised 16 items which were assessed along a 6-point continuum with anchors at "Strongly Agree" (6), "Agree" (5), Partly Agree" (4), "Slightly Disagree" (3), "Disagree" (2), and "strongly disagree" (1) (See Appendix 2). Therefore, the score ranges from 16 to 96. The Cronbach alpha reliability was found to be .87 in the present study.

3. Procedure

As mentioned earlier in section 1 (Participants), three groups, consisting of English teachers, participated in the current study, two treatments and one control group. The teachers in the first treatment group were a convenience sample of 30 teachers who were required to attend a mandatory professional development course, participation in which was among the requirements of the language school where they were working. The professional development course was designed to improve teachers' skills, specifically language skill. A set of 30 English teachers selected through convenience sampling was assigned to the second treatment group. The teacher participants in the second treatment group received the same training as the first treatment group did. Thus, the two courses resembled in factors such as subject, materials, and continuity. The only difference between the two professional development initiatives was in the kind of teachers' participation: the teachers in the first treatment had to participate in the professional development initiative, while those in the second treatment included volunteers. Another cohort of 30 teachers was selected through convenience sampling as the control group.

The three groups were then pretested on self-efficacy and perceived English proficiency. After the existence of no significant difference was ensured among the three groups (See Tables 2 and 3), the participants in the two treatment groups attended their specific three-month professional development initiatives, but the teacher participants in the control group received no training. The questionnaires were administered to the participating teachers in all the three groups once more at the end of the professional development initiatives. The current study reports the administration of two questionnaires: *Ohio State Teacher Efficacy Scale* (Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2001) and *Teachers' self-reported proficiency* (Chacon, 2005). The gathered data were then analyzed with the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS version 24).

V. RESULTS

As mentioned earlier, the present study aimed to probe the effect of voluntary participation in professional development initiatives on teachers' sense of self-efficacy and their perceptions of their English proficiency. Three groups of teachers participated in the current study with the descriptive statistics as reported in Table 1.

Table 1. The Descriptive data for the three groups.

Groups	N	Age range	Number of males	Number of females
Treatment group 1	30	25-44	5	25
Treatment group 2	30	27-47	5	25
Control group	30	25-45	5	25

The first research question concerned the comparison of the effects of voluntary participation in professional development initiatives on teachers' sense of efficacy. Prior to the experiment, the three groups of teacher participants were examined on self-efficacy through the survey instrument "Ohio State Teacher Efficacy Scale" (Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2001). The one-way analysis of variance (Table 2) showed no significant difference among the three groups, which let the researcher commence the experiment.

Table 2. Teachers' self-efficacy pre-test results.

Group		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Teachers' self-efficacy on pretest	Between groups	125.000	2	62.500	.086	.917
	Within groups	62875.400	87	722.706		
	Total	63000.400	89			

As mentioned earlier, the treatment groups both received similar but separate professional development initiatives. What differed between the two professional development initiatives was the participating teachers' motives; those in treatment 1 included volunteers, while attending the other professional development initiative was mandatory for those in treatment 2. The three groups of teachers were then post-tested on self-efficacy, the results of which are shown in Table 3.

Table 3. Teacher efficacy post-test results.

		Sum of squares	df	Mean square	F	Sig.
Post-test. self-efficacy	Between groups	75728.089	2	37864.044	50.770	.000
	Within groups	64883.867	87	745.792		
	Total	140611.956	89			

As the results of the one-way analysis of variance presented in Table 3, a significant difference, $F_{(2, 87)}=$ 50.770, p= .000, was observed among the groups after the experiment was run. Since there was a significant difference among the three groups, a post hoc test was also conducted to check which groups differed significantly from each other. The results are shown in Tables 4-5.

Table 4. Post hoc multiple comparison (Scheffe).

(I) group	(J) group	Mean difference (I-J)	Sig.
control	treatment 1(volunteers)	-67.93333*	.000
	treatment 2 (non-volunteers)	-15.93333	.084
treatment 1 (volunteers)	control	67.93333*	.000
	treatment 2 (non-volunteers)	52.00000*	.000
treatment 2 (non-volunteers)	control	15.93333	.084
	treatment 1(volunteers)	-52.00000*	.000

Table 5. Homogeneous subset analysis.

		Subset for alpha = 0.05	
group	N	1	2
control	30	165.0667	
treatment 2 (non-volunteers)	30	181.0000	
treatment 1(volunteers)	30		233.0000
Sig.		.084	1.000

As indicated in Tables 4 and 5, the post hoc test and the homogeneous subset analysis showed a significant difference in teachers' self-efficacy between the control and treatment 1 groups. The teachers participating in treatment 1 (volunteer participants in professional development initiative) also differed significantly from the teachers in treatment 2 (non-volunteers) in their self-efficacy. However, no significant difference in teachers' self-efficacy was found between the control group and the second treatment group.

Additionally, the study aimed to probe the differences among the study groups in their perceived English proficiency. To this end, the teacher participants in the three groups were both pre-tested on their level of perceived English proficiency and post-tested on their perceived English proficiency after the two professional development initiatives. As the first step in analyzing the data, one-way analysis of variance was conducted; the results are indicated in Table 6.

Table 6. Teachers' perceived proficiency pre-test results.

		Sum of squares	df	Mean square	F	Sig. (2-tailed)
Pre-test perceived proficiency	Between groups	50.689	2	25.344	.149	.862
	Within groups	14843.633	87	170.616		
	Total	14894.322	89			

As revealed in Table 6, there was no significant difference among the three groups in their perceived English proficiency before the treatment. So, the second step in analyzing the data involved running a one-way analysis of variance to investigate if there was any significant difference in teachers' perceived English proficiency across the three study groups. The results are presented in Tables 7-8.

Table 7. Teachers' perceived proficiency post-test results.

		Sum of squares	df	Mean square	F	Sig.
Post-test proficiency	Between groups	1157.600	2	578.800	3.009	.05
	Within groups	16734.800	87	192.354		
	Total	17892.400	89			

Table 8. Post hoc multiple comparison (Scheffe).

(I) group	(J) group	Mean difference (I-J)	Sig.
control	treatment 1(volunteers)	-7.40000	.124
	treatment 2 (non-volunteers)	.40000	.994
treatment 1 (volunteers)	control	7.40000	.124
	treatment 2 (non-volunteers)	7.80000	.099
treatment 2 (non-volunteers)	control	-.40000	.994
	treatment 1(volunteers)	-7.80000	.099

Table 9. Paired samples T-test result for control group scores in pre-test and post-test.

Teachers' perceived proficiency	T value	Mean	SD	Eta squared	Sig.
Pretest-post-test	-.520	-1.60000	16.85353	.009	.607

Table 10. Paired samples T-test result for volunteers' scores in pre-test and post-test.

Teachers' perceived proficiency	T value	Mean	SD	Eta squared	Sig (2-tailed)
Pretest-post-test	-3.255	-9.80000	16.49117	.267	.003

Table 11. Paired samples T-test results for non-volunteers' scores in pre-test and post-test.

Teachers' perceived proficiency	T value	Mean	SD	Eta squared	Sig (2-tailed)
Pretest-post-test	-.868	-3.03333	19.15181	.025	.393

Table 12. Descriptive statistics of perceived proficiency scores in pre-test and post-test.

		Mean	N	Std. error mean
Control group	**Pre-test**	64.5333	30	2.36824
	Post-test	66.1333	30	2.38950
Treatment 1(volunteers)	**Pre-test**	63.7333	30	2.62522
	Post-test	73.5333	30	2.93952
Treatment 2 (non-volunteers)	**Pre-test**	62.7000	30	2.13571
	Post-test	65.7333	30	2.21018

As revealed in Tables 7 and 8, there was a significant difference, $F_{(2, 87)} = 3.009$, $p = .05$, in teachers' perceived English proficiency across the groups. A Sheffe Post hoc test was also run to compare the pattern of differences among the three groups. A glance at the mean differences reported in Table 8 indicates that there was no statistically significant difference among the groups' mean values. However, since the existence of a significant difference or lack of that among the three groups in terms of perceived proficiency could not be verified through the one-way analysis of variance and Scheffe post hoc test, a series of paired samples t-tests were conducted to further check if the scores of the teacher participants in each group before and after participating in professional development initiatives differed significantly. The results are reported in Tables 9-11.

Based on Tables 9, 10, and 11, there was no significant difference, $t_{(29)} = -.520$, $p > .05$ (two-tailed), between the control group pre-test and post-test in the teacher participants' scores on perceived English proficiency. No statistically significant difference, $t_{(29)} = -.868$, $p > .05$ (two-tailed), was also observed between the pre-test and post-test in non-volunteers' perceived English proficiency scores. There was, however, a statistically significant difference among the scores of the teachers who had voluntarily taken part in the professional development initiative from pre-test ($M = 63.73$, $SD = 14.37$) to post-test ($M = 73.53$, $SD = 16.10$), $t_{(29)} = .003$, $p < .05$. A glance at the mean scores reported in Table 12 indicates that the teachers' perceived English proficiency scores increased over time.

The study also intended to probe whether teachers' efficacy and their perceptions of their English proficiency were significantly correlated. So, a Pearson product-moment correlation was run. Preliminary analyses were done to ensure no violation of normality, linearity, and homoscedasticity. The results are shown in Table 13.

Table 13. Pearson product-moment correlation between measures of teachers' self-efficacy and their perceived English proficiency.

group			Perceived proficiency	Self-efficacy
control	**Perceived proficiency**	**Pearson correlation**	1	.238
		Sig. (2-tailed)		.204
		N	30	30
	Self-efficacy	**Pearson correlation**	.238	1
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.204	
		N	30	30
treatment 1 (volunteers)	**Perceived proficiency**	**Pearson correlation**	1	.397*
		Sig. (2-tailed)		.030
		N	30	30
	Self-efficacy	**Pearson correlation**	.397*	1
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.030	
		N	30	30
treatment 2 (nonvolunteers)	**Perceived proficiency**	**Pearson correlation**	1	.341
		Sig. (2-tailed)		.065
		N	30	30
	self-efficacy	**Pearson correlation**	.341	1
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.065	
		N	30	30
*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).				

According to Table 13, the teachers' self-efficacy and the perception of their English proficiency were positively correlated in all the three groups. However, the correlation between these two constructs was only significant in the volunteer group. There was a medium positive correlation between the volunteer teachers' sense of efficacy and their perceived English proficiency ($r = .39$, $n = 30$, $p < .05$).

VI. DISCUSSION

As discussed above, the teachers' efficacy level was significantly higher after their voluntary participation in the professional development initiative than before it. However, there was an insignificant increase in their self-efficacy level due to the mandatory participation in the professional development initiative. Therefore, volunteering has a substantial influence on achieving the intended goal of the professional development initiative. The finding of this study is consistent with the results of the study carried out outside L2 education, which supports the assumption that teacher valuing of professional development is significantly related with teachers' self-efficacy level (Rutherford et al., 2017). Put it differently, the higher teachers value the professional development initiatives, the more they volunteer to attend professional development courses and, in turn, the higher their self-efficacy will be. A review of the related literature revealed inconsistent findings regarding the impact of professional development on teachers' self-efficacy with either the significant effect of participating in professional development initiatives on teachers' self-efficacy (e.g., Karimi, 2011) or the insignificant rise in teacher self-efficacy due to the participation in professional development initiatives (e.g., Zimmerman et al., 2017).

Additionally, the results showed a significant difference in teachers' perception of their English proficiency across the three study groups. More specifically, teachers' perception of their English proficiency significantly increased more in the volunteer than in the non-volunteer group. The finding of this study supports and is supported by the studies which consider both teachers valuing of professional development (e.g., Rutherford et al., 2017) and "content focus" (e.g., Birman et al., 2007; Desimone, 2009) as two important aspects of professional development which contribute to its effectiveness. However, English proficiency, as an important qualification for successful language teaching (Butler, 2004), has not been the focus of the professional development in which teachers mostly participate (Fraga-Canadas, 2010). As the results of the findings of the current study, volunteering is also a core feature of professional development which has mostly been ignored. Moreover, the current study underlined the necessity of reconceptualizing language teacher training programs in an attempt to provide in-service teachers with regular, meaningful professional development initiatives to maintain and to enhance their teaching skills which are needed for their teaching career.

This study also supports the positive correlation between teachers' self-efficacy and their perceived proficiency. However, the correlation between these two variables was only significant in the volunteer group. Therefore, volunteering has a substantial influence on the relationship between teacher self-efficacy and their perceived proficiency. The finding of the current study is consistent with the findings of previous studies conducted in the field (e.g., Chacon, 2005; Eslami & Fatahi, 2008).

VII. CONCLUSION

The notions of "teacher self-efficacy" and "perceived proficiency" have attracted some research interest (Karimi, 2011; Zimmerman et al., 2017). The current study is another attempt to explore the possibility of introducing changes in teachers' beliefs with the specific aim of improving teachers' self-efficacy and their perceived English proficiency through their voluntary participation in a professional development initiative.

As for the theoretical implications of the current study, it can be stated that the characteristics of an effective professional development course should be extended beyond the four features highlighted in prior research to include teachers' willingness to participate. The results of the study also explains that the voluntary participation of teachers is a factor which results in their engagement in professional development programs. With regard to the pedagogical implications of this study, it is advisable to design and run a preparatory meeting session before each professional development course, aiming to make teachers interested in the course subject and motivate them to participate in the course voluntarily.

The results of the study provide initial hints as to the assumption that if teachers value the professional development initiatives, these initiatives can help to improve teachers' self-efficacy (Rutherford et al., 2017). They also have the potential to improve teachers' perceptions of their proficiency, which calls for a need for effective professional developments (Birman et al., 2007). Furthermore, there is a hypothesis that the professional development initiatives which focus on the content of the subject that teachers teach (Cullen, 1994; Wayne et al., 2008) may attract them. This suggests professional development initiative providers to design professional development initiatives with a focus on the contents that teachers need.

Additionally, in the light of the findings of the current study and the support from the literature on professional development, more elaboration is called for on investigating what specific features of professional development matters (Wayne et al., 2008). Most of the professional developments are voluntary (Wayne et al., 2008), and, since volunteers may differ significantly in their motivation, self-efficacy, and even in prior knowledge, future research needs to reveal the effect of professional development in which teachers participate non-voluntarily on various cognitive aspects of teaching practice. Both the findings of the current study and the review of the related literature suggest that a relationship exists between self-efficacy and language proficiency (Rutherford et al., 2017). Therefore, another area suggested for future research is to investigate the effect of professional development courses on the increase of teachers' self-efficacy and language proficiency separately in which the contribution of their inter-relatedness is guaranteed. Specifically, the likely effect of the positive correlation between self-efficacy and perceived proficiency should be controlled in future studies. A limitation of this study was the use of self-reported questionnaires to collect the required data. Researchers interested in the subject are suggested to conduct the same study using other kinds of instruemts to gather the data. Another limitation was the quantitative method of data collection and analysis. Future studies can be conducted with a qualitative method to shed more light on the effect of volunteering on the effectiveness of professional development courses. The last limitation of this study was its narrow scope because it only focused on teachers' listening proficiency and their self-efficacy. Therefore, it is suggested that interested researchers carry out studies focusing on other teaching skills including motivational strategies, class management, corrective feedback, and so forth.

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Appendix 1

Ohio State Teacher Efficacy Scale (OSTES) (Tschannon Moran & Hoy, 2001)

	Nothing	Very little	Some influence	Quite a bit	A great deal
1. To what extent can you use a variety of assessment strategies?					
2. To what extent can you provide an alternative explanation or example when students are confused?					
3. To what extent can you craft good questions for your students?					
4. How well can you implement alternative strategies in your classroom?					
5. How well can you respond to difficult questions from your students?					
6. How much can you do to adjust your lessons to the proper level for individual students?					
7. To what extent can you gauge student comprehension of what you have taught?					
8. How well can you provide appropriate challenges for very capable students?					
9. How much can you do to control disruptive behavior in the classroom?					
10. How much can you do to get children to follow classroom rules?					
11. How much can you do to calm a student who is disruptive or noisy?					
12. How well can you establish a classroom management system with each group of students?					
13. How well can you keep a few problem students from ruining an entire lesson?					
14. How well can you respond to defiant students?					
15. To what extent can you make your expectation clear about student behavior?					
16. How well can you establish routines to keep activities running smoothly?					
17. How much can you do to get students to believe they can do well in schoolwork?					
18. How much can you do to help your students value learning?					
19. How much can you do to motivate students who show low interest in schoolwork?					
20. How much can you assist families in helping their children do well in school?					
21. How much can you do to improve the understanding of a student who is failing?					
22. How much can you do to help your students think critically?					
23. How much can you do to foster student creativity?					
24. How much can you do to get through to the most difficult students?					

Appendix 2

Teachers' Self-Reported English Proficiency (Chacon, 2005)

	Strongly agree	agree	partly agree	slightly disagree	disagree	Strongly disagree
I can understand magazines, newspapers, and popular novels when I read them in English.						
I can draw inferences/conclusions from what I read in English.						
I can figure out the meaning of unknown words in English from the context.						
I can write business and personal letters in English without errors that interfere the meaning I want to convey.						
I can write a short essay in English on a topic of my knowledge.						
I can fill in different kinds of applications in English (e.g., credit card applications).						
I can understand when two English-speakers talk at a normal speed.						
I understand English films without subtitles.						
I can understand a message in English on an answering machine.						
In face-to-face interaction with an English-speaker, I can participate in a conversation at a normal speed.						
I can express and support my opinions in English when speaking about general topics.						
I understand the meaning of common idiomatic expressions used by English-speakers.						
I know the necessary strategies to help maintain a conversation with an English-speaker.						
I can talk in English about cultural themes and norms in the US.						
I know how to act in social English-speaking situations.						
I know the English terms to use in regular classroom interaction with students.						