A Comparison of Pre-Service and In-Service English Teachers’ Teaching Competency Levels*

İngilizce Öğretmeni Adaylarının ve İngilizce Öğretmenlerinin Öğretim Yeterlilik Seviyelerinin Karşılaştırılması*

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ABSTRACT

Countries employ different methods in educating teachers according to the status of English and their own educational policies. As a country where English is taught as a foreign language, Turkey has set its own teacher competencies in an attempt to respond to changes in educational moves and to be in harmony with internationally acknowledged standards. This study aims to find out and compare the competency levels of pre-service and in-service English teachers in Turkey in terms of the generic and field-specific teacher competencies set by Turkish Ministry of National Education. 366 pre-service and 84 in-service English teachers participated in this study. Quantitative research method was adopted to reach a large number of participants and to increase the generalizability of the findings. The participants completed a survey including two different self-assessment forms. The results offer striking insights into teacher education in Turkey. The findings show that a high majority of the pre-service participants (n: 338, 92.3%) and most of the in-service participants (n: 54, 64.3%) were uninformed about the related competencies set at national level. There were also some differences between the two groups of participants in terms of the related competencies.

Keywords: Teacher education, Pre-service English teachers, In-service English teachers, Generic teacher competencies, English teacher competencies

ÖZ

İngilizcenin statüsüne ve kendi eğitim politikalara göre ülkeler öğretmen eğitiminde farklı yöntemler uygulamaktadır. İngilizcenin yabancı dil olarak okutulduğu Türkiye ise eğitimsel akımlardaki değişikliklere ve uluslararası kabul görmüş standartlara uyum sağlamak amacıyla kendi öğretmen yeterliklerini oluşturmuştur. Bu çalışma, Türkiye’deki İngilizce öğretmeni adaylarının ve İngilizce öğretmenlerinin Türk Milli Eğitim Bakanlığı tarafından oluşturulmuş olan genel ve özel alan öğretmen yeterlikleri anlamındaki yeterlik seviyelerini bulmayı ve karşılaştırmayı amaçlamaktadır. Çalışmaya 366 İngilizce öğretmeni adayı ve 84 İngilizce öğretmeni katılmıştır. Daha çok sayıda kişiye ulaşıp verinin genellenebilirliğini artırmak için nicel araştırma yöntemi kullanılmıştır. Katılımcılar iki farklı öz değerlendirme formunu içeren anketi doldurmuşlardır. Sonuçlar Türkiye’deki öğretmen eğitimini konusunda çarpıcı detaylar sunmaktadır, çünkü bulgular katılımcı İngilizce öğretmeni adaylarının büyük çoğunluğunun (n: 338, 92.3%) ve İngilizce öğretmenlerinin birçoğunun (n: 54, 64.3%) ulusal seviyede belirlenen ilgili yeterlikler hakkında bilgi sahibi olmadığını ve iki grup katılımcı arasında bazı farklılıklar olduğunu göstermiştir.

Anahtar Sözcükler: Öğretmen eğitim, İngilizce öğretmeni adayları, İngilizce öğretmenleri, Genel öğretmen yeterlikleri, İngilizce öğretmen yeterlikleri

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INTRODUCTION

Each country sets specific objectives for teacher training and may differ from each other in the way they educate their future teachers (Cochran-Smith, 2005). In a similar vein, English teacher education policies and implications could vary from country to country depending upon the status of English with contexts like English as a Second Language (ESL) and English as a Foreign Language (EFL). As a country where English is taught as a foreign language, Turkey comes across certain problems and faces criticism for its English teaching policies. Teacher education and foreign language education are among the hot topics in Turkish education system (Okumuş, 2014). Therefore, English teacher competencies and problems encountered in English teacher training need to be questioned in line with the teaching standards set by the national bodies in attempt to improve teacher quality and to contribute to success in English language education in Turkey.

A sole examination of student teachers’ views or applications may not give the complete picture about the needs of teachers. Besides, assessing teacher training programs according to student achievement may be counter-productive since teacher attrition and teacher competencies should be the focus as well (Goldhaber & Cowan, 2014). Then needs and expectations of teachers who are at different stages of their career stand out as one of the important points to be handled. In a similar vein, Aitken and Harford (2011) conducted a study on the induction needs of 44 teachers including student teachers, beginning teachers and experienced teachers, and stressed that teacher induction is not satisfied at a desirable level in spite of the high social regard of the teaching profession (Aitken & Harford, 2011). In parallel with these findings, the structure of pre-service and in-service teacher education programs in Turkey also needs to be questioned in order to enhance their effectiveness. In this regard, this study aims to find out and compare pre-service and in-service English teachers’ knowledge of the generic and field-specific teacher competencies set by Turkish Ministry of National Education (MoNE). Also, it sets out to provide practical solutions on how to integrate these competencies into the existing pre-service and in-service teacher education programs in Turkey.

Review of Literature

Teacher Training

The interaction of expert teachers possessing high-level knowledge and skills with novice teachers who are new to teaching in real school contexts (Lantolf, 2000) has drawn attention to socio-cultural theories in teacher training (Johnson, 2009). In addition, the background of student teachers may affect their knowledge and skills since students from different types of high school can meet in English Language Teaching (ELT) departments, which can affect their current and desired competencies. In a similar vein, Kani (2011) found that student teachers graduating from Anatolian Teacher Training high schools were more competent than those graduating from Anatolian high schools according to Common European Framework (CEF) and European Language Portfolio (ELP) competencies.

To attract the attention to what combination of elements could form a better teacher training, Simon (2013) takes different combinations of elements in teacher training programs as tapestry weaving with regard to the 4 main components including transformative and informed practice, social justice and inclusion, a future orientation and community capacity building. In this tapestry, the complex structure of the factors in teacher training programmes, their cross-relationship and different results of different combinations are stressed.

The lack of professional staff for in-service training at national and local level in Turkey (Bayraktar, 2013) is worth criticizing because an unclear system without knowledgeable, experienced and professional staff may be counter-productive. The system may not provide effective solutions to the problems teachers face, support them with the needed feedback or help them set realistic goals in their teaching context, which will eventually result in undesired outcomes. In an EFL context where students have limited interaction and practice opportunities in the target language, English teachers are charged with more responsibilities to keep their students motivated. Encouraging their students to participate in classroom discussions and activities also requires effective teaching strategies and desire to teach on the part of the teacher (Kanat, 2014). To improve the quality of teaching, in-service teacher trainers’ role is of great important. Their roles in Turkish education system were categorized as developing trust, active counselling, responding to practice, imparting knowledge and experience and establishing role identity (O’Dwyer & Atli, 2014). The teacher trainer is seen to be responsible for the professional development of the teacher.

Teacher Education and Teacher Competencies in Turkey

Village institutions have an important place in the history of Turkish education system since the teachers were selected from villages and expected to contribute to the development of villages (Karacaoğlu, 2008). The teacher training programs at university level were changed in 1998 and 2006 like the inclusion of Community Service Course in an attempt to keep up with the Bolognese process and to reach European standards (Turkish Higher Education Council [CoHE], 2006). There were some other important steps such as the Unification of Education in 1924, the establishment of MoNE and CoHE. These steps were taken to keep up with the rapidly changing nature of knowledge and educational moves at international level since teaching competencies play a crucial role in raising students’ intercultural awareness and in making contributions to the European Union (EU) application (Kani, 2011).

MoNE started to revise teacher competencies including professional knowledge, abilities and attitudes in 1999 with the aim of keeping up with the changing conditions of time and society. As a candidate member of the EU, Turkey began a project called Teacher Education in 2002 with the help of the formal authorities and organs such as universities, the CoHE and the MoNE. It has also been going through fast changes in terms of educational policies and practices (Isikoglu, Basturk & Karaca,
study about these competencies in 2005 and a national report was published about the content of these competencies as well as their validity and reliability. Document analyses of five countries namely England, USA, Seychelles, Australia and Ireland were employed and there was a workshop in Ankara between 26th April and 7th May in 2004. The participants were 120 teachers, 25 faculty members, 18 inspectors at primary school, 6 assessment experts and representatives of various ministries. 6 main competencies for generic teacher competencies emerged at the end of these studies as in the following: personal and professional values, knowing the student, learning and teaching process, monitoring and evaluation of learning and development, school-family-society relationships, and knowledge of curriculum and content. In total, there were 31 sub-competencies and 221 performance indicators of these competencies.

As for the English teacher competencies, five main categories emerged as planning and organizing English teaching procedures, improving language skills, monitoring and evaluating language development, school-family-society collaboration, and improving professional skills in English teaching. There are performance indicators for each item of the English teacher competencies and these indicators were previously categorized as A1, A2 and A3. A3 level competencies cover A2 level competencies which cover A1 level competencies. Therefore, A3 level competencies are the most general ones while A1 level competencies are the most specific ones.

The sub-categories of these two types of teacher competencies have different number of items. For instance; the first part of the generic teacher competencies has 55 items, the second part has 13 items, the part has 42 items, the fourth part has 25 items, the fifth part has 10 items and finally the sixth and the last part has 9 items. In total, there are 154 items in the generic teacher competencies. As to the English teacher competencies, the first part has 27 items, the second part has 63 items, the third part has 23 items, the fourth part has 26 items and finally the fifth part has 19 items. In total, there are 158 items in the English teacher competencies. When the generic and English teacher competencies are combined, there are 312 items in total.

In light of the related literature, it can be stated that there are some research studies which question the effectiveness of teacher education programs and teacher competencies in Turkey. However, there are no studies which compare the teaching competency levels of pre-service and in-service English teachers in terms of the generic and field-specific teacher competencies set by MoNE. Thus, this study will shed light upon an overlooked area of teacher education in Turkey.

In sum, this study aims to answer the following research questions:

1. Are pre-service and in-service English teachers informed about the teacher competencies set by MoNE?
2. What are the highest and lowest perceived competency levels of the pre-service English teachers and in-service
English teachers in terms of the generic teacher competencies set by MoNE?

3. What are the highest and lowest perceived competency levels of the pre-service English teachers and in-service English teachers in terms of the English teacher competencies set by MoNE?

METHODOLOGY

The aim of the study is to find out and compare the competency levels of pre-service and in-service English teachers in terms of the generic and field-specific teacher competences set by MoNE. The study has a descriptive research design in that it aims to describe the current state of the phenomenon. The universe of the study includes pre-service and in-service English teachers in Turkey. Some cities which are labelled as third level cities based on Turkish Statistical Institute (TÜİK) criteria were taken as the sample to conduct the study on in-service English teachers with the help of purposeful sampling. The pre-service English teachers from four different state universities and in-service English teachers in 21 different cities in Turkey participated in the study. The pre-service teachers were seniors in English Language Teaching (ELT) department since they were about to graduate with a certain level of teaching experience in their teaching practicum and a body of knowledge related to English, English teaching and educational courses. The participant English teachers were given a survey consisting of a part related to personal details, self-assessment form of the generic teacher competencies and self-assessment form of the English teacher competencies. The participants assessed their competency levels with related teaching competency items by choosing the competency level intervals ordered as not competent at all (1), a little competent (2), somewhat competent (3), fairly competent (4) and highly competent (5). The last column called “Explanation” was placed as the last column at the end of these competency intervals for participants to indicate whether they think the related competency item is relevant or not relevant to teaching in general or English teaching. Since the data collection tools are self-assessment forms but not questionnaires, only the frequency and percentage tables are provided and the interpretations are made accordingly. The self-assessment forms of the generic and English teacher competencies set by MoNE were applied in Turkish in order to ease the decoding of these tables. Validity and reliability of the self-assessment forms were ensured by MoNE with the help of workshops and a pilot study. There were also two scales namely importance levels and achievability for the performance indicators. Statistical procedures were employed to analyse and interpret the data. In sum, it was found that, in all cities, more than 85% of the participants completely agreed about the competencies in all main competencies. As for the sub-competencies, 83% of the participants completely agreed about content of the competencies, and with the inclusion of “somewhat agree”, the agreement level reached 99%. Regarding the performance indicators, 83.7% of the participants found them highly important and 83.2% of the participants thought they are achievable by all teachers. Aside from these importance and achievability results, the researcher felt the need to refer to statistical procedures to ensure the reliability of the instrument since there were two groups of participants and two types of teacher competencies. Cronbach Alpha coefficient, which ranges from 0 and +1 and where 0.70 is considered to be the minimum level for making the scale reliable (Dörnyei, 2007: 206-207), was adopted to measure the internal consistency reliability level. At the end of the statistical procedures, the Cronbach Alpha coefficient was found to be 0.994, which means that the data collection instruments have a high level of reliability.

RESULTS

Knowledge Levels of English Teachers About Teacher Competencies

The first research question aims to find out whether the participants are informed about the teacher competencies set by MoNE. The results of the pre-service and in-service participants with regard to the generic and English teaching competencies are given tables below (Table 1, Table 2, Table 3, Table 4).

| Table 1: Pre-service Participants’ Knowledge about Generic Teacher Competencies |
|---------------------------------|--------|--------|-----------|
| Valid                          | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent |
| Yes                            | 28     | 7.7    | 7.7        |
| No                             | 338    | 92.3   | 92.3       |
| Total                          | 366    | 100.0  | 100.0      |

According to Table 1, high majority of the pre-service participants (n: 338, 92.3%) are not informed about the generic teacher competencies set by MoNE whereas a small number of them (n: 28, 7.7%) are informed about these competencies.
Table 2: Pre-service Participants’ Knowledge About English Teacher Competencies

|       | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent |
|-------|-----------|---------|---------------|
| Valid |           |         |               |
| Yes   | 28        | 7.7     | 7.7           |
| No    | 338       | 92.3    | 92.3          |
| Total | 366       | 100.0   | 100.0         |

According to Table 2, parallel to the generic teacher competencies, high majority of the pre-service participants (n: 338, 92.3%) are not informed about the English teacher competencies set by MoNE while a small number of them (n: 28, 7.7%) are informed about these competencies.

Table 3: In-service Participants’ Knowledge About Generic Teacher Competencies

|       | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent |
|-------|-----------|---------|---------------|
| Valid |           |         |               |
| Yes   | 30        | 35.7    | 35.7          |
| No    | 54        | 64.3    | 64.3          |
| Total | 84        | 100.0   | 100.0         |

Table 3 shows that most of the in-service participants (n: 54, 64.3%) are not informed the generic teacher competencies set by MoNE while some of them (n: 30, 35.7%) are informed about these competencies.

Table 4: In-service Participants’ Knowledge About English Teacher Competencies

|       | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent |
|-------|-----------|---------|---------------|
| Valid |           |         |               |
| Yes   | 30        | 35.7    | 35.7          |
| No    | 54        | 64.3    | 64.3          |
| Total | 84        | 100.0   | 100.0         |

Table 4 demonstrates that most of the in-service participants (n: 54, 64.3%) are not informed about the English teacher competencies set by MoNE whereas some of them (n: 30, 35.7%) are informed about these competencies.

Highest and Lowest Levels of Generic Teacher Competencies

The scope of the study is limited to the first parts of the generic and English teacher competencies. The results of the pre-service and in-service English teachers’ competencies are given and interpreted respectively in order to prevent misunderstanding and provide a smooth transition among the results of the research questions. Besides, it should be noted that the second and third research questions include the word “perceived” since the participants filled in the self-assessment forms based on their self-evaluation.

Before giving the results, it would be useful to remember the first research question:

2- What are the highest and lowest perceived competency levels of the pre-service English teachers and in-service English teachers in terms of the generic teacher competencies set by MoNE?

Table 5 reports the competency item with the highest competency level for the pre-service English teachers in terms of the generic teacher competencies. The related competency item is the thirty-second item of the generic teacher competencies and relates to respecting students’ values.

Out of 366 (100%) pre-service English teachers; 3 (0.8%) find themselves not competent at all and 6 (1.6%) a little competent while 31 (8.5%) somewhat competent, 141 (38.5%) fairly competent and 185 (50.5%) highly competent in respecting students’ values. There are no pre-service participants who think that this item is not relevant to teaching.

Table 5: The Highest Competency Level of Pre-service English Teachers

|       | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent |
|-------|-----------|---------|---------------|
| Valid |           |         |               |
| Not Competent at All | 3 | .8 | .8 |
| A Little Competent | 6 | 1.6 | 1.6 |
| Somewhat Competent | 31 | 8.5 | 8.5 |
| Fairly Competent | 141 | 38.5 | 38.5 |
| Highly Competent | 185 | 50.5 | 50.5 |
| Total | 366 | 100.0 | 100.0 |

Table 6: The Highest Competency Level of In-service English Teachers

|       | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent |
|-------|-----------|---------|---------------|
| Valid |           |         |               |
| Somewhat Competent | 2 | 2.4 | 2.4 |
| Fairly Competent | 21 | 25.0 | 25.0 |
| Highly Competent | 61 | 72.6 | 72.6 |
| Total | 84 | 100.0 | 100.0 |
Table 6 gives the competency item with the highest competency level for the in-service English teachers in terms of the generic teacher competencies. In parallel to the pre-service teachers, the related competency item is again the thirty-second item of the generic teacher competencies and relates to respecting students’ values.

Out of 84 in-service English teachers; 2 (2.4%) find themselves somewhat competent, 21 (25%) fairly competent, and 61 (72.6%) highly competent in respecting students’ values.

The competency levels of both groups seem to be similar but the pre-service teachers were found to have lower competency levels compared to the in-service teachers in terms of respecting students’ values. Namely, there are no in-service English teachers who find themselves not competent at all or a little competent, but 3 (0.8%) pre-service English teachers find themselves not competent at all and 6 (1.6%) a little competent. However, both groups rank themselves as highly competent with the highest percentage because 72.6% of the in-service teachers and 50.5% of the pre-service teachers find themselves highly competent.

These two tables (Table 5 and Table 6) summarize the competency items with highest frequency and percentage for the pre-service and in-service English teachers. According to these tables (Table 1 and Table 2), both groups of the participants were found to be highly competent with the highest percentage in terms of respecting students’ values.

Table 7 reports the competency item with the lowest competency level for the pre-service English teachers in terms of the generic teacher competencies. The related competency item is the twenty-fifth item of the generic teacher competencies and is related with benefiting from the views of parents.

Out of 366 (100%) pre-service English teachers; 112 (30.6%) find themselves not competent at all, 79 (21.6%) find themselves a little competent, 61 (16.7%) somewhat competent, 78 (21.3%) fairly competent and 28 (7.7%) highly competent in benefiting from the views of parents. Finally, 8 (2.2%) think that this item is not relevant to teaching.

Table 8 summarizes the competency item with the lowest competency level for the in-service English teachers in terms of the generic teacher competencies. The related competency item is the twenty-fourth item of the generic teacher competencies and is related with knowing the laws and regulations about the education of the disabled and acting accordingly.

Out of 84 in-service English teachers; 9 (10.7%) find themselves not competent at all, 8 (9.5%) find themselves a little competent, 26 (31%) somewhat competent, 29 (34.5%) fairly competent and 11 (13.1%) highly competent in knowing the laws and regulations about the education of the disabled and acting accordingly.1 (1.2%) thinks that this item is not relevant to teaching.

The competency item with highest level of competence was the same for the pre-service and in-service teachers. However, the pre-service and in-service participants differ in the competency item with the lowest level of competence. According to the tables above (Table 7 and Table 8), the competency items including the lowest competency level namely “not competent

Table 7: The Lowest Competency Level of Pre-service English Teachers

| Valid                  | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent |
|------------------------|-----------|---------|---------------|
| Not Competent At All   | 112       | 30.6    | 30.6          |
| A Little Competent     | 79        | 21.6    | 21.6          |
| Somewhat Competent     | 61        | 16.7    | 16.7          |
| Fairly Competent       | 78        | 21.3    | 21.3          |
| Highly Competent       | 28        | 7.7     | 7.7           |
| Not Relevant           | 8         | 2.2     | 2.2           |
| Total                  | 366       | 100.0   | 100.0         |

Table 8: The Lowest Competency Level of In-service English Teachers

| Valid                  | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent |
|------------------------|-----------|---------|---------------|
| Not Competent At All   | 9         | 10.7    | 10.7          |
| A Little Competent     | 8         | 9.5     | 9.5           |
| Somewhat Competent     | 26        | 31.0    | 31.0          |
| Fairly Competent       | 29        | 34.5    | 34.5          |
| Highly Competent       | 11        | 13.1    | 13.1          |
| Not Relevant           | 1         | 1.2     | 1.2           |
| Total                  | 84        | 100.0   | 100.0         |
at all” differ for the pre-service and in-service English teachers. The pre-service English teachers seem to lack competency and rank themselves as “not competent at all” in benefiting from the views of parents. However, the competency item with the lowest competency level according to the ranking of the in-service English teachers is about knowing the laws and regulations about the education of the disabled students and acting in accordance with these laws and regulations.

**Highest and Lowest Levels of English Teacher Competencies**

The second research question is as follows:

3- What are the highest and lowest perceived competency levels of the pre-service English teachers and in-service English teachers in terms of the English teacher competencies set by MoNE?

The same procedures were adopted to find out the highest and lowest competency levels of the participants. The competency items with the highest percentages including the statements with “highly competent” and “not competent at all” were taken into consideration. In other words, the frequencies of the competency items were compared to one another in order to detect the competency items with highest and lowest levels depending on the self-assessment form results.

Table 9 summarizes the competency item with the highest competency level for the pre-service English teachers in terms of the English teacher competencies. The related competency item is the eleventh item of the English teacher competencies and is related with knowing that materials should be appropriate for the content, students’ language development and levels.

Out of 366 (100%) pre-service English teachers; 4 (1.1%) find themselves not competent at all and 20 (5.5%) find themselves a little competent while 36 (9.8%) somewhat competent, 141 (38.5%) fairly competent and 165 (45.1%) highly competent in knowing that materials should be appropriate for the content, students’ language development and levels.

Table 10 reports the competency item with the highest competency level for the in-service English teachers in terms of the English teacher competencies. The related competency item is the eleventh item of the English teacher competencies and refers to knowing that materials should be appropriate for the content, students’ language development and levels.

Out of 84 in-service English teachers; 3 (3.6%) find themselves a little competent and 4 (4.8%) somewhat competent, 27 (32.1%) fairly competent, and 50 (59.5%) highly competent in knowing that materials should be appropriate for the content, students’ language development and levels.

There are similarities between the participant groups. In both groups, a high number of participants find themselves highly competent while a small number of them have low competency levels. For instance, 3 (3.6%) in-service English teachers and 20 (5.5%) pre-service English teachers find themselves highly competent in knowing that materials should be appropriate for the content, students’ language development and levels. However, the highest percentages show that 50 (59.5%) in-service English teachers and 165 (45.1%) pre-service English teachers rank themselves as highly competent for this competency item.

The two tables (Table 9 and Table 10) report the competency items with highest levels for pre-service and in-service English teachers. Both groups of participants were again found to be highly competent with the highest percentage in terms of knowing that materials should be appropriate for the content, students’ language development and levels.

| Table 9: The Highest Competency Level of Pre-service English Teachers | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent |
|---------------------------------------------------------------|-----------|---------|--------------|
| Valid                                                        |           |         |              |
| Not Competent At All                                        | 4         | 1.1     | 1.1          |
| A Little Competent                                          | 20        | 5.5     | 5.5          |
| Somewhat Competent                                         | 36        | 9.8     | 9.8          |
| Fairly Competent                                            | 141       | 38.5    | 38.5         |
| Highly Competent                                            | 165       | 45.1    | 45.1         |
| Total                                                       | 366       | 100.0   | 100.0        |

| Table 10: The Highest Competency Level of In-service English Teachers | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------|---------|--------------|
| Valid                                                              |           |         |              |
| A Little Competent                                                  | 3         | 3.6     | 3.6          |
| Somewhat Competent                                                  | 4         | 4.8     | 4.8          |
| Fairly Competent                                                    | 27        | 32.1    | 32.1         |
| Highly Competent                                                    | 50        | 59.5    | 59.5         |
| Total                                                              | 84        | 100.0   | 100.0        |
Table 11 reports the competency item with the lowest competency level for the pre-service English teachers in terms of the English teacher competencies. The related competency item is the twenty-second item of the English teacher competencies and is related with creating original activities to promote colloquial English by collaborating with colleagues and teachers from other disciplines.

Out of 366 (100%) pre-service English teachers; 41 (11.2%) find themselves not competent at all and 89 (24.3%) find themselves a little competent while 77 (21%) somewhat competent, 88 (24%) fairly competent and 69 (18.9%) highly competent in creating original activities to promote colloquial English by collaborating with colleagues and teachers from other disciplines.

Out of 84 in-service English teachers; 3 (3.6%) find themselves not competent at all, 5 (6%) a little competent and 11 (13.1%) somewhat competent, 30 (35.7%) fairly competent, and 35 (41.7%) highly competent in creating original activities to promote colloquial English by collaborating with colleagues and teachers from other disciplines.

According to tables above (Table 11 and Table 12), the competency items including the lowest competency level with “not competent at all” differ for the pre-service and in-service English teachers. The pre-service English teachers seem to lack competency and rank themselves as not competent at all in creating original activities to promote colloquial English by collaborating with colleagues and teachers from other disciplines. However, the competency item with the lowest competency level according to the ranking of the in-service English teachers is about enriching materials used in teaching process by evaluating them in terms of their usefulness, up to dateness, effectiveness or creating original materials.

**DISCUSSION and CONCLUSION**

This study aimed to find out and compare the competency levels of the pre-service and in-service English teachers in Turkey in terms of the generic and field-specific teacher competencies set by Turkish Ministry of National Education. It was revealed that high majority of the pre-service participants (n: 338, 92.3%) and most of the in-service participants (n: 54, 64.3%) are uninformed about these competencies. First of all, these teaching competencies should be introduced and taught across the curriculum during pre-service teacher training. More importantly they should be tested so that student teachers will get the chance to associate what they learn with these competencies. In other words, student teachers will see how theory turns into practice and they will build bridges between the university and school context. Such an approach will help diminish the theory-practice gap and inform student teachers about what is expected by them in real teaching circumstances. If student teachers are not given feedback or tested upon these competencies, they will tend to exclude them in their presentations, micro teaching activities or practicum lessons.

**Table 11: The Lowest Competency Level of Pre-service English Teachers**

| Competency Level                                 | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent |
|--------------------------------------------------|-----------|---------|--------------|
| Not Competent At All                             | 41        | 11.2    | 11.2         |
| A Little Competent                               | 89        | 24.3    | 24.3         |
| Somewhat Competent                               | 77        | 21.0    | 21.0         |
| Fairly Competent                                 | 88        | 24.0    | 24.0         |
| Highly Competent                                 | 69        | 18.9    | 18.9         |
| Not Relevant                                     | 2         | .5      | .5           |
| Total                                            | 366       | 100.0   | 100.0        |

**Table 12: The Lowest Competency Level of In-service English Teachers**

| Competency Level                                 | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent |
|--------------------------------------------------|-----------|---------|--------------|
| Not Competent At All                             | 3         | 3.6     | 3.6          |
| A Little Competent                               | 5         | 6.0     | 6.0          |
| Somewhat Competent                               | 11        | 13.1    | 13.1         |
| Fairly Competent                                 | 30        | 35.7    | 35.7         |
| Highly Competent                                 | 35        | 41.7    | 41.7         |
| Total                                            | 84        | 100.0   | 100.0        |
In other words, negative washback effect (Brown, 2004) due to the lack of instruction and feedback can influence the learning preferences and priorities of student teachers. Teacher competencies should be integrated into the existing curriculum of the pre-service teacher education program to help student teachers gain awareness about them. Once introduced at pre-service teacher education, these competencies can be used by the authorities as a framework to be followed in order to reach conclusions about the current competency level of in-service teachers. They can also be utilized to enhance their professional development and to meet their context-bound needs.

When the results of the generic teacher competency levels are examined, it is seen that both pre-service and in-service English teachers ranked themselves as highly competent with the highest percentage for respecting students’ values. However, they differ in the lowest competency level item in that some of the in-service English teachers found themselves not competent at all for knowing the laws and regulations about the disabled and acting accordingly. Some of the pre-service English teachers, on the other hand, found themselves not competent at all in benefiting from the views of parents. All in all, the participant English teachers seem to suffer from lack of knowledge related to the legislations about the disabled learners and collaborating with parents as stakeholders. These findings show that pre-service English teachers need to be engaged in various activities to learn how to collaborate with parents during their practicum. Additionally, in-service English teachers appear to be in need of more in-service training to learn about legislations related with disabled learners and about how to integrate them into the classroom atmosphere.

The results of the English teacher competencies display similarity with those of the generic teacher competencies. Both pre-service and in-service teachers ranked themselves as highly competent with the highest percentage in terms of knowing that materials should be appropriate for the content, students’ language development and levels. However, they differ in the item where they were found to have the lowest competency level. Namely, some of the pre-service English teachers evaluated themselves as not competent at all for creating original activities to promote colloquial English by collaborating with colleagues and teachers from other disciplines. The competency item with the lowest competency level, on the other hand, was enriching materials used in teaching process by evaluating them in terms of their usefulness, up to dareness, effectiveness or creating original materials for in-service English teachers. It could be said that both pre-service and in-service English teachers seem to be aware of the fact that the materials used in courses should be appropriate for learner characteristics like students’ language development and language levels. However, pre-service English teachers seems to be more in need of instruction upon how to create original activities to promote colloquial English and how to collaborate with colleagues. In-service English teachers, however, appear to need more support and feedback in terms of evaluating course materials in terms of their usefulness, up to dareness and effectiveness.

In light of these findings, it can be said that pre-service English teachers need to be exposed to collaboration with various stakeholders to gain awareness of what works in practice. They also need to learn how to build rapport with the related stakeholders during their practicum so that they will form their teaching practices for their future classes. Different from student teachers, in-service English teachers seem to lack the professional knowledge and skills in terms of course book evaluation. In-service teachers may be equipped with the necessary skills of collaboration with stakeholders due to their previous experiences. However, they may have difficulty in covering the course book content owing to student characteristics and context-bound differences or questioning the role of the course book in actualizing course goals. In this regard, teachers can get peer feedback from their experienced colleagues or can receive support from inspectors on how to use or modify a course book effectively and get the utmost benefit. These changing demands of the pre-service and in-service English teachers will shed light upon the missing or problematic areas in teacher education. Therefore, these demands should be taken into consideration by policy makers while making adjustments in pre-service and in-service teacher education programs to fulfill what is needed at practical ends.

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APPENDIX A

DATA COLLECTION TOOL

TEACHER COMPETENCIES SURVEY FOR PRE-SERVICE TEACHERS

Dear English Teacher Candidates,

This survey aims to find out perceptions of pre-service English teachers about generic teacher competences set by Turkish Ministry of National Education. For this purpose, as English teacher candidates, your invaluable opinions will greatly contribute to the research. The research consists of three parts. In the first part, you are expected to provide information about personal details. In the second part, you are expected to answer the questions in the Self-Assessment Form which is in Turkish and takes approximately 45 minutes to complete. In the Self-Assessment Form, if you think that the item does not apply in English language teaching, please write not relevant (ilgisiz) under explanation or put a sign under the last column called “Açıklama”. Finally, the third part consists of interview questions in English about generic teacher competencies set by MNE.

Your answers and your identity will be kept confidential. Your participation in the study involves no risks or requirements in any case. It is purely on voluntary basis.

Thanks for your valuable contribution. Please do not hesitate to contact me in case of any questions or concerns.

I read the information above and am willing to take part in the study.

Name Surname:    Date:           Signature:

I would like to take part in the interview: Yes   No

Kind Regards

Çağla ATMACA

PhD student, English Language Teaching Department, Gazi University
Research Assistant, English Language Teaching Department, Gazi University
E-mail: caglaatmaca@gazi.edu.tr, caglaatmaca90@gmail.com
PART I) PERSONAL DETAILS FORM

Gender: □ Female □ Male

Age: □ 21-25 □ 26-30 □ 31-35 □ 40-45 □ 50-55 □ 60+

Marital Status: □ Single □ Married

GPA (Grade Point Average):

Type of High School Graduated: □ Anatolian High School □ General High School □
□ Anatolian Teacher Training High School □ Vocational High School □
□ Anatolian Vocational High School □ Super High School □

*Other □ *Please specify__________________________

Experience in teaching:

□ Less than 1 year □ 1-5 years □ 6-10 years □
□ 11-15 years □ 16-20 years □ 21 years and over □

• Are you informed about the Generic Teacher Competencies set by Turkish Ministry of National Education?
  □ Yes □ No

• Are you informed about the English Teacher Competencies set by Turkish Ministry of National Education?
  □ Yes □ No

TEACHER COMPETENCIES SURVEY FOR IN-SERVICE TEACHERS

Dear English Teachers,

This survey aims to find out perceptions of in-service English teachers about the generic and English teacher competencies set by Turkish Ministry of National Education (MoNE). For this purpose, as English teachers, your invaluable opinions will greatly contribute to the research. The research consists of four parts. In the first part, you are expected to provide information about your personal details. In the second part, you are expected to answer the questions in the Generic Teacher Competencies Self-Assessment Form and in the third part English Teacher Competencies Self-Assessment Form, which are in Turkish and take approximately 45 minutes to complete. In the Self-Assessment Forms, if you think that the item does not apply in English language teaching, please put “X” in the last column of the related item titled “Açıklama”. Finally, the fourth part consists of written interview questions in English about generic and English teacher competencies set by MoNE.

Your answers and your identity will be kept confidential. Your participation in the study involves no risks or requirements in any case. It is purely on voluntary basis.

Thanks for your valuable contribution. Please do not hesitate to contact me in case of any questions or concerns.

I read the information above and am willing to take part in the study. □

Name Surname: __________________________ Date: __________ Signature: ______________________

I would like to take part in the interview: Yes □ No □

Kind Regards

Çağla ATMACA
PhD student, English Language Teaching Department, Gazi University
Research Assistant, English Language Teaching Department, Gazi University
E-mail: caglaatmaca@gazi.edu.tr, caglaatmaca90@gmail.com

• Are you informed about the Generic Teacher Competencies set by Turkish Ministry of National Education?
  □ Yes □ No

• Are you informed about the English Teacher Competencies set by Turkish Ministry of National Education?
  □ Yes □ No
PART I) PERSONAL DETAILS FORM

Gender:  Female □  Male □

Age:  21-25 □  26-30 □  31-35 □  40-45 □  50-55 □  60+ □

Marital Status:  Single □  Married □

Major:  American Culture and Literature □  Comparative Literature □

English Language and Literature □  English Language Teaching □

English Linguistics □  Translation and Interpretation □

*Other □  *Please specify ______________________

Experience in teaching:  Less than 1 year □  1-5 years □  6-10 years □

11-15 years □  16-20 years □  21 years and over □

Educational Status (Ongoing):  B.A. □  M.A. □  Ph.D □

Which institution are you working at?

State Primary School □  State Lower Secondary School □

State Upper Secondary School □  State High School □

*Please write the name and location of your institution:

Which institution(s) have you previously been to?

State Primary School □  State Lower Secondary School □

State Upper Secondary School □  State High School □

How many hours a week do you teach English?

Less than 15 hours □  16-20 hours □

21-25 hours □  26 hours and over □

How long have you been teaching at this school?

Less than 1 year □  1-5 years □  6-10 years □

11-15 years □  16-20 years □  21-25 years □

26 years and over □

What is the approximate number of students in each classroom?

less than 20 students □  21-30 students □  31-40 students □

41-50 students □  51-60 students □  60 and over □
### PART II) GENERIC TEACHER COMPETENCIES SELF ASSESSMENT FORM

| A | KİŞİSEL GELİŞİM - KİŞİSEL DEĞERLER |
|---|-----------------------------------|
| **Kişisel Gelişim** | | |
| 1 | Farklı fikirlere ve değişime açık olma | Çok Yeterliyim (5) | Yeterliyim (4) | Kabul edilebilir düzeydeyim (3) | Gelişmeliyim (2) | Kesinlikle gelişmeliyim (1) | Açıklama |
| 2 | Üst düzey düşünce becerilerini kullanma (eleştirel, sorgulayan, yansıtırıcı gibi) | | | | | | |
| 3 | Türkçe kurallarına uygun ve anlaşılabilir bir biçimde kullanma | | | | | | |
| 4 | Stresle başa çıkma yollarını bilme ve kullanma | | | | | | |
| 5 | Gerektiğinde kişisel ve mesleki konularda uzman yardımıma devourma | | | | | | |
| 6 | Sağlıkli yaşam ve öz bakım becerilerine sahip olma | | | | | | |
| 7 | Bilgi ve iletişim teknolojilerindeki gelişmeleri izleme | | | | | | |
| 8 | Teknoloji okur-yazarı olma (teknoloji ile ilgili kavram ve uygulamaların bilgi ve becerileri) | | | | | | |
| 9 | Bilimsel araştırma yapma becerilerine sahip olma | | | | | | |
| 10 | Bilgi ve iletişim teknolojilerinden (on-line dergi, mesleki forum, paket yazılımlar, e-posta, v.b) bilgiyi paylaşma amacıyla yararlanma | | | | | | |
| 11 | Bilgi ve iletişim teknolojilerinden öğretim süreçinde yararlanma | | | | | | |
| 12 | Mesleki bilgi, beceri ve yeterliklerini geliştirmek amacıyla, hizmet içi eğitim, toplantı ve seminerlere katılma | | | | | | |
| 13 | Mesleki gelişimine yönelik yayınları izleme | | | | | | |
| 14 | Kişisel ve mesleki duyarlılığını artırmak için kültür ve sanat etkinliklerine katılma | | | | | | |
| **Okulun îyileştirilmesine ve Geliştirilmesine Katkı Sağlama** | | | | | | |
| 15 | Okulda sosyal, kültürel ve mesleki davranışlar aktif bir biçimde katılma ve gerektiğinde önderlik yapma | | | | | | |
| 16 | Okul eğitim-yönetim ekibi içinde görev alma | | | | | | |
| 17 | Okul ve çevrenin geliştirilmesine katkı sağlamak için çalışmalar yapma | | | | | | |
| 18 | Okul iyileştirilmesinde ve geliştirilmesinde çevre olanaklarını kullanma | | | | | | |
| 19 | Sivil toplum örgütleri, yerel yönetimlerle iş birliği yapma | | | | | | |
| 20 | Okula yaşanan sorunları çözme için eylem araştırmaları planlama ve yürütme | | | | | | |
| 21 | Okulu geliştirme çalışmalarında öğrencileri rol almalarını teşvik etme | | | | | | |
| 22 | Öğrencenin okul çalışmalarını destekleme ve bu çalışmalarına katılma | | | | | | |
| **Mevzuat Bilgişi** | | | | | | |
| 23 | Görev, hak ve sorumluluklarıyla ilgili mevzuatı bilme ve buna uygun davranma | | | | | | |
| 24 | Engellilerin eğitim ve öğretimden yararlanmasına hizmet eden yasa ve yönetimlerini bilme ve buna uygun davranma | | | | | | |
| A | KİŞisel Gelişim - Kişisel Değerler | Çoş Yetiştirilmiş (5) | Yeterliyim (4) | Kabul Edilebilir Düşeyi (3) | Geliştelimi (2) | Kesinlikle Geliştelimi (1) | Açıklama |
|---|----------------------------------|----------------|----------------|-----------------------------|----------------|------------------------|----------|
| 25 | Veli görüşlerinden yararlanma | | | | | | |
| 26 | Yönetici görüşlerinden yararlanma | | | | | | |
| 27 | Öğretmen görüşlerinden yararlanma | | | | | | |
| 28 | Öğrenci görüşlerinden yararlanma | | | | | | |
| 29 | Sınıf içi - sınıf dışı çalışmalarını eleştirel bir yaklaşımla analiz edip öz değerlendirmede kullanma | | | | | | |
| 30 | Öz değerlendirdenden elde ettiği verileri kişisel gelişimi için kullanma | | | | | | |
| A | Mesleki Gelişim - Mesleki Değerler | | | | | | |
| | Öğrenciye Değer Verme | | | | | | |
| 31 | Öğrencilerle ilgili kayıtlarda gizlilik ilkesine uyma | | | | | | |
| 32 | Öğrencilerin sahip olduğu değerlere saygı gösterme | | | | | | |
| 33 | Öğrencilere, düşlerinin fikirlerine ve ürettiğlerine değer vermeleri için model olma | | | | | | |
| 34 | Öğrencinin kendini ifade edebileceği fırsatları sunma | | | | | | |
| 35 | Öğrencilerin sevgi ve saygıya dayalı ilişkiler geliştirmelerine ortam oluşturma | | | | | | |
| 36 | Öğrencileri etkin biçimde dinleme | | | | | | |
| 37 | Öğrencilere uygun tartışma ortamı sağlamak | | | | | | |
| 38 | Öğrenciye isimle hitap etme | | | | | | |
| | Öğrencinin Başarılabilirliğinde İnanma | | | | | | |
| 39 | Planında öğrencilerin gereksinimlerini yanıt verecek farklı etkinlikler tasarlama | | | | | | |
| 40 | Öğrenmeyle engellenen etmenleri analiz ederek öğrencilerin ihtiyaçlarına yönelik düzenlemeler yapma | | | | | | |
| 41 | Ödevleri ve sınıf dışı çalışmaları, öğrencilerin ve çevrenin ihtiyaç ve imkânlarına uygun planlama | | | | | | |
| 42 | Sınıf içi ve dış faaliyetlerde öğrencin merak/ istek uyandırıcı etkinlikler hazırlama | | | | | | |
| 43 | Yetersiz-isteksel öğrenciler motive edici tedbirler alma | | | | | | |
| 44 | Öğrenme ve başarmanın çeşitli yolları olduğu konusunda öğrencileri bilgilendirme | | | | | | |
| 45 | Çalışmalarını uygularken, öğrencilerin her birini var olan kazanım düzeylerinden daha ileriye götürme | | | | | | |
| 46 | Farklı düzeydeki öğrencilerin öğrenme çabalarını cesaretlendirme | | | | | | |
| | Ulusal ve Evrensel Değerlere Önem Verme | | | | | | |
| 47 | Öğrencilere bireysel ve kültürel farklılıklar olabileceğine ilişkin anlayış kazandırmaya yönelik çalışmalarla yer verme | | | | | | |
| 48 | İnsan haklarına uygun biçimde davranma | | | | | | |
| 49 | Bilgi ve iletişim teknolojileri ile ilgili yasal ve ahlâkî sorumlulukları öğrenciler kazandırma | | | | | | |
| 50 | Çocuk haklarının korunması ile ilgili yasa ve yönetmelikleri bilme | | | | | | |
| 51 | Sınıf içi ve dış etkinliklerde demokrasi anlayışını geliştirici yöntem / tekniklere yer verme | | | | | | |
### A MESLEKİ GELİŞİM - MESLEKİ DEĞERLER

| Sıra | İÇERİK | Çoş Yeterlilik (5) | Yeterlilik (4) | Kabul edilebilir düzey (3) | Gelistirilmesi (2) | Kesinlikle gelistirilmesi (1) | Açıklama |
|------|--------|-------------------|----------------|--------------------------|------------------|-----------------------------|----------|
| 52   | Öğrencilerde ulusal ve evrensel değerlerin gelişmesini destekleme ve model olma |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 53   | Sınıf içi ve dışi çalışmalarında, toplumsal ve mesleki etik değerleri benimseme ve bunlara uygun davranma (adalet, dürüstlük, tutarlılık, kararlılık, duyarlılık v.b) |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 54   | Uluslara, bireylere ve inançlara karşı ayrımcılık yapmama |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 55   | Sınıf içi ve dışında çocuk haklarının korunmasına ve uygulanmasında etkin rol alma |  |  |  |  |  |  |

### PART III) ENGLISH TEACHER COMPETENCIES SELF-ASSESSMENT FORM

| 1 | ÖĞRENME-ÖĞRETME SÜRECINI PLANLAMA VE DÜZENLEME İNGİLİZCE ÖĞRETİM SÜREÇLERİNİ PLANLAMA VE DÜZENLEME | Çoş Yeterlilik (5) | Yeterlilik (4) | Kabul edilebilir düzey (3) | Gelistirilmesi (2) | Kesinlikle gelistirilmesi (1) | Açıklama |
|---|--------------------------------------------------|-------------------|----------------|--------------------------|------------------|-----------------------------|----------|

#### 1.1 İngilizce Öğretimine Uygun Planlama Yapabilmek

**A1** İngilizce programı doğrultusunda öğrenme-öğretim sürecini planlama
Öğretim sürecinin planlanmasında öğrencilerin dil yeterliklerini dikkate alma

**A2** Öğretim sürecini, genel olarak öğrencilerin dil gelişim düzeylerini, öğrenme stilerini, ilgi ve ihtiyaçlarını dikkate alarak planlama

**A3** Öğretim sürecini, öğrencilerin tamamının dil gelişim düzeyleri ile öğrenme stilerine uygun ve esnek olarak planlama

#### 1.2 İngilizce Öğretimine Uygun Öğrenme Ortamları Düzenleyebilmek

**A1** Öğrenme ortamında, öğretim stratejilerine uygun fiziksel düzenlemeler yapma

**A2** Öğrencilerin katımlarını sağlamak ve başarılarını artırmaya yönelik sıcak ve olumu ortamlar oluşturma

**A3** Öğrenme ortamlarının düzenlenmesinde bütün öğrencilerin ilgi ve gerekşimlerini dikkate alarak etkin katılımlarını sağlamak ve başarılarını artırmaya yönelik ortamlar oluşturma

Bütün öğrencilerin öğretmenle ve birbirleriyle öğrenme amaçlı etkileşimlerini geliştiren okul içi ve okul dışı çoklu öğrenme ortamları düzenleme

Öğrencilerin ilgi duyduklarını konularda katılımlarını sağlayacak çeşitli sosyal etkinlikler düzenleme

#### 1.3 İngilizce Öğretim Sürecine Uygun Materyaller ve Kaynaklar Kullanabilmek

**A1** Öğretim sürecinde çeşitli materyallerden ve kaynaklardan yararlanmanın önemini bilme

Materyallerin içeriğinde, öğrencilerin dil gelişimine ve seviyesine uygun olması gerektiğini bilme

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Öğretim sürecinde sınıf düzeyine uygun mevcut materyallerden yararlanma

A2 Öğrencilerin günlük yaşamlarıyla ilişkili olan materyaller kullanma
Öğrencilerin yaşlarına, dil gelişim düzeylerine, öğrenme stillerine uygun yazılı, görsel ve işitsel materyalleri seçerek kullanma

A3 Öğretim sürecinde kullandığı materyalleri kullanma
İngilizce öğretiminde içerige, öğrencisi seviyesine ve çevre koşullarına uygun materyalleri ve kaynakları geliştirme konusunda bilgi ve deneyimlerini meslektaslıklarıyla paylaşma

| 1.4 İngilizce Öğretim Sürecine Uygun Yöntem ve Teknikleri Kullanabilme |
|---|
| A1 Öğrencilerin dil gelişimlerini sağlamaya yönelik mevcut kaynaklarda önerilen yöntem ve tekniklerden yararlanma
Dilin günlük yaşamını geliştirilecek etkinliklere yer verme |
| A2 Öğrencilerin dil gelişimlerine uygun yöntem ve teknikleri ilgi ve ihtiyaçları doğrultusunda çeşitli etkinlikler | Dilin günlük yaşamını geliştirilecek etkinlik, görev ve ödevleri birbirini destekleyerek biçimde düzenlenme |
| A3 Öğrencilerin dil becerilerini geliştirmeye yönelik farklı yöntem ve tekniklerin kullanında meslektaslıklarına rehberlik etme
Kendi alanından ve diğer disiplinlerden öğretmenlerle iş birliği yaparak İngilizcenin günlük yaşamını geliştirecek özgün etkinlikler tasarlama |

| 1.5 İngilizce Öğretiminde Teknolojik Kaynakları Kullanabilirme |
|---|
| A1 Öğrenmenin daha etkin gerçekleşmesi için teknolojik kaynaklardan yararlanma
Öğrencileri teknolojik kaynaklara erişim için teşvik etme |
| A2 Dil öğretiminde kullanılan yazılımları ve Internet kaynaklarını izleme
Mevcut olanaklar doğrultusunda öğrencilerin teknolojik kaynaklardan yararlanabilmeleri için uygun ortam ortamlar hazırlayarak bu kaynaklara eşit olarak erişimlerini sağlama |
| A3 Öğrencilerin İngilizce öğreniminde ihtiyaç duydukları teknolojik kaynakları eleştirel gözle değerlendirecek etkin kullanımalarını sağlama |