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 politikalarına 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 alanındaki yeterlik seviyelerini bulmayı ve karşılaştırmayı amaçlamaktadır. Çalışmaya 366 İngilizce öğretmeni adayı ve 84 İngilizce öğretmeni katılmıştır. Daha çok sayıda kişiye ulaşmak ve verinin genellenebilirliğini artırmak için nicel araştırma yöntemi kullanılmıştır. Katılımcılar iki farklı öz değerlendirme formunu içeren anketi doldurmuşlardır. Sonuçlar Türkiye'deki öğretmen eğitimi 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 eğitimi, İngilizce öğretmeni adayları, İngilizce öğretmenleri, Genel öğretmen yeterlikleri, İngilizce öğretmeni 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 (Bayrakcı, 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 & Atlı, 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,

2009). Consequently, MoNE formed the generic and field-specific teacher competencies. Turkish Education Association published findings on the generic teacher competencies with the participation of 4450 students, 2007 teachers, 272 administrators and 2112 parents in 12 cities in Turkey in 2009.

However, there is another study which came up with qualifications of Turkish teachers in relation to the process of becoming a member of EU with the help of Delphi Technique, questionnaire, observation form and interview (Karacaoğlu, 2008). This study included 417 pre-service teachers and 440 in-service teachers in Ankara. It was found that the participant in-service teachers found themselves very qualified in terms of personal and professional knowledge, and highly qualified in terms of national-international values. When these teacher qualifications are compared with the generic teacher competencies set by MoNE, great similarities are seen. These similarities are due to the fact that most of the items on teacher qualifications show similarity or they are the same as the performance indicators of the generic teacher competencies. However, there are some differences, too. While some items such as knowing Turkish national educational system goals appear as the sub-items under the teacher qualifications, the same item appears as the main category with nine performance indicators in the generic teacher competencies. The teacher qualifications suggested by Karacaoğlu (2008) display differences with the inclusion of such items as having a smiling face, being honest, being analytical, having a nice handwriting, and being energetic and enthusiastic. Also, the items of teacher qualifications seem to be shorter than the items of the generic teacher competencies.

Akpınar and Mete (2013) compared teaching competencies and teacher standards between Turkey and China, and showed how the two countries are influenced by each other. It was found that both countries appreciate knowing foreign languages as a way of world knowledge, introducing their own culture, and they stress the importance of tolerance and respect for other cultures and countries. Turkey, on the other hand, was seen to differ with the way it treats culture as a disciplinary knowledge with a focus on the relationship between culture and literature texts. However, China was found to attach great importance to etiquette norms due to the repetition of etiquette norms in competence indicators with a focus on its own festivals, etiquette norms, their customs and foreign countries' customs (Akpınar & Mete, 2013).

When the teacher competencies set by MoNE are examined in detail, it is seen that there are different categories of teacher competencies. There are generic teacher competencies which are considered to be possessed by all teachers regardless of their department. There are also field-specific teacher competencies which were formed on the basis of generic teacher competencies but were revised according to the features of each department. For example, there exist teacher competencies for English teachers, maths teachers, Turkish teachers and some other departments of teaching.

The validity and reliability of the related competencies were ensured with various methods. First of all, there was a pilot 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

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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 and shorten completion time since there are lots of items and statements. The results of the self-assessment forms of both groups were compared to each other to detect similarities and differences between them.

Quantitative data were gathered with the help of two types of self-assessment forms and were analysed with the help of statistical procedures such as frequency and percentage tables via Statistical Programme for Social Sciences 16 (SPSS). The study took about 15 months since certain procedures took time to get permission from the MoNE to carry out scientific research at state schools. That time was also needed to apply the survey with two types of self-assessment forms on both pre-service and in-service English teachers. This study adopted quantitative research method because it aimed to reach a large

number of participants, to increase the generalizability of the findings, and to gain a deeper understanding of the phenomenon in question (Cresswell, Plano Clark, Gutmann, & Hanson, 2003; Dörnyei, 2007). The frequency and percentage tables of the competency levels of the participants are followed by 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

		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 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

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent
Valid	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

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent
Valid	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 a little competent in terms of 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. 2 participants (0.5%) think that this item is not relevant to English teaching.

Table 12 presents the competency item with the lowest competency level for the in-service English teachers in terms of the English teacher competencies. The related competency item is the fifteenth item of the English teacher competencies and is associated with enriching materials used in teaching process by evaluating them in terms of their usefulness, up to dateness, effectiveness or creating original materials.

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 enriching materials used in teaching process by evaluating them in terms of their usefulness, up to dateness, effectiveness or creating original materials.

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

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent
Valid	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

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent
Valid	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 dateness, 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 dateness 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

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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
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- **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	Çok Yeterliyim (5)	Yeterliyim (4)	Kabul edilebilir düzeydeyim (3)	Geliştirmeliyim (2)	Kesinlikle geliştirmeliyim (1)	Açıklama
	Kişisel Gelişim						
1	Farklı fikirlere ve değişime açık olma						
2	Üst düzey düşünme becerilerini kullanma (eleştirel, sorgulayan, yansıtıcı gibi)						
3	Türkçeyi kurallarına uygun ve anlaşılabilir bir biçimde kullanma						
4	Stresle başa çıkma yollarını bilme ve kullanma						
5	Gerektiğinde kişisel ve mesleki konularda uzman yardımına başvurma						
6	Sağlıklı 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 sürecinde yararlanma						
12	Meslekî bilgi, beceri ve yeterliklerini geliştirmek amacıyla, hizmet içi eğitim, toplantı ve seminerlere katılma						
13	Meslekî gelişimine yönelik yayınları izleme						
14	Kişisel ve mesleki duyarlılığını artırmak için kültür ve sanat etkinliklerine katılma						
	Okulun İyileştirilmesine ve Geliştirilmesine Katkı Sağlama						
15	Okuldaki sosyal, kültürel ve meslekî çalışmalara aktif bir biçimde katılma ve gerektiğinde önderlik yapma						
16	Okul gelişim-yönetim ekiplerinde görev alma						
17	Okul ve çevrenin gelişimine katkı sağlamak için çalışmalar yapma						
18	Okulun iyileştirilmesinde ve geliştirilmesinde çevre olanaklarını kullanma						
19	Sivil toplum örgütleri, yerel yönetimlerle iş birliği yapma						
20	Okulda yaşanan sorunları çözmek için eylem araştırmaları planlama ve yürütme						
21	Okulu geliştirme çalışmalarında öğrencileri rol almaları için teşvik etme						
22	Öğrenen okul çalışmalarını destekleme ve bu çalışmalara katılma						
	Mevzuat Bilgisi						
23	Görev, hak ve sorumluluklarıyla ilgili mevzuatı bilme ve buna uygun davranma						
24	Engellilerin eğitim ve öğretimden yararlanmasına hizmet eden yasa ve yönetmelikleri bilme ve buna uygun davranma						

A	KİŞİSEL GELİŞİM - KİŞİSEL DEĞERLER	Çok Yeterliyim (5)	Yeterliyim (4)	Kabul edilebilir düzeydeyim (3)	Geliştirmeliyim (2)	Kesinlikle geliştirmeliyim (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 değerlendirmeden elde ettiği verileri kişisel gelişimi için kullanma						
A	**MESLEKİ GELİŞİM - MESLEKİ DEĞERLER**						
	Öğrenciye Değer Verme						
31	Öğrencilerle ilgili kayıtlarda gizlilik ilkesine uyma						
32	Öğrencilerin sahip olduğu değerlere saygı gösterme						
33	Öğrencilere, diğerlerinin fikirlerine ve ürettiklerine 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 sağlama						
38	Öğrenciye ismiyle hitap etme						
	Öğrencinin Başarabileceğine İnanma						
39	Plânında öğrencilerin gereksinimlerine yanıt verecek farklı etkinlikler tasarlama						
40	Öğrenmeyi engelleyen 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 dışı faaliyetlerde öğrenmeye karşı merak/ istek uyandırıcı etkinlikler hazırlama						
43	Yetersiz-isteksiz öğrencileri 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	Öğrencilerde bireysel ve kültürel farklılıklar olabileceğine ilişkin anlayış kazandırmaya yönelik çalışmalara yer verme						
48	İnsan haklarına uygun biçimde davranma						
49	Bilgi ve iletişim teknolojileri ile ilgili yasal ve ahlâki sorumlulukları öğrencilere kazandırma						
50	Çocuk haklarının korunması ile ilgili yasa ve yönetmelikleri bilme						
51	Sınıf içi ve dışı etkinliklerde demokrasi anlayışını geliştirici yöntem / tekniklere yer verme						

A	MESLEKİ GELİŞİM - MESLEKİ DEĞERLER	Çok Yeterliyim (5)	Yeterliyim (4)	Kabul edilebilir düzeydeyim (3)	Geliştirmeliyim (2)	Kesinlikle geliştirmeliyim (1)	Açıklama
52	Öğrencilerde ulusal ve evrensel değerlerin gelişmesini destekleme ve model olma						
53	Sınıf içi ve dışı çalışmalarında, toplumsal ve meslekî 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 korunmasında ve uygulanmasında etkin rol alma						

PART III) ENGLISH TEACHER COMPETENCIES SELF-ASSESSMENT FORM

1	ÖĞRENME-ÖĞRETME SÜRECİNİ PLANLAMA VE DÜZENLEME İNGİLİZCE ÖĞRETİM SÜREÇLERİNİ PLANLAMA VE DÜZENLEME	Çok Yeterliyim (5)	Yeterliyim (4)	Kabul edilebilir düzeydeyim (3)	Geliştirmeliyim (2)	Kesinlikle geliştirmeliyim (1)	Açıklama
1.1 İngilizce Öğretimine Uygun Planlama Yapabilme							
A1	İngilizce programı doğrultusunda öğrenme-öğretme sürecini planlama						
	Öğretim sürecinin planlanmasında öğrencilerin dil yeterliklerini dikkate alma						
A2	Öğretim sürecini, genel olarak öğrencilerin dil gelişim düzeylerini, öğrenme stillerini, ilgi ve ihtiyaçlarını dikkate alarak planlama						
A3	Öğretim sürecini, öğrencilerin tamamının dil gelişim düzeyleri ile öğrenme stillerine uygun ve esnek olarak planlama						
1.2 İngilizce Öğretimine Uygun Öğrenme Ortamları Düzenleyebilme							
A1	Öğrenme ortamında, öğretim stratejilerine uygun fiziksel düzenlemeler yapma						
A2	Öğrencilerin katılımlarını sağlamaya ve başarılarını arttırmaya yönelik sıcak ve olumlu ortamlar oluşturma						
A3	Öğrenme ortamlarının düzenlenmesinde bütün öğrencilerin ilgi ve gereksinimlerini dikkate alarak etkin katılımlarını sağlamaya ve başarılarını arttırmaya yönelik ortamlar oluşturma						
	Bütün öğrencilerin öğretmenle ve birbirleriyle öğrenme amaçlı etkileşimlerini geliştiren okul içi ve okul dışı çoklu öğrenme ortamları düzenleme						
	Öğrencilerin ilgi duydukları konularda katılımlarını sağlayacak çeşitli sosyal etkinlikler düzenleme						
1.3 İngilizce Öğretim Sürecine Uygun Materyaller ve Kaynaklar Kullanabilme							
A1	Öğretim sürecinde çeşitli materyallerden ve kaynaklardan yararlanmanın önemini bilme						
	Materyallerin içeriğe, öğrencilerin dil gelişimine ve seviyesine uygun olması gerektiğini bilme						

	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 kullanışlılığı, güncelliği, etkililiği gibi açılardan değerlendirerek zenginleştirme veya özgün materyaller hazırlama						
	İngilizce öğretiminde içeriğe, öğrenci seviyesine ve çevre koşullarına uygun materyalleri ve kaynakları geliştirme konusunda bilgi ve deneyimlerini meslektaşlarıyla 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 yaşamda kullanımını geliştirecek etkinliklere yer verme						
A2	Öğrencilerin dil gelişimlerine uygun yöntem ve teknikleri ilgi ve ihtiyaçları doğrultusunda çeşitlendirme						
	Dilin günlük yaşamda kullanımını geliştirecek etkinlik, görev ve ödevleri birbirini destekleyecek biçimde düzenleme						
A3	Öğrencilerin dil becerilerini geliştirmeye yönelik farklı yöntem ve tekniklerin kullanımında meslektaşlarına rehberlik etme						
	Kendi alanından ve diğer disiplinlerden öğretmenlerle iş birliği yaparak İngilizcenin günlük yaşamda kullanımını geliştirecek özgün etkinlikler tasarlama						
1.5 İngilizce Öğretiminde Teknolojik Kaynakları Kullanabilme							
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 İçin uygun ortam ortamlar hazırlayarak bu kaynaklara eşit olarak erişimlerini sağlama						
A3	Öğrencilerin İngilizce öğreniminde ihtiyaç duydukları teknolojik kaynakları eleştirel gözle değerlendirerek etkin kullanmalarını sağlama						