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Personal and Professional Readiness of In-service Teachers of English for Culturally Responsive Teaching

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ARTICLE INFO	ABSTRACT
  	Purpose: The aim of this study was twofold. First, it investigated the extent to which in-service teachers of English were personally and professionally ready to carry out culturally responsive teaching (CRT). Second, it aimed to understand teachers' perceptions of CRT. **Research Method:** This study was carried out in a sequential explanatory mixed methods design. Accordingly, first quantitative data were gathered in the first phase through administering CRT readiness scale. In the second phase, qualitative data were gathered through semi-structured interviews to gain detailed insights about their perceptions. A total number of 415 in-service teachers of English participated in the quantitative phase of the study, and 12 teachers participated in the semi-structured interviews.

Findings: Quantitative findings showed significant differences between teachers' personal and professional readiness, novice and experienced teachers, and graduates of ELT departments and graduates of ELL and ACL departments. Qualitative findings showed that experience alone was a distinguishable factor for CRT and also underlined the necessity for and the importance of culture-oriented courses in undergraduate English language teacher education.

Implications for Research and Practice: Accordingly, enriching undergraduate English language teacher education programs with culture-oriented courses is a need. Such courses should cover both theoretical and practical sides of multicultural education and CRT. There is also a need to provide more opportunities for teacher candidates to execute teaching practices in real and culturally diverse classrooms. Furthermore, the need for studies focusing on field-specific competencies and real classroom settings are also underlined.

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Introduction

The 21st century is mostly associated with globalization, information, technology and digitalization. These burgeoning phenomena are reshaping today's world in which people have "access to knowledge and information through multiple and varied media and sources" (Porto, 2010, p. 45). In addition, these media and sources provide a plethora of cultural exchanges in which not only messages and knowledge, but cultures are also transmitted without spatial distance (Aigrain, 2012; Hossain & Aydin, 2011; Koc-Damgacı & Aydin, 2018; Krisneepaiboon, 2015; Siapera, 2006). All these developments have consequently paved the way for dramatic changes in the role and nature of culture, making it a dynamic and multi-faceted concept. As Kramsch (2014) underlines, such a postmodern space has deterritorialized culture, by suggesting that the term culture no longer means "shared membership in one singular community of like-minded individuals" (p. 250). Accordingly, multiculturalism, cultural hybridity, shifting, and multiple identities are now social facts of "our everyday life, evident on a daily basis in educational, vocational, and recreational" contexts (Tan, 2008, p. 146).

As Lendis (2014) argues, educational goals should be accommodated to meet current societal and global demands, and thus students must be equipped with the necessary tools and skills to get by in today's world. Considering rapidly diversifying demographic make-up of today's schools and classrooms, multicultural education is a fact and need to which educational policy-makers, administrators and practitioners need to pay regard. Accordingly, multicultural education can be considered the reflection of multiculturalism in educational contexts (Bagceli Kahraman & Onur Sezer, 2017; Tonbuloglu, Aslan & Aydin, 2016). Based on such tenets as equity, social justice, understanding, and respect for differences (Akinlar & Dogan, 2017), multicultural education is described as the amalgamation of an idea, an educational reform movement, and a process whose ultimate aim is to provide "an equal opportunity to learn in school" for all students "regardless of their gender, social class, and ethnic, racial, or cultural characteristics" (Banks, 2010, p. 3). Holding this view, it is clear that traditional teaching practices would fail in such culturally diverse settings even if educational policies, national curricula, syllabi and coursebooks are re-framed concerning multicultural education because it is still the teacher who actualizes all these plans on paper in the classroom (Richards, 2001). However, not all teachers know what to do and how to do in order for actualizing the requirements of multicultural education. Therefore, culturally responsive teaching (hereafter CRT) is proposed to fill this gap.

Culturally Responsive Teaching

CRT is considered the extension of multicultural education in the classroom as multicultural education is mostly related to plans, ideas, and organizations on paper. CRT is also anchored in the assumptions that pedagogy must cater to academic success, provide students with opportunities "to develop and maintain cultural competence" and cultivate "critical consciousness" so that students perceive, criticize, and challenge social inequalities (Ladson-Billings, 1995, p. 160). When academic

knowledge and skills are given in appropriate contexts involving students' real experiences and cultural backgrounds, they become more meaningful, appealing; and thus, are learned and internalized more easily (Au & Kawakami, 1994; Bishop & Berryman, 2006; Ladson-Billings, 1995; Sleeter & Owuor, 2011; Villegas & Lucas, 2002). Holding these assumptions as primary tenets, Gay (2000) proposes CRT "with a stronger focus on teachers' strategies and practices that is, the doing of teaching" (Muniz, 2019, p. 9), and defines CRT as "using the cultural knowledge, prior experiences, frames of reference, and performance styles of ethnically diverse students to make learning encounters more relevant to and effective for them" (Gay, 2000, p. 29). Echoing Gay (2000, 2002), Siwatu (2007) also argues that the primary function of CRT is to provide students with essential knowledge and skills so that they can act in harmony with mainstream culture while keeping their unique cultural identities and native languages.

Various conceptual frameworks have been proposed for CRT by many researchers. Gay (2002) postulates five main elements for CRT; (1) developing a knowledge base about cultural diversity, (2) proliferation of ethnic and cultural diversity content for culturally relevant curricula, (3) demonstrating cultural caring, (4) building learning communities and communicating with ethnically diverse students, and (5) responding to ethnic diversity in the delivery of instruction (p. 106). Siwatu (2007) regards CRT as an approach to teaching and learning that requires specific competencies such as integrating students' cultural backgrounds and learning preferences with curriculum, creating a culturally compatible classroom atmosphere, using various assessment techniques, and fostering cultural enrichment. In a similar vein, Aceves and Orosco (2014) identify six themes of CRT including (1) instructional engagement, (2) culture, language, and racial identity, (3) multicultural awareness, (4) high expectations, (5) critical thinking, and (6) social justice, and underline that teachers should;

- integrate students' cultural knowledge with the course content,
- understand how students' cultural, linguistic, and racial identities develop along with their impacts on learning,
- use multicultural awareness skills to observe and reflect on their own cultural values, beliefs and perceptions, and to overcome cultural stereotypes and prejudices,
- hold high expectations of academic success, and help students to reach their potential through using challenging and engaging exercises,
- instill the ways for critical thinking into students by merging their cultural and linguistic experiences with challenging learning experiences (pp. 9-12).

Despite many studies presenting practical suggestions and empirically revealed positive outcomes of CRT, it should also be underlined that implementation of CRT is not flawless; on the contrary, it is not executed beyond the superficial level, and this paves the way for a little or no room for adapting teaching to the needs of culturally diverse students (Abacioglu et al., 2019).

CRT and English Language Teaching

Holding a global status, the English language has already become the medium of interaction among many non-native speakers (Crystal, 2003; McKay, 2002) which has led to diminishing the role of native speakers in ELT pedagogy (Byram, 2008; Graddol, 2000; Matsuda, 2006; McKay, 2002). This paradigm shift has culminated in that one of the ultimate aims of ELT is preparing students to communicate effectively and appropriately in various settings where speakers' world of linguistic and cultural origins are mostly diverse (Deardorff, 2006; Kiczkowiak, 2019; Schreiber, 2019; Seidlhofer, 2011) and "to which each speaker brings their own cultural frames of reference" (Matsuda, 2017, p. xiii). From this standpoint, ELT pedagogy "goes beyond acquisition of linguistic, non-linguistic etc. knowledge" (Porto, 2010, p. 46) and incorporates integrating students' own culture into course content (Cortazzi & Jin, 1999), revising culturally inappropriate materials (Matsuda, 2012; Piątkowska, 2015), valuing cultural diversity (Chlopek, 2008; Corbett, 2003), creating culturally tolerant classroom atmosphere (Brown, 2007), tolerating different ideas, contrasts between these new ideas and students' prior beliefs and values along with reconciliation (Porto, 2010; Tseng, 2002) along with using various language learning strategies and assessment types (Gu, 2012; Oxford, 2017). These are considered the current tenets of ELT pedagogy which are also akin to those proposed by CRT.

There is an increasing body of literature on CRT practices in language classrooms and English language teacher education. Recent studies carried out with in-service teachers of English have provided insights about to what extent teachers apply CRT in the classroom (Rhodes, 2013), how effectively they address cultural diversity (Chen & Yang, 2017) along with the effects of such practices (Heineke, 2014; Lin, 2015) and teachers' competency on CRT (O'Keeffe, 2019; Smith, 2020). Many of such studies encapsulate the need for teaching English in a culturally and linguistically responsive way and research investigating CRT practices of in-service teachers of English.

CRT in Turkey's Case

Despite myriad studies on CRT in the international literature (e.g. Aceves & Orosco, 2014; Gay, 2002; Hsiao, 2015; Muniz, 2019; Siwatu, 2007; Siwatu et al., 2016; Sleeter & Owuor, 2011; Villegas & Lucas, 2002), our national literature offers a limited amount of studies whose focus is solely on CRT and in-service teachers. Findings of Karatas and Oral's (2015) study showed that teachers found themselves "inadequate to actualize" CRT in their classrooms due to "their personal apprehension, education programs and school opportunities" (p. 54). In a similar vein, as Paksoy (2019) study revealed, Turkish teachers of English did not consider themselves ready to face the challenges stemming from cultural differences due to lack of training (p. 1167). Findings of Paksoy's (2017) study showed a similar portrait revealing that teachers paid "limited and superficial attention" to culturally different students, and they did not hold essential qualifications to respond to the expectations of culturally diverse students (p. 183). In addition, Kotluk and Kockaya's (2018) study revealed that for the majority of teachers, different cultural values held by teachers and students negatively influenced the teaching-learning process and integrating different cultural values into

education negatively impacted on social cohesion. Therefore, considering the multicultural mosaic in Turkey, Nayir and Saridas (2020) underline that there is a need for educational policies focusing on CRT in our country. Furthermore, Nayir and Taskin's (2020) study also showed that in-service teachers were not wholly insufficient as they were able to merge the conventional methods with the special ones while managing cultural diversity in their classrooms whereas some of them preferred to ignore cultural diversity as a way to cope with it. Although findings of these studies are adequate to delineate problems related to the practice of CRT in Turkey's case, they do not portray a whole picture of teachers of English in terms of CRT in the national context.

Considering the conceptual framework of CRT, it is clear that CRT assigns teachers numerous responsibilities and requires various competencies. Teachers' readiness to take these responsibilities and to perform these competencies plays a crucial role in actualizing CRT, yet national studies show that teachers are having problems performing CRT. More importantly, national studies lack showing the status of Turkish teachers of English in terms of CRT. Therefore, to what extent in-service teachers of English are ready to work in such a culturally diverse environment is still an important question waiting to be answered. Hence, the aim of this study is to focus on in-service teachers of English and seek answers to the research questions given below.

1. To what extent are in-service teachers of English personally and professionally ready to carry out their teaching practices in a culturally responsive way?

    a. Is there a statistically significant difference between professional and personal readiness of in-service teachers of English?

    b. Do teaching experience and BA degree lead to a statistically significant difference in personal and professional readiness of in-service teachers of English for CRT?

2. How do in-service teachers of English perceive multiculturalism and CRT? What kind of problems do they encounter in the classroom, and what solutions do they find to solve these problems?

Method

Research Design

This study was conducted in a sequential explanatory mixed methods design. This design is characterized by gathering quantitative data in the first phase then the qualitative data are gathered to explain and interpret the results stemming from the first data set in the second phase (Creswell, 2009, p. 211). Accordingly, these two different types of data sets were used in answering the first research question and two sub-questions (Teddlie & Tashakkori, 2009) although the priority was given to quantitative data. In addition, the qualitative data were also gathered to gain deeper insights about participants' perceptions of CRT, the problems they encountered in the classroom, and their solutions to these problems.

Sampling and Participants

In this study, the convenience sampling method was used as it allows researchers to gather "samples that are both easily accessible and willing to participate in a study" (Teddlie & Yu, 2007, p. 78). Furthermore, the sample does not represent any group apart from itself, and the aim is not to make generalizations about the wider population (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2007, p. 114). Hence, a total number of 415 teachers of English participated in the quantitative phase of the study. These teachers were collected from an online community of teachers that was popular in a social network site after an open invitation that informed the target population about the study. A total number of 415 teachers of English attended the quantitative phase of the study. The demographic make-up of the teachers of English is given in Table 1.

Table 1

Teachers' Demographics

		f	%			f	%
Sex	Female	335	80.7	School Type	State	324	78.1
	Male	80	19.3		Private	91	21.9
Age	25-29 years old	122	29.4	Teaching Experience	1-3 years	76	18.3
	30-35 years old	138	33.3		4-6 years	86	20.7
	36-39 years old	74	17.8		7-9 years	60	14.5
	40-50 years old	81	19.5		10 years +	193	46.5
Teaching Context	Primary School	121	29.2	Bachelor's Degree	ELT Dep.	277	66.7
	Lower Secondary School	179	43.1		Other Dep.*	138	33.3
	Upper Secondary School	115	27.3				
School location	Aegean Region	46	11.1	Marmara Region		80	19.3
	Black Sea Region	43	10.4	Mediterranean Region		116	27.9
	Central Anatolia Region	47	11.3	Southeastern Region		50	12.1
	Eastern Anatolia Region	33	7.9				

* Other Departments involve teachers holding BA level diplomas from English Language and Literature and American Culture and Literature departments along with the certificate of English language teaching.

Data Collection

Two different data collection tools were employed in this study. In the first phase, CRT readiness scale designed by Karatas and Oral (2017) was administrated as it is more appropriate to the Turkish context compared to the other scales developed through data generated from American pre-service teachers (see Hsiao, 2015; Siwatu, 2007). The scale used in this study incorporates 21 items designed in a 5-point Likert-type scale and categorized in personal readiness and professional readiness dimensions. The reliability of the scale was found .92 for personal readiness dimension, .87 for professional readiness dimension and .90 for the whole scale (Karatas & Oral, 2017, p. 253). In this study, the Cronbach's alpha coefficient value was found .85 for personal readiness, and .89 for professional readiness and .86 for the whole scale. The scale was re-designed in an online form then was sent to teachers via e-mail. It was administrated in Turkish and no changes were made in the scale.

In the second phase, the qualitative data were gathered through face-to-face semi-structured interviews to gain "rich and varied insights about the phenomenon under

investigation" (Dornyei, 2007, p. 126). First, a set of open-ended questions were designed, and then opinions from three different experts of culture and English language teaching were taken for the validity of the questions. Accordingly, some questions were rephrased, whereas some were excluded. A total number of 8 open-ended questions were addressed to the participants, and some follow-up questions were also asked when necessary to elicit vague responses. At the end of the quantitative data collection tool, participants were asked if they were volunteering to participate in the interviews, and a total of 12 teachers of English volunteered to participate. Of 12 interviewees, 8 were female, and 4 were male, and 7 teachers were graduates of ELT departments, whereas 5 teachers were graduates of ELL departments, holding the certificate of English language teaching. All the interviewees work in state schools in different parts of Turkey and have been teaching English for at least two years. The open-ended interview questions were put to the respondents in Turkish by the researcher so that they could clearly understand and thoroughly respond to each of them, and their responses were recorded and then transcribed verbatim. During the interviews, the researcher acted as a moderator. That is to say, the researcher kept the interviews to the point, asked the open-ended questions neutrally and formally, and added some follow-up questions to elicit responses (Cohen et al., 2007; Patton, 2015).

Data Analysis

Quantitative data were analyzed through the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) edition 23. Mean scores were used for answering the first research question. For answering the two sub-research questions, data were first analyzed in terms of normality to decide parametric or non-parametric tests would be applied. Descriptive statistics were employed to test the normal distribution of the data set. This method pays regard to skewness and kurtosis values generated from the data set to test normality (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2013). As presented in Table 2, skewness and kurtosis values were found between ± 2, which was considered the evidence of the normal distribution (George & Mallery, 2010). Accordingly, for answering the first and second sub-research questions, parametric tests were employed. Table 2.

Table 2

Descriptive Statistics

Scale and Dimensions	Skewness	Kurtosis
CRT Readiness Scale	-.099	.256
• Personal Readiness Dimension	-.294	-.108
• Professional Readiness Dimension	.132	-.453

Qualitative data were analyzed by employing thematic analysis. In this process, the procedure proposed by Braun and Clarke (2013, pp. 202-203) was followed. Accordingly, audio recordings were first transcribed into a Word 2010 document, and then these documents were imported to Atlas.ti, a qualitative data analysis software. The transcriptions were exposed to multiple readings in order for familiarization and generating codes and themes as no pre-determined codes or themes were used. Then,

the transcriptions were reviewed for double check by another expert to increase reliability.

Findings

Findings Related to the CRT Readiness Scale

Findings related to the personal readiness dimension showed that teachers of English who participated in the study found themselves personally ready to teach in a culturally responsive way (M=4.21). As shown in Table 3, the highest mean scores attached to the attributes of not allowing any discrimination (M=4.78) and enjoyment in interacting with culturally different people (M=4.53). These were followed by taking students' own culture into consideration while teaching (M=4.49) and having personal curiosity about different cultures (M=4.42). Surprisingly, the lowest mean scores were related to teachers' preferences in teaching in places where cultural diversity was most observable (M=3.55) and being able to teach anywhere in Turkey considering such cultural diversity (M=3.70).

Table 3

Means and Standard Deviations of Personal Readiness Dimension

	Items	M	SD.
5.	In my classroom, I don't allow my students to discriminate against one another due to their cultural differences.	4.78	.494
4.	I enjoy interacting with culturally different people.	4.53	.604
3.	I know I need to consider my students' cultural values while I guide their learning.	4.49	.585
2.	I am curious about the cultural values that my students have.	4.42	.647
9.	In my opinion, students should be encouraged to give specific examples related to their own cultures during class time.	4.40	.581
10.	I think that students' academic success will increase if teaching is carried out considering their cultural environment in which they grew up.	4.28	.700
12.	I think that our education system –from preschool to university– should be re-shaped to represent cultural diversity in Turkey.	4.19	.795
6.	In my opinion, it's fun to teach in a culturally diverse classroom.	4.10	.830
8.	Both inside and outside the classroom, I would like to increase interactions with my students who are not native speakers of Turkish by learning words and sentences from their native languages.	4.07	.864
1.	I'm ready to teach in a culturally diverse classroom.	3.99	.906
7.	Considering cultural diversity, I can teach anywhere in Turkey.	3.70	1.09
11.	I prefer to teach in a place where there are culturally different people than me.	3.55	1.01
	Personal Readiness Dimension TOTAL	4.21	.476

Similarly, when the professional readiness of the teachers is considered, it is seen that these teachers were not certain about being professionally ready to teach in a

culturally responsive way (*M*=2.89). As shown in Table 4, the highest mean score attached to teachers' awareness of using students' own cultures as a tool was found 4.07 followed by the teachers' awareness of cultural diversity being raised during their undergraduate education under the influence of their lecturers'/professors' personalized narratives and experiences was found 3.15.

The lowest mean scores were mostly related to their undergraduate programs. Accordingly, many teachers of English thought that the textbooks studied in their undergraduate education courses were not adequate for involving knowledge about cultural diversity in Turkey (*M*=2.34). Similarly, their undergraduate programs were not found sufficient for raising awareness of cultural diversity (*M*=2.47). Finally, they did not gain much information about different cultures in Turkey throughout their undergraduate education (*M*=2.62).

Table 4

Means and Standard Deviations of Professional Readiness Dimension

Items		*M*	*SD.*
18.	I'm aware that students' cultural lives should be used as a tool to fulfill their learning objectives.	4.07	.651
21.	I raised awareness of cultural diversity thanks to my lecturers/professors who included their personal lives and experiences in our courses.	3.15	1.17
14.	I think that the compulsory courses I took throughout my undergraduate education have contributed to me in terms of sensitivity to cultural values.	3.00	1.23
16.	Throughout my undergraduate education, I raised awareness of cultural diversity in Turkey.	2.81	1.11
13.	Throughout my undergraduate education, my lecturers/professors raised awareness of cultural diversity in Turkey.	2.77	1.18
20.	I think that the electives I took throughout my undergraduate education have contributed to me in terms of sensitivity to cultural values.	2.74	1.13
17.	Throughout my undergraduate education, I gained knowledge about different cultures in Turkey.	2.62	1.09
15.	I consider my undergraduate program adequate for raising awareness of cultural diversity in Turkey.	2.47	1.03
19.	I consider the textbooks studied in undergraduate education courses adequate for involving knowledge about cultural diversity in Turkey.	2.34	.982
	Professional Readiness Dimension TOTAL	2.89	.819

In order to seek answers to the first sub-research question, the paired samples t-test was conducted. As shown in Table 5, findings showed that personal readiness scores of teachers of English were higher than those related to professional readiness, and the paired samples t-test results revealed that this difference was statistically significant (*p*<.01).

Table 5

Paired Samples T-test Results

	Paired Differences					
	M	*SD*	*St. Error Mean*	*t*	*df*	*Sig (2-tailed)*
Personal Readiness Professional Readiness	1.32	.862	.042	31.212	414	.000*

p<.01

These results are in line with those revealed in Ozudogru's (2018) study which shows a similar statistically significant difference between participants' personal readiness for CRT scores and their professional readiness scores. Considering the focus of the items given in the professional readiness dimension, it can be deduced from these results that undergraduate teacher education programs in Turkey have problems in preparing teacher candidates for teaching in a culturally responsive way.

In order to seek answers to the question that if teaching experience leads to a statistically significant difference in personal and professional readiness of teachers of English for CRT, the One-Way ANOVA test was conducted, and results are given in Table 6.

Table 6

One-Way ANOVA Test Results

		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Personal Readiness	Between Groups	2.456	3	.819	3.667	.012
	Within Groups	91.481	411	.223		
	Total	93.937	414			
Professional Readiness	Between Groups	18.221	3	6.074	9.618	.000*
	Within Groups	259.532	411	.631		
	Total	277.753	414			

p<.01

As shown in Table 6, results revealed that there was not any statistically significant difference among groups in terms of personal readiness (*p>*.01). However, statistically significant differences were found between teaching experience and teachers' professional readiness (*p<*.01). Accordingly, Gabriel post-hoc test was conducted as the significance value of Levene's test of homogeneity of variances was found .562, and the group sizes in teaching experience were not equal. As shown in Table 7, Gabriel post-hoc test results indicated that teachers who had 1 to 3 years of teaching experience (*M*=3.32) had higher mean scores than teachers who had 4-6 years of teaching experience (*M*=2.86), teachers who had 7 to 9 years of teaching experience (*M*=2.70), and teachers who had 10 years of teaching experience and more (*M*=2.78), and these differences were found statistically significant.

Table 7

Gabriel Post-Hoc Test Results

Teaching Experience (I)	Teaching Experience (J)	M. Dif. (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.
	4-6 years	.45859	.12511	.002*
1-3 years	7-9 years	.61608	.13723	.000*
	10 years and more	.53253	.10761	.000*

*p<.01

The second sub-research question aimed to reveal if teachers' undergraduate programs led to a statistically significant difference in personal and professional readiness for CRT. The independent samples t-test was conducted, and the results are given in the table below. As shown in Table 8, although ELT graduates had lower scores (*M*=4.17) than the graduates of English Language & Literature (ELL) and American Culture & Literature (ACL) departments (*M*=4.29), when the personal readiness dimension of CRT is considered, this difference was not statistically significant. Similarly, ELT graduates had lower scores (*M*=2.79) than the graduates of ELL and ACL departments (*M*=3.07) in terms of professional readiness for CRT, yet the t-test results showed that this difference was statistically significant.

Table 8

Independent Samples T-test Results

		Mean Dif.	Std. Error Dif.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
Personal Readiness	Equal variances assumed	-.12562	.04931	-2.548	413 303.379	.011
Professional Readiness	Equal variances assumed	-.28187	.08431	-3.343	413 258.748	.001*

*p<.01

In a nutshell, quantitative data showed that the personal readiness of teachers of English was high for CRT although participating teachers were not professionally ready for teaching in a culturally responsive way. In terms of the teaching experience, results showed that teachers of English with 1 to 3 years of experience had higher scores of professional readiness than those who had 4 years or more of classroom experience. The results also showed that graduates of ELT departments had lower scores in professional readiness compared to graduates of ELL and ACL departments.

Findings Related to Semi-Structured Interviews

Qualitative findings showed that almost all of the interviewees thought they were personally ready to teach in culturally diverse classrooms. When their reasons were interrogated, it came to the surface that openness to different cultures, having cultural tolerance, and regarding cultural diversity as richness were the leading markers. A male teacher's response clearly portrays this:

T7: "*I can say that I'm personally ready to teach in culturally diverse classrooms because I've always been open to different cultures and never had prejudices against them. I think cultural diversity cultural richness rather than a problem. I'm trying to reflect this mindset to my job.*"

Almost all of the interviewees stated that they did not think they were professionally ready due mainly to a lack of experience and in-service education related to CRT. A female teacher underlined that "*I don't think I'm professionally ready as I'm not an experienced teacher. Although I gradually develop myself about teaching in culturally diverse classrooms, I still need more experience to say I'm ready*" (T4). In a similar vein, another female teacher stated:

T5: "*I can't say I'm professionally ready to do so because I have not attended any in-service seminars or workshops about it. But I'd love to as the number of culturally diverse students increases day by day, and as teachers, we need to learn what to do.*"

Interviewees were also asked to state the differences between personal readiness and professional readiness. Findings revealed that most of the teachers drew a dichotomy between personal and professional readiness. Accordingly, personal readiness for CRT required a culturally tolerant and open mindset along with acceptance of different cultures, whereas professional readiness required knowledge, skills and experience. More importantly, although teachers drew a distinction between personal and professional readiness, a great majority of them underlined that personal readiness must be amalgamated with professional readiness in order to teach in culturally diverse classrooms. A female teacher summarized the importance of both type of readiness as follows;

T5: "*I don't think a teacher who isn't culturally tolerant can teach in such a way* [CRT]. *That's why I think personal readiness is the must-be requirement of professional readiness. Professional readiness involves knowledge and skills, and it also refers to the difference between what you should do and what you are doing in the classroom. Therefore, the most important thing is merging them.*"

In order to gain detailed insights about quantitative findings related to teaching experience, interviewees were asked to explain to what extent experience was important to teach in a culturally responsive way. All teachers highlighted the importance of experience, yet they also stressed that the quality of the experience had a more critical role.

T1: "*Yes, experience is important, yet for vocational development, knowing what to do and how to do is also important, especially if the case is cultural issues.*"

T4: "*Although experience is one of the most important elements, it is not enough... If experience is not supported with knowledge and skill, it just refers to saying I have been teaching English for 3 years or 5 years.*"

T9: "*In my opinion, experience is always important, especially if the matter is teaching in a culturally diverse classroom. But experience does not mean how long you have been teaching English; it is related to increasing knowledge, developing skills and practice.*"

One of the important findings of this study was the statistically significant difference between the graduates of ELT departments and the graduates of ELL and ACL departments in terms of professional readiness for CRT. In order to seek explanations to this finding, interviewees were asked to explain what contributions their undergraduate program made for teaching in a culturally responsive way. ELT graduates underlined that their undergraduate education was well-designed and instructional to learn all the essentials related to language teaching, yet it was not sufficient to prepare them for teaching in a culturally diverse classroom due mainly to the lack of courses focusing on CRT and multicultural education, and the lack of teaching practices in real and culturally diverse classrooms.

> T1: "*…all those lesson plans, activities and micro-teachings were designed to teach in flawless classrooms. I only experienced two different classrooms while doing my teaching internship, so most of us don't know what is going on in real classrooms or what problems occur in culturally diverse classrooms…*"

> T11: "*I can say that my undergraduate education was instructional… But I can't say the theoretical part of it was not helpful because I didn't take any courses about culture or cultural issues. I wasn't trained to teach in culturally diverse classrooms...*"

> T12: "*I can't say that my undergraduate education prepared me to teach in culturally diverse classrooms. Culture was a part of some of our courses, but it was only limited to superficial elements related to British or American cultures, and unfortunately, there were no culture-oriented courses.*"

Graduates of ELL departments pointed out that although they had shortcomings in language teaching and needed more practice and experience, their undergraduate education helped them increase their knowledge about cultural issues and also increase their cultural understanding and sensitivity.

> T6: "*There were only 2-3 courses related to English language teaching … but I think my undergraduate education helped me better understand other cultures as there were many courses directly related to culture.*"

> T8: "*ELL departments don't aim to train English teachers. That's why I still have some deficiencies in practice… There were many courses about culture in my undergraduate program, and they helped me increase my knowledge and understanding of different cultures.*"

In order to seek answers to the last research question, interviewees were asked questions about their perception of multiculturalism and CRT, the problems they encountered, and the strategies they used to solve these problems. Qualitative findings showed that multiculturalism was mostly associated with cultural and linguistic diversity, ethnicity and acceptance of such differences whereas CRT was mostly associated with teaching paying regard to all kind of cultural differences along with teaching against marginalization and discrimination.

> T2: "*I think multiculturalism refers to a society which consists of different ethnic groups and acceptance of them as richness rather than a challenge to the social order...* [CRT]

means taking cultural differences into consideration and prevention of any kind of discrimination while teaching."

T3: "*Multiculturalism is a society where linguistically or culturally various ethnic groups live together in harmony. So, it refers to cultural diversity… I can define* [CRT] *as paying attention to students' cultural backgrounds in the classroom and create a culturally respectful classroom atmosphere so that all students feel safe."*

When it comes to the problems related to CRT, teachers mostly encountered communication problems in the classroom due to linguistic diversity and a male teacher's responses clearly shows how teachers try to solve such problems:

T8: "*I have many linguistically diverse students and sometimes it is difficult to communicate with them. So, I use gestures and mimes, and also I learned some basic words and phrases in their native language."*

Another problem they encountered was discrimination in the classroom due to linguistic diversity, and a female teacher described this problem and her solution as follows;

T10: "*Some students ridicule others as they speak their native language, so they feel left out. In such cases, I often tried not to overreact, communicated with those students one-to-one and explained that their behavior was unacceptable."*

Teachers also underlined that some cultural elements in course materials were unfamiliar to their students or students' own culture was underrepresented. In such cases, they tried to give some extra examples or prepared some extra activities related to students' own culture.

T12: "*The theme of one unit is 'At the fair' but there were a lot of students who have never been to a fair, so all those words and pictures were unfamiliar to them. I tried to solve this problem by converting words and phrases about 'fair' to playground and prepared some extra activities."*

Discussion, Conclusion and Recommendations

This study was carried out to determine to what extent in-service teachers of English were personally and professionally ready to carry out their teaching practices in a culturally responsive way. It further examined if undergraduate education and teaching experiences led to a meaningful difference in terms of teachers' readiness. Finally, the results of this study revealed how teachers perceived multiculturalism and CRT with particular attention paid to the problems they encountered in their classrooms.

Quantitative findings of this study revealed that teachers of English were personally ready to teach in a culturally responsive way. Qualitative findings also underpinned this result and explained why teachers did not think they were professionally ready for CRT due mainly to a lack of experience and in-service education related to CRT. However, two of the quantitative findings are significant to pose problems related to the personal dimension of readiness for CRT. Considering

cultural diversity, most teachers did not find themselves able to teach anywhere in Turkey, and they did not prefer to teach in places where there were culturally different people. These findings can be explained with teachers' lower scores of professional readiness, their lack of education and experience related to CRT. These findings are also in line with other findings existing in the related literature. Yildirim's (2019) study showed that classroom management problems resulting from cultural differences made teachers feel wary and anxious as they did not know how to handle such problems due to lack of training. Focusing on exemplary teachers' CRT practices, O'Keeffe's (2019) and Smith's (2020) studies revealed that these teachers attached great importance to professional development, and they effectively used peer observation and debriefing to improve their teaching. Furthermore, it should also be underlined that teachers need to approach curricula and course materials with a critical eye, reflect on their teaching practices, and re-shape them (Chou et al., 2018; Civitillo et al., 2019); and thus, CRT might be more time-consuming, overwhelming, and demanding for teachers.

When it comes to if teaching experience was one of the leading factors in the improvement of teachers' readiness for CRT, qualitative findings showed that teaching experience alone was not a distinguishable factor as teachers who had 1-3 years of teaching experience had higher scores in professional readiness dimension than the others. Qualitative findings may shed light on the reason behind this finding as interviewees clearly stated how important the quality of experience was for CRT. Accordingly, the quality of experience was mainly associated with teaching practice underpinned by increasing theoretical knowledge and developing CRT skills. The reason why novice teachers had higher professional readiness scores can also be explained with unfamiliar nature of CRT for experienced in-service teachers. CRT is "a new territory" for many in-service teachers; and thus, they are expected to have "a sense of discomfort and uncertainty" when they consider "a new paradigm or value system with regard to teaching practice" (McKoy et al., 2017, p. 59) whereas novice teachers tend to "seek out advanced training, better manage their planning, and deepen their use of community resources and family involvement" (Sobel & Taylor, 2015, p. 40).

Quantitative findings of this study also revealed that graduates of ELT departments had lower scores in professional readiness for CRT compared to graduates of ELL and ACL departments. Accordingly, a part of the qualitative phase of this study was designed to seek explanations for this finding. The results revealed that undergraduate ELT education programs were not found sufficient in preparing teacher candidates for CRT as they lacked courses focusing on CRT and multicultural education along with the problems related to teaching practices in real and culturally diverse classrooms. Likewise, there are various studies underlying that the lack of courses focusing on culture in English language teacher education program is one of the biggest problems (Diaz & Arikan, 2016; Karakas, 2012; Yavuz & Zehir-Topkaya, 2013), and more importance should be attached to teaching practices (Atay, 2007, 2008; Seferoglu, 2006). To be more specific, as Mahalingappa and Polat (2013) point out, although there is increasing importance attached to culture, it is superficial and

restricted to "the role of cultural practices and perspectives" and "cultural identity in L2 development". More importantly, "content on new instructional trends" and "methods that incorporate culturally competent pedagogy" are the significant missing parts of English language teaching education in Turkey" (p. 373). Possible impacts of these curricular problems are also evident in recent studies. Some of these studies reveal that English language teacher candidates feel not competent enough in planning, practice and assessment stages of multicultural education as their undergraduate education does not focus on multicultural education (Caliskan, 2019). Although teacher candidates appreciate the value added to the classroom by culturally diverse students, they have problems in relating the way they teach to the theories of language, learning and culture (Yuce, 2019). Furthermore, teacher candidates find their undergraduate courses insufficient in terms of their contributions to gain the 21st-century skills (Aydin, 2019, p. 92), and they also regard themselves less competent in effectively studying culturally and socially different groups and adapting to changes in different environment and roles (Aydin, 2019, p. 80).

As stated before, interviewees associated multiculturalism mostly with cultural and linguistic diversity, ethnicity and acceptance of social and cultural differences. From this standpoint, it can be said that teachers' perception of multiculturalism is limited as multiculturalism transcends these aspects and involves all the other differences such as "sexual orientation, disability, class status and religious/spiritual orientation" (APA, 2002, p. 10). Unlike multiculturalism, teachers' perception of CRT is more comprehensive as it incorporates the most significant aspects such as teaching paying regard to all kind of cultural differences along with teaching against marginalization and discrimination. When it comes to solutions that teachers found to overcome problems occurred in the classroom, it can be said that they tried to make learning more relevant to and meaningful for culturally diverse students (Gay, 2000) through taking ethnic or cultural diversity into consideration while teaching in the classroom (Gay, 2002), integrating students' cultural backgrounds (Siwatu, 2007) and cultural knowledge (Aceves & Orosco, 2014) into instruction, and they also tried to create a culturally congruent classroom environment by preventing any kind of discrimination in the classroom (Siwatu, 2007). However, some important aspects such as developing a knowledge base, building learning communities (Gay, 2000) or using various assessment techniques for culturally diverse students (Siwatu, 2007) still remain outside. There is a predominant 'go and teach' approach imposed on in-service teachers and "little supervision and career assistance" are provided for them (Ozturk & Aydin, 2019, p. 196). Considering all these and the problems related to teachers' undergraduate education, it is encouraging that teachers try to implement CRT as much as they can.

In conclusion, the quantitative and qualitative findings of this study portrayed the strengths and weaknesses of in-service teachers of English in CRT. In the light of these findings, it is suggested that undergraduate English language teacher education programs should be enriched with culture-oriented courses covering both theoretical and practical sides of multicultural education and CRT as any expectation for "establishing relationships among cultural groups" requires "an understanding and

change in teachers' notions of culture" (Arikan, 2011, p. 236). In addition, more opportunities should be provided to teacher candidates so that they can execute teaching practices in real and culturally diverse classrooms. In this way, they can also transfer their knowledge and skills related to multicultural education and CRT into practice (Siwatu et al., 2016). As for in-service teachers, seminars and workshops about CRT practices should also be arranged. Yet, as Arikan (2019) underlines, traditional professional development activities still remain problematic in terms of effectiveness; and thus, there is a need for platforms of language teacher communities where teachers can "reify and concretize the abstract, on-paper experiences" (p. 12).

This study has three major limitations. First, the CRT readiness scale scores may not reflect in-service teachers' actual readiness as the scale relies on self-reporting. Second, because the scale focuses on teachers' preparedness for CRT, it is neither competence- nor field-specific. Third, data gathered from semi-structured interviews may not reflect the experiences of other in-service teachers. Accordingly, future studies on CRT should focus on field-specific competencies, especially by using a wealth of qualitative data gathering tools such as classroom observations, keeping diaries and field notes to deepen our understanding of CRT practices. Furthermore, there is also a need for studies aiming to evaluate curricula, course syllabi or course materials in relation to CRT.

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İngilizce Öğretmenlerinin Kültürel Olarak Duyarlı Öğretime Yönelik Kişisel ve Mesleki Hazırbulunuşlukları

Atıf:

Özet

Problem Durumu: 21. yüzyıl ile birlikte küreselleşme, bilgi, teknoloji ve dijitalleşme gibi olgular yaşadığımız dünyayı değiştirmiş ve çokkültürlülük, kültürel melezlik ya da çoklu kimlik gibi kavramları günlük yaşantımızın bir parçası haline getirmiştir. Alanyazında da belirtildiği gibi eğitimsel amaçların mevcut sosyal ve küresel ihtiyaçlara uyması gerekmektedir. Dolayısıyla, öğrencilere onları günümüzün çokkültürlü dünyasıyla bütünleştirecek gerekli becerilerin kazandırılması esastır. Günümüz okullarında ve sınıflarında artmakta olan kültürel çeşitlilik göz önüne alındığında, çokkültürlü eğitim karar alıcıların, yöneticilerin ve uygulamacıların dikkate alması gereken bir gerçek ve ihtiyaçtır. Çokkültürlü eğitim, cinsiyet, sosyal sınıf, etnik köken, ırk veya kültürel özelliklerine bakılmaksızın her öğrenciye gerekli eğitimi alması için eşit fırsat sunulmasını amaçlamaktadır. Ancak eğitim politikaları, öğretim programları ve ders kitapları çokkültürlü eğitim çerçevesinde yeniden şekillendirilse bile, kâğıt üstünde kalan tüm bu planları sınıf ortamında gerçekleştirenin öğretmenler olduğu unutulmamalıdır. Öğretmenlerin çokkültürlü eğitimi sınıf ortamına yansıtabilmeleri için neyi nasıl yapmaları gerektiğini bilmeleri oldukça önemlidir. Kültürel olarak duyarlı öğretimin amacı öğretmenlerin sınıf

içerisinde kullandıkları stratejilere ve uygulamalara odaklanarak öğrencilerin sahip oldukları kültürel farklılıkların akademik başarılarını engellenmesi önlemek ve öğrencilere kendi kültürel kimliklerini ve ana dillerini korurken hem ana akım kültürle hem de tüm dünya ile uyum içinde hareket edebilmeleri için gerekli olan temel bilgi ve becerileri sağlamaktır. Sınıf içerisine odaklanan kültürel olarak duyarlı öğretim pek çok farklı yeterliliği ve sorumluluğu kapsamaktadır. Bu nedenle, öğretmenlerin tüm bu yeterlilikleri başarılı bir şekilde uygulayabilme ve gerekli sorumlulukları alabilme konusundaki hazırbulunuşlukları kültürel olarak duyarlı öğretimin etkin bir biçimde uygulanabilmesi için oldukça önemlidir.

Araştırmanın Amacı: Ulusal alanyazın öğretmenlerin kültürel olarak duyarlı öğretimi uygulama konusunda yaşadıkları problemleri genel hatlarıyla ortaya koysa da, İngilizce öğretmenlerinin kültürel olarak duyarlı öğretim açısından ne derece hazır olduğuna ve ne çeşit sorunlarla karşılaştıklarına odaklanan çalışmaların sayısı oldukça azdır. Bu bağlamda, bu çalışmanın amacı İngilizce öğretmenlerinin kültürel olarak duyarlı öğretime kişisel olarak ve mesleki olarak ne derece hazır bulunduklarını incelemek ve İngilizce öğretmenlerinin kültürel olarak duyarlı öğretimle ilgili algılarını, sınıfta ne tip sorunlarla karşılaştıklarını ve bunlara nasıl çözümler ürettiklerini irdelemektir. Bu bağlamda bu çalışmanın cevap aradığı araştırma soruları şunlardır: (1) İngilizce öğretmenleri kültürel olarak duyarlı öğretime kişisel ve mesleki olarak ne derece hazırlardır? (1a) İngilizce öğretmenlerinin kültürel olarak duyarlı öğretime kişisel olarak hazırbulunuşlukları ile mesleki olarak hazırbulunuşlukları arasında istatistiksel olarak anlamlı bir fark var mıdır? (1b) Öğretmenlik deneyimi ve mezun olunan lisans programı açısından İngilizce öğretmenlerinin kişisel ve mesleki olarak hazırbulunuşluklarında anlamlı bir far var mıdır? (2) İngilizce öğretmenleri çokkültürlülüğü ve kültürel olarak duyarlı öğretimi nasıl algılamaktadır? İngilizce öğretmenleri kültürel olarak duyarlı öğretimle ilgili ne tip sorunlarla karşılaşmakta ve bunlara nasıl çözümler üretmektedirler?

Yöntem: Bu çalışmada çalışmanın amacı doğrultusunda belirlenen araştırma sorularına cevap aramak için ardışık açıklayıcı karma yöntem kullanılmıştır. Bu yöntemde veriler iki farklı aşamada toplanmaktadır. Birinci aşamada nicel veriler toplanırken ikinci aşamada nitel veriler birinci aşamada ortaya çıkan bulguları açıklamak ve yorumlamak için toplanmaktadır ve ağırlık nicel verilerde olsa da araştırma sorularının cevaplandırılmasında her iki veri tipi de kullanılmaktadır. Çalışmanın nicel kısmında uygunluk örnekleme yöntemi kullanılmış ve Türkiye'nin farklı illerinde görev yapmakta olan 415 İngilizce öğretmeni katılmışken nitel kısmına ise 12 İngilizce öğretmeni katılmıştır. Nicel verilerin toplanmasında Karataş ve Oral (2017) tarafından geliştirilen kültürel olarak duyarlı öğretim hazırbulunuşluk ölçeği kullanılırken nitel veriler sekiz adet açık uçlu yarı-yapılandırılmış mülakat soruları ile toplanmıştır. Nicel verilerin analizinde SPSS 23 programı kullanılmıştır. Verilerin normal dağıldığı basıklık ve çarpıklık değerleri doğrultusunda tespit edildikten sonra parametrik testlerden sırasıyla eşleştirilmiş örneklemler t-testi, tek yönlü ANOVA testi ve bağımsız örneklem t-testi uygulanmıştır. Nicel verilerin analizinde ise Braun ve Clarke (2013) tarafından önerilen tematik analiz yönteminin adımları uygulanmıştır. Önce nitel veriler yazıya aktarılmıştır. Ardından, önceden belirlenen kodlar ve temalar

kullanılmadığından çoklu okuma yöntemiyle kodlar ve temalar belirlenmiştir. Son olarak da güvenirliği arttırmak için veriler başka bir nitel araştırma uzmanı tarafından kontrol edilmiştir.

Bulgular: Nicel bulgular çalışmaya katılan İngilizce öğretmenlerinin bireysel hazırbulunuşlukları ile mesleki hazırbulunuşlukları arasında anlamlı bir fark olduğunu göstermiştir. Nicel bulguların ortaya koyduğu başka önemli bulgu ise 1-3 yıl deneyime sahip olan İngilizce öğretmenlerinin, 4 yıl ve daha üzeri deneyime sahip olanlardan mesleki açıdan kültürel olarak duyarlı öğretime daha hazır olmalarıdır. Son olarak İngilizce öğretmenliği bölümünden mezun olan İngilizce öğretmenlerinin İngiliz Dili ve Edebiyatı ile Amerikan Kültürü ve Edebiyatı bölümlerinden mezun olan İngilizce öğretmenlerine kıyasla kültürel olarak duyarlı öğretime mesleki olarak daha az hazır olduklarını da nicel bulguların ortaya koyduğu bir başka önemli sonuçtur. Nitel bulgular ise deneyimin tek başına kültürel olarak duyarlı öğretim için ayırt edici bir unsur olmadığını, İngilizce öğretmenliği lisans programlarında çokkültürlülüğü ve kültürel olarak duyarlı öğretimi de kapsayan kültür temelli derslere oldukça ihtiyaç olduğunu göstermiştir. Bunlara ek olarak, nitel bulgular İngilizce öğretmenlerinin kültürel olarak duyarlı öğretimi öğrencilerin tüm farklılıklarını dikkate alarak ötekileştirmeye ve ayrımcılığa karşı durarak öğretim yapmak ile özdeşleştirdiklerini göstermiştir.

Sonuç ve Öneriler: Sonuç olarak İngilizce öğretmenlerinin kültürel olarak duyarlı öğretime ilişkin hazırbulunuşluklarına odaklanan bu çalışma çalışmaya katılan öğretmenlerin mesleki hazırbulunuşluklarında sorunlar olduğunu ve bu sorunların öğretmenlerin lisans programlarında aldıkları eğitimin yanı sıra kültürel olarak duyarlı öğretimle ilgili bilgi, beceri ve deneyim eksikliğinden kaynaklandığını ortaya koymuştur. Bu bağlamda, İngilizce öğretmenlerinin kültürel olarak duyarlı öğretim ile ilgili bilgi, beceri ve deneyimlerinin artmasına odaklanan seminer ve çalıştaylar gibi çeşitli hizmet içi eğitimlerle birlikte öğretmenlerin deneyimlerini, karşılaştıkları sorunları ve çözüm önerilerini somutlaştırarak paylaşabilecekleri platformlara oldukça ihtiyaç vardır. Bunlara ek olarak, İngilizce öğretmenliği lisans programlarında da çokkültürlülüğün ve kültürel olarak duyarlı öğretimin hem kuramsal hem de uygulama kısımlarını kapsayan kültür odaklı derslere oldukça ihtiyaç olduğu da çalışmanın önerileri arasındadır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Çokkültürlü eğitim, kültürel olarak duyarlı öğretim, hazırbulunuşluk, İngilizce öğretimi, İngilizce öğretmenleri.