ENGLISH TEACHERS' PERSPECTIVES ABOUT TEACHER COMPETENCIES IN TERMS OF PROFESSIONAL IDENTITY[*]

Çağla ATMACA[**]

ABSTRACT

This study aims to find out and compare the perspectives of pre-service and in-service English teachers about generic and field-specific teacher competencies set by Turkish Ministry of National Education (MoNE) with regard to teacher identity in Turkish EFL context. There were 366 pre-service and 84 in-service English teachers participating in the study. The constant comparison method of grounded theory was used while analysing the data and two coders were involved in the interpretation of emerging categories to increase the objectivity. The findings show that about half of the participant English teachers have positive opinions about the contribution of the related competencies to their professional identity, but a small number of them indicate negative opinions or hesitations. They also make suggestions and criticism about the nature of teacher training such as bettering teacher image, diminishing theory-practice gap, controlling teachers, improving competencies, stopping adaptations, reopening teacher training high schools and including a special talent test at educational faculties. Policy makers and teacher training programmes could benefit from the practical experiences of teachers and their suggestions while making adaptations in teacher training both at pre-service and in-service level.

Key Words: Teacher education, teacher induction, teacher competencies, professionalism, teacher identity, generic teacher competencies, English teacher competencies

İNGİLİZCE ÖĞRETMENLERİNİN MESLEKİ KİMLİK AÇISINDAN ÖĞRETMEN YETERLİKLERİ HAKKINDAKİ GÖRÜŞLERİ

ÖZET

Bu çalışma İngilizce öğretmeni adaylarının ve İngilizce öğretmenlerinin Millî Eğitim Bakanlığı (MEB) tarafından düzenlenen genel ve özel alan yeterlikleri hakkındaki görüşlerini bulmayı amaçlamaktadır. 366 öğretmen adayı ve 84 öğretmen çalışmaya katılmıştır. Nitel veri analiz edilirken gömülü teorinin sürekli karşılaştırma yöntemi kullanılmıştır ve iki kodlayıcı veriyi sınıflandırmıştır. Sonuçlar, katılımcı İngilizce öğretmenlerinin yaklaşık olarak yarısının ilgili yeterliklerin kendi mesleki kimliklerine olan katkısı hususunda olumlu görüşlere sahipken katılımcıların küçük bir bölümünün konu hakkında olumsuz görüşe sahip olduğunu ya da tereddütlerinin olduğunu göstermektedir. Katılımcılar öğretmen eğitiminin yapısına yönelik tavsiyelerde de bulunmuştur. Karar alıcılar ve öğretmen eğitimi programları hem hizmet öncesi hem de hizmet içi öğretmen eğitiminde öğretmenlerin uygulamalı deneyimlerinden ve önerilerinden faydalanabilirler.

Anahtar Kelimeler: öğretmen eğitimi, öğretmenlik mesleğine giriş, öğretmen yeterlikleri, profesyonellik, öğretmen kimliği, genel öğretmen yeterlikleri, İngilizce öğretmeni yeterlikleri

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1. INTRODUCTION

Each country sets specific objectives for teacher training so countries differ from each other in the way they educate their future teachers (Cochran-Smith, 2005) and even regions in the same country might differ from each other in their requirements and expectancies due to the changes resulting from the socio-economic structure of the region. Therefore, teacher trainers are expected to ease adaptation process of their student teachers when they are appointed as teachers in real classrooms (Zeichner, 2005). Raising well-equipped teacher candidates may not be enough for long-term success. Thus in-service teachers should also be given importance to continue their profession, feel contentment and to demolish signs of teacher burnout. Otherwise, educational policies may not be sustained, or objectives may not be fulfilled effectively.

The same prerequisites also go for foreign language teachers. Pre-service teacher education may create awareness but how to cope with the realities in the teaching contexts mainly depends on the in-service training they take. If pre-service teachers graduate with the feelings of inadequacy or in-service teachers feel dissatisfaction about their professional skills and knowledge, then we cannot expect them to be successful or happy in their jobs and subsequently we can't hope that the students they teach will succeed, either. First of all, we should be aware of teacher competencies, what they lack, what they need and how we can overcome the difficulties to provide the needed guidance and help them set more realistic goals for personal and professional improvement.

Thus, the study aims to reveal the perspectives of both pre-service and in-service English teachers about the generic and English teacher competencies set by Turkish MoNE regarding professional identity so that the lacking aspects or problematic practices could be found out and educational policies and teacher training programmes could be revised accordingly.

2. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

2.1 Teacher Training

The importance of teacher training programmes is stressed for their facilitative role in terms of preparing teacher candidates for the complex realities of their future classroom (Simon, 2013). Whether they undergo any cognitive change during their education or more specially teaching practicum, where they are provided with the opportunities to apply their knowledge and skills, gains importance in this regard. Socio-constructivist views have an important influence on teacher training so it will be useful to examine the underlying social and cultural factors that are deeply felt in by the individuals in different countries (Williams & Burden, 1997). Since each person is unique, the change they undergo will also differ from each other based on their experience and worldview. The cumulative aspect of teacher belief changes is also stressed by Cabaroglu and Roberts (2000) in that pre-service teachers are thought to arrive at a conclusion and synthesis not only with their individual meaning-making but also the learning environment embedded in their teaching circumstances.

Teacher training practices around the world can be compared so as to reach a sounder synthesis and draw conclusions about individual country's teacher training programs and better training conditions and policies (Cochran-Smith, 2005). Likewise, some common frameworks like Common European Framework (CEF) and European Language

Portfolio (ELP) can be used to assess teacher education programs and to keep up with the internationally established standards. Such a comparative approach can also yield important outcomes for sharing experiences in this highly globalized world. Since students from different types of high school can meet in ELT departments, this can affect their current and desired competencies. The type of high schools could be another factor in teacher competencies because there are teacher training high schools where students are educated specifically to become a teacher in the future, a specific syllabus covering educational sciences in terms of psychology and methodology is applied, and the students receive extra scores for being a graduate of this type of high school. There are also other types of schools like Anatolian high schools which include the common standard syllabus in line with the central educational policies implemented across the country and receive students with higher scores compared to Vocational high schools which receive students with lower scores and enhance field-based professional skills in terms of computer, communication, information and machinery. However, students attending Anatolian or Vocational high schools do not get extra scores on university examination. In a similar vein, Kani (2011) found that pre-service teachers coming from Anatolian Teacher Training high schools were more competent than those from Anatolian high schools according to CEF and ELP competencies because student background could also impact their current and desired teaching competencies. In this regard, teacher training programs could diminish these differences with the courses and practices they offer and have pre-service teachers with similar learning experiences and teaching competencies. These competencies remind us the issue of teacher qualifications because the qualities of teachers should be considered as much as their quantity (Akyüz, 2003, as cited in Kani, 2011).

Only considering pre-service teacher needs is not enough for their professional development throughout their career since they also need guidance, help and feedback when they have become teachers. Thus in-service teachers should also be involved in certain activities like participating in seminars, reading journals related to their field and asking for mentoring and guidance from colleagues and administrators as well as cooperating with parents and students. With the help of the other stakeholders like teacher trainers, parents, administrators and colleagues, teachers' cognitive processing can be bettered via discussion and reflection (Wolff, van den Bogert, Jarodzka, & Boshuizen, 2014).

Because teachers are one part of the chain within the school system and a member of the education community, they are held responsible for the failure or success of students. They can, in turn, make some internal or external attributions regarding their success or failure in their profession like whether the success or failure happens because of them or some other factors involved in the process like management, parents, students, cultural norms, and school type and setting to name a few. Such an attribution can create differences among teachers about their self-efficacy beliefs with regard to personal teaching efficacy and general teaching efficacy (Knoblauch & Chase, 2015).

2.2 Teacher Induction

The relationship between the novice teacher and induction supporter is of great importance (McCrone, 2000) since the interaction between them will affect the quality of the induction and have an impact on teacher cognition. Since teaching career does not stop sharply at a point but rather continues in different routes by changing shapes,

teachers start their long journey when they are appointed as in-service teachers by their governments. Their perceptions on good teaching are shaped by what they experience in the course of time. Their ideas and needs go through changes. Therefore, it is only natural that the kind and amount of feedback and support they need from mentors or induction supporters show differences in different phases of teaching career and the mentors negotiate with novice teachers to respond to their changing needs well (Suen & Chow, 2001). When today's commonly-used teacher training understanding is examined, it is seen that social-constructivist view comes to the fore (Cabaroglu & Roberts, 2000). Teacher induction is also seen as a social activity with participation of stakeholders that have a say or affect educational practices with the help of interaction and communication sources. That's why teaching happens in specific discourses with specific applications but not in isolation with contextual or environmental factors, which is also related to the ontological approach taken (Cabaroğlu & Roberts, 2000).

Wang, Odell and Schwille (2008) found out that while the previous findings offer important implications upon the influence of teacher induction on new teachers, few studies touched upon its influence on teaching practice and student achievement. They also stressed the importance of joint learning among teachers with the help of peer collaboration, mutual modeling and observation. They suggested that there should be more studies on workshops and more case studies to improve teacher quality due to the generalization of findings in a specific context. Therefore, studies need to focus on the practical outcomes of teacher training and guide pre-service teachers about the results of their application.

There was a shift in research on teacher induction in that while initial studies focused on the personal comfort of novice teachers (Gold, 1996, as cited in Wang, Odell, & Schwille, 2008), subsequent studies found opposing findings regarding the ineffectiveness of personal comfort on teaching and learning (Anyon, 1981, as cited in Wang, Odell, & Schwille, 2008). Teachers may be taught the theoretical and practical knowledge but induction program may not reach its final goals unless the related training program is questioned and teachers are tested. Besides, the structure of the current standardized tests was criticized for being inappropriate to test the goals of the national curriculum and teaching standards (Wang, Odell, & Schwille, 2008). The same situation can be said for Turkey in that teachers are appointed in different parts of Turkey according to their KPSS (Kamu Personeli Seçme Sınavı- Public Personnel Selection Examination) results, and these teachers are regarded as practicum teachers in their first year of teaching. The candidates who want to work at state organisations have to pass this examination. In the same way, English teachers have to get a certain score to work at state schools, and this score changes from department to department and is determined by the state for teacher candidates to make their preferences for their future workplace and appointment. However, how effective KPSS results (Kamu Personeli Seçme Sınavı - Public Personnel Selection Exam – an exam which the candidates who want to become a public personnel at state institutions in Turkey have to pass) in reflecting real competencies of teachers needs to be questioned and new teachers' first year of teaching should be under close scrutiny. For example, an English teacher candidate in Turkey receives education in a big city and has practicum experiences at a high school during his/her last year but she is appointed to a primary school in a rural region, and s/he is expected to master all the skills and knowledge expected from every teacher and put these skills into his/her teaching practices. That's why the first years of teaching become crucial for the

professional identity of a teacher for it shapes his/her perceptions regarding teaching and forms his/her teaching practices. Therefore, the effectiveness of in-service teacher training needs to be questioned and tested.

Pre-service teachers' sense of belonging to the community and active participation in teaching context shouldn't be underestimated because their identity is formed and shaped in light of their experiences gained during pre-service training and their cooperation with other stakeholders during their in-service (Olsen, 2008b: 25). This shows that the teacher may learn socially from their peers, colleagues or administrators in their educational settings and that's why communities of practice (Wenger, 1998) could help us understand the role of social dynamics and relationships in teacher induction. Being a social learning model, Wenger (1998)'s communities of practice could help to gain a deeper understanding of the partnership among different stakeholders to increase the effectiveness of teacher training programmes. In a similar vein, after three-year-project conducted with 126 pre-service teachers Carter (2012) added employer authorities, community agencies and pre-service teachers as active members of stakeholders since such partnership has important reflections on the orientation of the teacher and induction into the educational system.

It was found that there were significant increases in pedagogical knowledge and skills of the participating teachers in the first three years of their career, especially in classroom management aspect at the end of the third year. What striking is the significant increases in the knowledge and skills of the participants between the first and third year (Choy, Wong, Lim, & Chong, 2013), which shows us the dynamic structure of being a teacher and that teachers can contribute to their professional identity after their teaching practicum experiences during pre-service training.

To voice the needs of English teachers and determine the defective points in their training and development, roles of in-service trainers in Turkey and the possible challenges they face are also in need of research. The importance of professional development and life-long learning is regarded as a must for improving teacher quality. Roles of in-service trainers in Turkish MoNE were categorized as developing trust, active counseling, responding to practice, imparting knowledge and experience and establishing role identity (O'Dwyer & Atlı, 2014).

There are three important cornerstones in the identity and beliefs of teachers in that first they are learners of the content, then they are learners of teaching and finally they become teachers, which can be attributed to their learning experiences, the education they receive for teaching and finally the complexities of the teaching environment they are found in (Beauchamp & Thomas, 2009). Teaching practicum could make a difference in the beliefs of pre-service teachers. This so-called change may turn into different shapes under the names of confirmation, realization, disagreement, elaboration, integration, and modification as suggested by Yuan and Lee (2014). These categories show us the route of change followed by pre-service teachers through accepting certain teaching applications, rejecting or extending them. Depending on the context and experiences, teachers' beliefs regarding learning and teaching can be shaped with the help of teaching practicum where they are exposed to stakeholders like mentors, students, parents, and directors. This shows us the dynamic structure of teacher beliefs since every teaching and learning experience is highly context-bound and affects teachers in different ways (Yuan & Lee 2014).

2.3 Teacher Identity

Teacher identity is a multidisciplinary concept which is studied by different fields of science like psychology, anthropology, sociology, and linguistics. Olsen (2008a: 139) defines identity as a label for the collection of influences and effects from immediate contexts, prior constructs of self, social positioning, and meaning systems. There are two forms of teacher identity: the entrepreneurial and the activist identities (Sachs, 2005). The former refers to management sector and educational policies of governments while the latter broadly refers to democratic education aiming to include all individuals in the educational institution and is concerned to reduce or eliminate exploitation, inequality, and oppression (Sachs, 2005: 13). In brief, teachers bring their selves to a certain type of teaching situation with a full awareness defined as teacher presence (Rodgers & Raider-Roth, 2006).

To point out the complex structure and interactions of teacher identity, Olsen (2008b: 25) and Forde, McMahon, McPhee and Patrick (2006: 10) provided Figure 1 and Figure 2 respectively. All the dynamics in the figures are mediated by each other, and they make teachers adopt a professional identity ultimately.
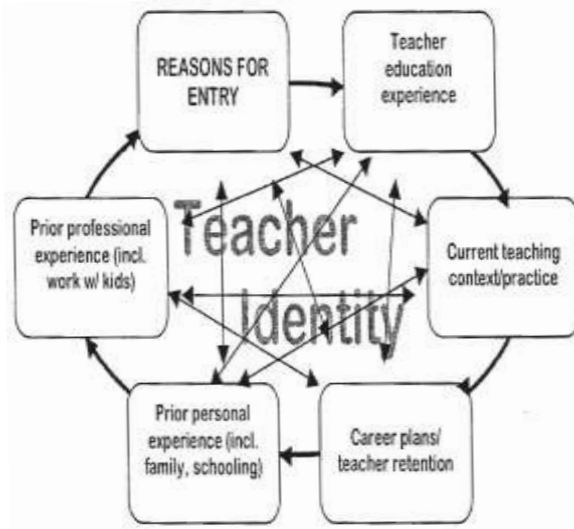

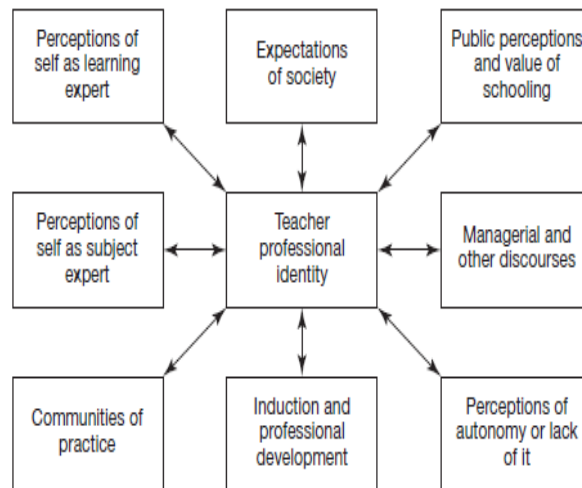Figure 1. Dynamics of teacher identity

Figure 2. Important interactions of teacher identity

The concept of teacher identity deserves closer attention because it is affected by the interaction of a number of such factors as the place of the self, agency, emotion, the role of reflection and the influence of contextual factors (Beauchamp & Thomas, 2009). It cannot be handled alone, but the consideration of related factors is required to shed light on overlooked areas. What seems missing is the role of stakeholders and their perspectives upon how to develop professional identities of teachers. Only with the participation of different groups of stakeholders does it become possible to get a clear understanding of teacher identity and how to solve hindering aspects.

Personal and professional lives of teachers are interrelated. Bukor (2011) four ESL teachers' beliefs about the impact of their personal experiences on their teacher identity development and concluded that personal experiences affect teachers' instructional preferences and teacher identity.

Teacher identity is formed in a long process and is affected by the actions of stakeholders such as pre-service teachers, in-service teachers, inspectors, parents, students and managers. To illustrate, teacher trainers are required to possess a large body of competencies and experiences to contribute to teaching identity of their students (Gallagher, Griffin, Parker, Kitchen, & Figg, 2011). Additionally, Joseph (2011) closely links teacher identity and staying in the job, and highlights the role of the participation of various stakeholders such as friends, colleagues or the university lecturers in preventing teachers from leaving their jobs. In this respect, the involvement of stakeholders in the development of teachers' professional identity deserves closer attention.

2.4 Teacher Competencies

There are some standards for pre-service teachers like the European Profile (EP), and European Portfolio for Student Teachers of Languages (EPOSTL). We can add the generic and field-specific teacher competencies set by Turkish MoNE as a kind of teacher standards at national level. The common aspects of all these three different teacher standards are that they should be regarded as a checklist or frame of reference to be used

for self-evaluation rather than a mandatory document that must be followed strictly. They will provide the policy makers or authorities with the necessary clues and information in making appropriate policies in line with the needs of pre-service teachers and expectations of the related stakeholders.

Developed to harmonise teacher training in Europe, the EPOSTL mainly aims to enhance reflection and self-assessment of teachers and could be used across the teacher training curriculum to achieve better results. It consists of a personal statement, self-assessment section and a dossier, and has seven main categories, which are divided into several sub-categories. If we go one step further, the EPOSTL could take place as a course in pre-service teacher training to reduce theory-practice gap (Burkert, 2009) and in a similar vein, the generic and field-specific teacher competencies set by Turkish MoNE could be applied in pre-service teacher training as a separate course so that it could be integrated into the curriculum by associating the theoretical knowledge with the performance indicators.

Since each country sets unique policies for teachers in line with the local and national needs, it is only natural that teaching standards vary from country to country and the same standards could be applied for teachers at different points of their career like pre-service teachers, in-service teachers, beginning teachers, experienced teachers or expert teachers. In other words, teacher standards exist for teacher training programmes, state licensing purposes, and finally certification and recognition of advanced performance (Kleinhenz & Ingvarson, 2007).

Turkey set its own teacher competencies to both respond to international expectations and to provide a framework to guide teachers depending on the context they teach in and generic so generic and field-specific teacher competencies were developed by Turkish Ministry of National Education (MoNE). However, there is another study which came up with qualifications of Turkish teachers in relation to the process of becoming a member of European Union (EU) with the help of Delphi Technique, questionnaire, observation form and interview (Karacaoğlu, 2008). 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. The teachers who received in-service training were found to have higher levels of perceptions about teacher qualifications compared to those who did not. In addition, the teachers who graduated from the faculty of education were found to be more qualified than the others in light of the observation forms.

When we look at the teacher competencies set by Turkish MoNE, it is seen that there are different categories of teacher competencies in that there are both generic teacher competencies which are considered to be possessed by all teachers regardless of their department and field-specific teacher competencies which were formed on the basis of generic teacher competencies but 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. 6 main competencies for generic teacher competencies emerged at the end of these studies as in the following: Personal and Professional Values-Professional Development, Knowing the Student, Learning and Teaching Process, Monitoring and Evaluation of Learning and Development, School-Family and Society Relationships, and Knowledge of Curriculum and Content. Besides, there were 31 sub-competencies and 221 performance indicators

of these competencies. As for English teacher competencies there are five main categories namely Planning and Organizing English Teaching Procedures, Improving Language Skills, Monitoring and Evaluating Language Development, School-Family and Society Collaboration, Improving Professional Skills in English Teaching. The sub-categories of these two types of teacher competencies have different number of items. For example; part A of the generic teacher competencies has 55 items, part B has 13 items, part C has 42 items, part D has 25 items, part E has 10 items and finally part F has 9 items. In total, there are 154 items in the generic teacher competencies. As for 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 English teacher competencies. When we combine the generic and English teacher competencies, there are 312 items in total.

Although there have been various studies upon teacher identity and competencies, there is no research study which aimed to compare the beliefs of pre-service and in-service teachers about teacher identity with regard to teacher competencies and inspection at the same time. In this respect, this study will shed light upon an overlooked area in teacher education in Turkish EFL context with the participation of two groups of stakeholders for comparative purposes. All in all, the study aims to find out the perspective of English teachers about the generic and English teacher competencies set by Turkish MoNE in terms of their contribution to professional identity and get any other comments of the participants regarding the related competencies.

3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Research Design and Participants

The aim of the study is to get in-depth opinions of English teachers about the generic and English teacher competencies set by Turkish MoNE in terms of professional identity and their suggestions about how to integrate these competencies to enhance professional identity of English teachers. Therefore, the study has a descriptive research design in that it aims to describe the current state of the related competencies and go one step further to explain the underlying factors of it. The universe of the study includes pre-service English teachers (seniors) and in-service English teachers at different levels of schools with different teaching experience in English Language Teaching (ELT) programmes in Turkey. Some cities which are labelled as third level cities based on their socio-economical features of the regions they are found in according to Türkiye İstatistik Kurumu (TÜİK) (Turkish Statistical Institute) criteria were taken as the sample to conduct the study with the help of convenience sampling.

The universe of the study consists of pre-service and in-service English teachers in Turkey. The pre-service teachers who were the last year students in ELT Department at four different universities participated in the study.

The pre-service teacher sample was taken from four different universities in Turkey namely in Turkey. There were 366 (100%) pre-service teacher participants in total. 292 (79.8%) were female pre-service teachers and 74 (20.2%) were male pre-service teachers in ELT departments. It is seen that female participants form the high majority of the population (N: 292, 79.8%). Out of 366 (100%) participants, 345 (94.3) are aged between 21-25, 16 (4.4%) are aged between 26-30, 2 (0.5%) are aged between 31-35, 1 (0.3%) is aged between 36-40, 1 (0.3%) is aged between 41-45 and finally 1 (0.3%) is aged between

51-55. As is seen, high majority of the pre-service participants, who were the last year students of ELT, (N: 345, 94.3%) are aged between 21-25.

There were 84 in-service English teachers participating in the study. It should be noted that the English teachers participated from 21 cities in Turkey. All the participant in-service English teachers were purposely chosen from state schools because the study is based on the teacher competencies set by Turkish MoNE specifically for teachers teaching at state schools directed by Turkish MoNE. Teachers from different parts of Turkey were involved in the study in order to get a larger perspective on the studied phenomenon, and put forward diverse findings upon the needs and expectations of the English teachers in Turkish EFL context. Out of 84 (100%) in-service English teachers, 53 (63.1%) were female and 31 (36.9%) were male. It can be said that female in-service English teachers from the majority (N: 53, 63.1%) of the total in-service participants. Besides, 10 (11.9%) were aged between 21-25, 31 (36.9%) were aged between 26-30, 24 (28.6%) were between 31-35, 1 (1.2%) between 36-40, 15 (17.9%) between 41-15 and finally 3 (3.6%) between 46-50.

3.2 Data Collection and Analysis Procedures

The study aimed to find out and compare detailed perspectives of pre-service and in-service teachers upon MoNE teacher competencies. Thus, a qualitative data collection tool was preferred and the researcher decided to refer a written interview protocol to obtain written statements of the participants in depth. The questions in the written interview protocol (WIP) were formed in light of the articles related to teacher induction and teacher competencies. The WIP was sent to 6 different academicians in ELT departments at 4 different universities to get expert opinion and check the validity and reliability of the data collection tool. There were two rounds of revision. In the first round, there the experts gave feedback and required some revisions about the content, layout and wording. The researcher did all the revisions and suggestions, and sent the WIP back to the experts via e-mail. The researcher made changes on the WIP till there was complete agreement among the experts. After the revisions, there was a pilot study to check whether their ambiguity or misunderstanding in the WIP items. The pilot study was conducted in Ankara at Gazi University and some state schools in Ankara. There were 50 pre-service teachers and 17 teachers in the pilot study and it was seen that the question items were clear and there was no ambiguity. Therefore, the WIP was decided to be applied with more participants. There were nine question items with yes/no questions and open-ended questions about generic and field-specific teacher competencies formed by Turkish MoNE. The WIP is offered in the appendix part at the end of the text.

After the WIP took its final shape, the researcher contacted lecturers delivering courses at the 4th grade in ELT departments at four different state universities in Turkey. The researcher sent them a permission e-mail about the study and explained the aim, content and application duration of the study. The related lecturers all replied positively to the researcher and gave permission for the WIP application in the last session of their courses. The WIP application took about 30-45 minutes to complete. Apart from universities, the population of the study included in-service English teachers working at state schools. Thus, the researcher wrote a petition to Turkish MoNE to get permission in order to apply the WIP at state schools in Turkey. The researcher was redirected to YEĞİTEK (Yenilik ve Eğitim Teknolojileri Genel Müdürlüğü- Directorate General for Innovation and Educational Technology) which is a sub-branch of Turkish MoNE since there were

various cities and school types to apply the study. The researcher paid regular visits to some schools in Ankara (where the researcher lived) and Denizli (which was the hometown) in person to encourage teachers to fill in the WIP. The researcher also sent e-mails and text messages to remind teachers complete and send the WIP. Some teachers sent the WIP via e-mail while some of them handed the WIP to the researcher at the schools with the help of school directors. While it took about six weeks to apply the WIP on pre-service teachers, it took about one year to do so with in-service teachers. The study started in April 2015 and ended in May 2016.

This study employs qualitative research method since data collection tool is a written interview protocol so the data were analysed with the help of constant comparison of grounded theory, which is considered to be a form of content analysis (Dörnyei, 2007). To lessen the subjectivity and secure inter-rater reliability, a second coder apart from the researcher was also consulted for the categorization and interpretation of the qualitative data. Besides, both coders looked and revised their qualitative data analyses and categories about a month after finishing them for the sake of intra-rater reliability. Since the study was based on a data-driven approach, there was no previously formed thematic coding scheme upon which the coders categorised the data. According to inter-rater reliability formula by Miles and Huberman (1994: 64), the reliability of the two coders in terms of the first quarter of the total qualitative data was found to be 80.1%. At that point, the thematic coding scheme appeared and the two coders agreed on the emerging categories as positive, negative and mixed to conduct further analysis for the rest of the data. They went on interpreting and putting the coming flow of data under these categories. Thanks to the on-going meetings and discussions of the two raters after the results of the first quarter of the data, the inter-rater reliability increased to 90.1% at the end of the analysis of the all qualitative findings of the WIP items. Such repetition of reliability was conducted since the agreement levels of the two coders was expected to be at least 70% for the analysis procedures to be considered as reliable.

Qualitative data is thought to be more subjective due to its analysis procedures since the researcher has to move back and forth in light with the coming data, and follow a zigzag pattern to form emerging themes and categories from the non-numerical data as s/he gets new flow of qualitative findings (Dörnyei, 2007). The coders had no previously formed schemes but rather depended upon the written statements of the participants to form categories. They interpreted the sentence structure of the statements, the meanings conveyed, the connotation of the words used, the feelings of the participants and their preferences about professional identity. Such data-driven approach in order to get the big picture from emerging themes was coined as grounded theory by Glaser and Strauss (1980). However, their view of "delaying the literature" was criticised by Thornberg (2012) and it was stated that the related literature should be examined before the categorization of qualitative findings due to the possibility of missing important points or being left with unrelated categories. Consequently, the finally formed theory is expected to have some characteristics like being general, understandable, and easy to practice, flexible and in harmony with social beliefs, everyday life realities and changing facts (Glaser & Strauss, 1980). In this study, the two coders examined the previous research studies and were informed about their results so informed grounded theory was adopted in this study. Besides, the emerging themes and categories were quantified in that the frequency and percentage of the formed categories are also given so that the numbers and words could accompany and witness each other and provide sound

conclusions for the reader (Cresswell, Plano Clark, Gutmann, & Hanson, 2003). In a way, the quantitative data were qualified and qualitative data were quantified for complementary purposes of different research methods.

4. RESULTS

4.1 Replies to the First WIP Question

In this part, participant answers about professional identity will be exemplified. Please note that this study presents one part of a large-scale study in which the participants were free to answer or not to answer the questions in the WIP. Thus, the number of the participants varies depending on the WIP question. It should also be born in mind that the number of the participants reflects the participation order of pre-service teachers or in-service teachers regardless of the fact that they answered or didn't answer the WIP item.

The first question is: How do you think the generic and English teacher competencies set by Turkish MoNE contribute to your professional identity?

Table 1.
Pre-service Answers about Professional Identity

Theme	Frequency	Percentage
Positive	163	44.6%
Negative	16	4.4%
Mixed 1 (+ and -)	9	2.5%
Mixed 2 (conditional)	17	4.6%
No answer	151	41.2%
Irrelevant	10	2.7%

Table 1 offers the answers of the pre-service English teachers to the fifth WIP item which asks the contribution of the generic and English teacher competencies to their professional identity. Various categories emerged upon the contribution of these competencies to professional identity but about a large number of the pre-service participants (N: 151, 41.2%) did not answer the fifth WIP item. Again various categories emerged as positive, negative, mixed, no answer and irrelevant. The mixed categorization includes answers where the participants either have both positive and negative views or explain their views with the help of conditional clauses. 163 (44.6%) pre-service participants held positive views, while 16 (4.4%) held negative views, 9 (2.5%) held both positive and negative views, and 17 (4.6%) laid down some criteria as a condition. Finally, 10 (2.7%) participants gave irrelevant answers to the fifth WIP item. In sum, the pre-service teachers appear to hold positive views about the contribution of these competencies to their professional identity.

The participants who were in favour of the contribution of these competencies to their own professional identity touched upon various aspects in terms of evaluating abilities, framing professional life, developing individual features, improving field knowledge, growing up abilities, establishing a set of goals, evaluating success, creating awareness about abilities and disabilities, providing an outline, increasing qualifications, learning the curriculum, supplying effective teaching means, increasing teacher efficiency, improving teaching skills, directing how to teach, providing characteristics of a good teacher, regulating teaching strategies, raising awareness, figuring weak sides, improving

stakeholder relationship, improving critical thinking ability, controlling teaching, increasing teaching capability, directing manner and content of teaching, solving the problems, noticing and improving bad sides, understanding student needs, planning lessons, meeting student needs and working in collaboration, learning about the requirements, seeing the path of educational future, gaining consciousness about teaching, realizing weak aspects, serving as a model for teachers, enlarging vision, creating a better learning environment, increasing ability to improve oneself, increasing self-confidence, showing the way to deal with the difficulties, bettering teacher qualities, solving problems in class management, gaining student trust, learning about weak sides, gaining trust of students and colleagues, functioning as self-assessment tool, providing a self-assessment tool, developing professional identity, noticing strong and weak points and abilities about teaching English, increasing awareness, improving teaching practices, serving learner needs, recognizing students, and gaining experience. As is seen, lots of themes emerged about the contribution of these competencies to the professional identity of both pre-service and in-service English teachers. Apart from the aforementioned themes, the participants think that these competencies are related to real life, they give ideas about the manner and content of teaching, contribute to personal and professional improvement, can be effective in guiding teachers, increase awareness about teacher quality and extracurricular learning, improving content and field knowledge especially in lesson planning, and enhance good rapport with stakeholders. These participants especially stress the guiding role of the competencies for self-assessment these competencies can function as criteria for self-evaluation because teachers can set realistic goals due to clear criteria. Moreover, the competencies are seen as a must for teachers because their answers suggest that these competencies make teaching more concrete since they are thought to cover the whole teaching profession with all aspects.

There are also negative views about the contribution of the competencies for professional identity. They describe these competencies as irrelevant and ineffective and do not think they have any contribution since they were not considered to be criteria for appointment of teachers. Their answers focus on the suspicion about the outcomes of the application of these competencies and they criticised the determining role of KPSS sores for teacher appointment. There were some participants who expressed lack of faith in research studies to improve these competencies while one in-service English teacher mentioned his/her lack of self-confidence to keep up with younger generation teachers. Finally, one stated that student success determines teacher identity but not these competencies whereas another one reports that teachers get their professional identities by themselves but not due to the existence of such teacher competencies.

A number of participants were found to have both positive and negative views about the contribution of these competencies to their professional identity. Some describe these competencies as "beneficial but hard to achieve" and "necessary but not helpful". Some participants find these competencies sufficient but do not think that there are teachers possessing all these competencies, some of them find the competencies helpful but seem unsure about how to benefit from them while one finds the competencies helpful but do not think that they appeal to all teachers due to standardization. In addition, one in-service English teacher stresses the individual's character and readiness level in English for improving professional identity while one thinks that they can be helpful with the help of effective inspection.

Now opinions of pre-service English teachers will be exemplified. STE stands for pre-service teacher and the following numbers show the order of the participant in the study. Below are some excerpts taken from the comments of the participant pre-service English teachers. When we look at the following four participant comments, it is seen that they take these MoNE competencies as criteria to make self-assessments and get ideas about their strong and weak aspects in teaching. Also, these competencies are regarded as the framework to shape professional knowledge and skills of teachers. The last two participants show how these competencies improve their individual characteristics like empathy, reflection and open-mindedness, which are included in the generic teacher competencies as well as respond to needs of teachers in different branches.

STE 33: *I think that when I look at these competencies, I evaluate my abilities. They determine my strengths and deficiencies.*

STE 39: *They will frame my professional life. It affects how I should become a teacher.*

STE 54: *They should provide me to become a competent teacher both in teaching and developing my individual features, such as empathy, reflection, open-minded, etc.*

STE 55: *They will help me improve myself in my field.*

The following nine participants report various contributions of these competencies regarding self-evaluation since teachers can reach a conclusion regarding their success by referring to these competencies as basic criteria to be followed. In this way, teachers can decide what has been done, what still needs to be done and set realistic goals accordingly. These competencies are thought to provide opportunities for teachers to improve their professional knowledge and skills because teachers will get the chance to see what to do and how to do. Self-assessment function of these competencies is stressed by the participants for they can gain consciousness about their abilities and lacking aspects. One of the participants (STE 80) state that these competencies remind pre-service teachers that teaching does not only mean content knowledge or pedagogical knowledge. Instead, it also covers assessment of learner and the role of stakeholder participation in teaching-learning activities. According to participant views, teachers can go further and reach more desirable levels in their profession by forming an effective learning environment and cross-curricular learning activities thanks to gaining awareness about the characteristics of a qualified teacher. These conclusions can be easily seen in the quotations below:

STE 59: *They establish a set of goals in my future profession. They also help evaluate my success.*

STE 61: *They affect teachers positively. Teacher who have these competencies will be perfect people. They know what they do and how they do.*

STE 62: *I can improve myself.*

STE 65: *These competencies help me to be aware of my ability and disability, my sufficiency on teaching. And help me to improve them.*

STE 67: *If we had a chance to apply them at schools, they would help us improve ourselves.*

STE 73: *Of course, most of them relevant to our profession and they enable us improve ourselves.*

STE 80: *We are reminded that our professional identity comprises not only of our skill with language and pedagogy but also of assessing our students in the school system framework, where many "possible influential" factors such as the administration, the PTA, and teachers reside. These competencies also provide an outline for which we can improve ourselves.*

STE 95: *Of course, they will contribute to me. These questions made me see myself and I will improve my insufficiency.*

STE 102: *I will be aware of the necessities of a good teacher, to create efficient classroom and extracurricular learning.*

We need to analyse the comments of more participants to make in-depth analyses, so more quotations from different pre-service English teachers are given below. It is seen that some of the pre-service participants treat these MoNE competencies a kind of teaching standards according to which teachers can develop their professional identity and contribute to their existing teaching skills. The following participant comments show that these competencies can have a guiding role for teachers because by following the related competency items, teachers can better their relationship with various stakeholders such as parents and students, have a more effective teaching style, increase both their own success and student success, get the opportunity to see the missing points and lacking aspects in their teaching and set goals accordingly.

STE 110: *I will improve my professional identity according to these competencies.*

STE 136: *These competencies comprise my whole professional identity. If I can compensate them, I will be a perfect teacher.*

STE 155: *My relationship with parents and with my students will improve.*

STE 160: *Maybe these could be a guide for me.*

STE 190: *I can teach more effectively.*

STE 324: *For sure, they will help me do better and perform better. So, in the end, they will bring about success for both the teacher and the student side.*

STE 336: *They complete all lacks of a teacher and create an ideal teacher.*

STE 354: *At least, they form my prof. identity.*

STE 366: *They will guide me in many aspects.*

Table 2.
In-service Answers about Professional Identity

Theme	Frequency	Percentage
Positive	21	25.0%
Negative	8	9.6%
Mixed 1 (+ and -)	2	2.4%
Mixed 2 (conditional)	1	1.2%
No answer	48	57.1%
No effect	1	1.2%
Irrelevant	3	3.5%

Table 2 offers the answers of the in-service English teachers to the fifth WIP item which asks the contribution of the generic and English teacher competencies to their professional identity. Various categories emerged upon the contribution of these competencies to professional identity, but again more than half of the in-service participants (N: 48, 57.1%) did not answer the fifth WIP item. Again various categories emerged as positive, negative, mixed, no answer and irrelevant but this for this question we have no effect category as well. The mixed categorization includes answers where the participants either have both positive and negative views or explain their views with the help of conditional clauses whereas no effect category includes answers which state that these competencies have no positive or negative effect on improving their professional identity. 21 (25%) in-service participants held positive views, while 8 (9.6%) held negative views, 2 (2.4%) held both positive and negative views, 1 (1.2%) laid down some criteria as a condition, and 1 (1.2%) thinks that these competencies have no positive or negative effect on improving his/her professional identity. Finally, 3 (3.5%) participants gave irrelevant answers to the fifth WIP item. In sum, the in-service teachers appear to hold positive views about the contribution of these competencies to their professional identity.

Below are some excerpts taken from in-service English teachers. T stands for in-service teacher and the number represents the order of the participant in the study. Please note that the first 366 are pre-service English teachers and the rest consists of in-service English teachers. The quotations will be given as they are without correcting any errors. The same sample chosen among the participants was used to exemplify participant opinions.

According to the following comments, the participant in-service English teachers seem to perceive the MoNE competencies as a way of assessing their knowledge and skills, parallel to the views of pre-service English teachers. They also think that these competencies can develop their professional identity and create consciousness about their strong and weak points. One of them (T 406) thinks that these competencies can help teachers to create a better classroom atmosphere, increase their self-confidence and guide them how to deal with hardships. These competencies are thought to work as a self-assessment tool and guide teachers when they encounter discipline problems in classroom management. The last participant also highlights the fact that students can differentiate between a competent teacher and incompetent one and teachers may have negative image in the eyes of students. S/he also adds that teachers can gain awareness about their competencies while they teach and teachers need to make effort to gain these competencies.

T 372: *They provide self-assessment.*

T 394: *They developed my professional identity.*

T 397: *They contribute our professional identity if we are all of them. We should use all competencies during education time.*

T 400: *They improve my professional identity.*

T 404: *It helped me to notice my strong and weak points and my abilities about teaching English.*

T 406: *First of all, they help me to create a better learning environment .and they also increase my ability to improve myself and self-confidence as a teacher. Besides, having good competency in teaching show me the way to deal with the difficulties during teaching process.*

T 417: *I call myself a "teaching professional" because I am aware of these competencies.*

T 419: *It works as a self-assessment test.*

T 414: *firstly, having the competency helps you to be a better teacher in your own field. Secondly, it helps you solve problems in class management. Thirdly, the students now are certainly good at making a difference between a competent and not a competent teacher. if you are ineffective in some competencies, you may lose your ss' trust, and it causes more and more problems in teaching environment. While you teach you surely get aware of your weak sides. the important thing is how much effort you spend to acquire the competency*

Although the fifth WIP item is about the contribution of the generic and English teacher competencies set by Turkish MoNE, some in-service English teachers reported negative views about these competencies. The following in-service participants think that the related competencies do not contribute to their professional identity. While some (like T 370) seem to be content with their existing body of competencies and find generic teacher competencies insufficient, some others (like T 409) seem to have negative self-image about their competencies regardless of their teaching experience in terms of keeping up with the new generation of teachers. Different from the other in-service participants, one of the participants (T 412) states that s/he refers to his/her innate abilities to teach rather than these competencies. Another participant (T 430) disregards these competencies as well and takes student success as criteria for being a competent teacher. The last given participant comment shows that teachers form their competencies in their own ways but not according to nationally accepted standards.

T 368: *To say the truth, if you personally want to be the professional in your field, these competencies will not be the key for your identity.*

T 370: *I am proud of my field-specific competency but the generic competencies is not enough.*

T 383: *Not so much.*

T 409: *However experienced I'm, I do not think I will be competent enough to catch up with the younger generation needs.*

T 412: *To be honest, I have used my innate abilities to educate my students. Meanwhile, I got avail of my university education knowledge. I have never used MNE competencies.*

T 430: *I think the students are your professional identity, if they are successful this means that you have all these competencies.*

T 441: *I think these competencies may not much contribute to my professional identity because teachers get their identities by themselves.*

Both pre-service and in-service English teachers' opinions were given above regarding their views about the contribution of the generic and English teacher competencies set by Turkish MoNE. It was found out that although the pre-service participants only held positive opinions about the contribution of the related competencies for their professional identity, in-service teachers were found to have both positive and negative opinions.

4.2 Replies to the Second WIP Question

In this part, participant answers to the second question in the WIP will be exemplified. The ninth question is: Please indicate if you have any other comments regarding the generic and English teacher competencies set by Turkish MoNE?

Table 3.
Pre-service Comments about Teacher Competencies

Theme	Frequency	Percentage
Suggestion	33	9.1%
Criticism	17	4.7%
Appraisal	1	0.2%
Mixed 1 (+ and -)	2	0.5%
No answer	313	85.5%

Table 3 reports the answers of the pre-service English teachers to the ninth WIP item which asks further comments of the participants on the generic and English teacher competencies. Various categories emerged upon the further comments, but a high majority of the pre-service participants (N: 313, 85.5%) did not answer the ninth WIP item. There are categories like suggestion, criticism, appraisal, mixed and no answer. The mixed categorization includes answers where the participants have both positive and negative views. 33 (9.1%) pre-service participants made suggestions, while 17 (4.7%) made criticism, 1 (0.2%) made a compliment, and 2 (0.5) held both positive and negative views. It can be said that the pre-service teachers made suggestions or criticism to develop these competencies.

Some of the participants made suggestions about the improvement of the generic and English teacher competencies in terms of bettering teacher image, diminishing theory-practice gap, controlling teachers, improving competencies, stopping adaptations, informing stakeholders, reopening teacher training high schools and including a special talent test at educational faculties. They wanted these competencies to have a less formal manner and a more concise style, and to be internationally applicable. Some of them stress the influence of teacher trainers, inspectors and educational faculties on teacher education and the educational system with the help of observation, providing more practical opportunities, curriculum change and technological improvements. Some think that there should be different criteria to choose teacher candidates, more monetary

support and professional help for dealing with teacher differences while some insist that these competencies are not valid for all teachers and there should be trust in teachers.

Some of the participants made criticism about the improvement of the generic and English teacher competencies set by Turkish MoNE in terms of changing criteria for choosing teacher candidates with regard to field competencies and personal characteristics, manner of inspection, diminishing the role of KPSS scores in teacher appointment, lack of Turkish MoNE support, lack of teacher trainer support, lack of practicality of research findings, lack of stakeholder participation to improve teachers, curriculum-based educational system and English course books. There are some negative views about the MoNE competencies in that they were found to be "formal", "invalid", "demanding", "unrealistic", "unnecessary", "challenging", "unpractical due to theory-practice gap" and "inapplicable". Some wanted these competencies to be more plausible by balancing the expectations from teachers and their training. Moreover, YÖK-MoNE cooperation is thought to be essential for both national educational system and ELT programmes. Finally, one participant reports that teachers need to be valued more and points out Finland educational system as a model.

A small number of participants offer positive views about Turkish MoNE for providing self-evaluation opportunities with the help of these competencies and find MoNE efforts as precious in creating big differences but they also stress the need of more training for self-development of teachers and makes compliments about Finland education system.

Again a small number of participants have mixed views about the generic and English teacher competencies. One participant sees these competencies as good but not very realistic while another one finds them necessary but not possible.

Now opinions of pre-service English teachers will be exemplified. STE stands for pre-service teacher, and the following number shows the order of the participant in the study. A few pre-service English teachers made extra comments for the last WIP item. The first of the following participants propose a new way of choosing pre-service teachers for ELT departments in that MoNE is suggested to eliminate teacher candidates based on their speaking ability, psychological health and communication skills. While some of them (T 190) find the competencies good but unrealistic, another one wants these competencies to be controlled since teachers are not thought to possess them.

STE 16: *MNE can choose candidates according to their speaking ability, psychological healthy and their communication ability.*

STE 61: *They are given importance and are controlled. Because lots of teacher don't have them.*

STE 190: *They are good but not very realistic.*

Assessment of these competencies comes to the fore as another issue to be considered. One of the participants thinks that these competencies cannot be assessed via KPSS and stresses the need for different and valid assessment tools. The last participant appreciates all of the aforementioned teacher competencies but points out the need for a sensitive and effective application of these competencies and adds that teachers should be provided with more training programs to enhance self-development.

STE 136: *They are good but they cannot be tested through KPSS. There should be more realistic testing devices.*

STE 324: *They are all precious competencies. If can be applied sensitively and effectively, they will create a big difference. Plus, there should be more teacher training programs for their self-development.*

Table 4.
In-service Answers about Teacher Competencies

Theme	Frequency	Percentage
Suggestion	3	3.6%
Criticism	8	9.5%
No answer	73	86.9%

Table 4 reports the answers of the in-service English teachers to the ninth WIP item which asks further comments of the participants on the generic and English teacher competencies. Various categories emerged upon the further comments, but a high majority of the pre-service participants (N: 73, 86.9%) did not answer the ninth WIP item. There are categories like suggestion, criticism, and no answer. 3 (3.6%) in-service participants made suggestions while 8 (9.5%) made criticism. It can be said that the in-service English teachers made suggestions or criticism to develop these competencies.

Below are some excerpts taken from in-service English teachers. First of all, pre-service English teacher opinions will be given. T stands for in-service teacher and the number represents the order of the participant in the study. Please note that the first 366 are pre-service English teachers and the rest consists of in-service English teachers. The quotations will be given as they are without correcting any errors. The same sample chosen among the participants was used to exemplify participant opinions.

A few in-service English teachers provided extra comments and suggestions about these competencies. Some of the suggestions are listed below. According to the first of the following participants, there are problems with the content of English course books like having long dialogues and texts which do not reflect the characteristics of everyday language. S/he also suggests the English course books should be designed by native speakers of English. The second in-service teacher does not have any other comment.

T 375: *Our course books at state schools should be prepared by native speakers. There are nonsense and long dialogues in the books and they've nothing to say about daily usage of the language.*

T 394: *I have not any other comment.*

The following in-service English teacher states that teachers need feedback from various stakeholders like teacher trainers, administrators and inspectors during their in-service training because stakeholders are thought to be influential in helping teachers recognize what aspects they are good at and what aspects they lack but just looking for what teachers lack is not considered to be an effective approach. Thus, inspection is criticized for not being useful on the part of the teacher due to the passive role of inspectors and their note-taking style to detect what the teacher lacks. This is stated in the following quotation:

T 404: *We need feedback and in-service training from teacher trainers, administrators and inspectors about these competencies. They should make us notice our strong and weak aspects. It is not useful to look for teachers' lack of knowledge or mistakes. Inspectors should not just in the classroom and note the insufficient points. I think it is not beneficial.*

The next in-service English teacher is in favour of an urgent change in the curriculum to cover intercultural communication issues as well. S/he also suggests that Turkish MoNE should provide programs for the student to study abroad and improve the technological infrastructure at schools.

T 406: *TMNE must urgently try contemporary curriculum (including the culture of the target language that we are teaching). And provide better and cheaper education programmes both in the country and abroad. And also provide better conditions and technology at schools.*

In light of the comments of the last three participants, we can say that in-service English teachers would like to include more extra-curricular activities in their lessons and they need more seminars or meetings in their in-service training to improve their professional skills. The next teacher wishes that these competencies were known, possessed and applied by the MoNE staff to serve teacher needs more. Finally, the last participant stresses that the application of these competencies does not occur in the short term but they need to be implemented in the long term and adds that teacher competencies flourish in the course of teaching in classes and teaching itself is shaped by experiences in the course of time rather than taking place due to the written content in any curriculum.

T 412: *There should be more extracurricular activities or professional seminars for English teachers.*

T 417: *I wish, all MNE staff knew, had and used teacher competencies for a better teaching service.*

T 441: *Teacher need more nights to use their educational competencies in classes. Teaching mustn't be like a curriculum-based system.*

Extra comments and suggestions of the pre-service and in-service English teachers about the generic and English teacher competencies as well as choosing teacher candidates, course book design and the structure of the pre-service teacher training and in-service teacher training were given.

5. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

The study aimed to find out the perspective of English teachers about the generic and English teacher competencies set by Turkish MoNE in terms of their contribution to professional identity and get any other comments of the participants regarding the related competencies. The participant comments yielded multifaceted understanding of the related competencies. While some of the participants held positive views about the contribution of these competencies to their professional identity, some expressed hesitation or negative views due to the constraints in practice like effective introduction and regular testing of these competencies. Testing and improvement of the generic and English teacher competencies with the help of constant feedback are as important as the introduction of these competencies because if pre-service teachers are taught knowledge

and skills which they will not need in their future career or for which they will not be responsible and evaluated, they are likely to disregard these competencies, which can be explained by wash back effect. Therefore, Turkey seems to need a systematic approach in the introduction, improvement and testing of these competencies in both pre-service and in-service teacher training programme.

This study bears some similarities and differences with the previous research results. Echoing Beauchamp and Thomas (2009) contextual factors were reported to be an important part of teacher development in terms of teacher identity. Similar to Gallagher et al. (2011), the participants touched upon the role of teacher competencies in forming their teaching identity. However, what differs and expands on the current research findings was the criticism of teacher employment policies and the unavoidable effect of high-stake exams in Turkey. The participants did not favour the existence of only a central examination to appoint teachers. They also stated that they were overwhelmed by school management and parents to prepare students for high-stake exams in terms of reading, vocabulary and grammar but to exclude communicative activities. The participants reported that they felt constrained by the high-stake examinations and teacher recruitment policies in Turkey. In parallel with Okumuş (2014) and Çakır and Balçıkanlı (2012), the self-assessment forms of these competencies provided by Turkish MoNE can be an alternative way of testing these competencies since these forms can act as can-do statements found in the EPOSTL and EP because some previous studies also came up with the positive outcomes of the use EPOSTL like improving reflection and self-assessment among pre-service teachers.

Both generic and English teacher competencies need to be included in pre-service and in-service teacher training since they can contribute to the professional identity of teachers in a number of ways. First of all, pre-service teachers and in-service English teachers can refer to these competencies as criteria to detect their strong and weak aspect, and act accordingly. In other words, self-assessment forms of these competencies can take the form of framework, general guidelines or standards to be followed for professional development and practical experience, which can enhance self-confidence of teachers. Beginning teachers can benefit from these competencies especially when confronted with difficulties in classroom management or having discipline problems since these two aspects of teaching were found to be among the major concerns or difficulties of pre-service teachers, which confirm the findings of Wolff, van den Bogert, Jarodzk and Boshuizen (2014). It is also possible that teachers will realize that they gain awareness about their teaching competencies as they teach so the more they teach the more they will be conscious about their teaching competencies. English teachers can reach a synthesis about their teaching identity by considering the generic and English teacher competencies, drawing conclusions from their teaching experiences and observing colleagues.

Linguistic proficiency of students at some departments like ELT, linguistics, translation and interpretation, or literature can be achieved to some extent but it is the educational sciences courses which are expected to make a difference in the perceptions and practices of pre-service teachers in terms of developmental features of learners and their differing characteristics depending upon their age, language level and grade. Knowing the linguistic content may not always be enough to teach English because pre-service teachers receive education for four years and they are exposed to the pedagogical aspect

of each course across the curriculum. For example; how to benefit from literary texts to improve reading skills and lexis of learners, how to test different language skills of learners, how to teach young learners, how to teach integrated language skills or how to teach to learners with different needs with different types of methods. In other words, the pre-service teacher is waiting at a junction and is affected by all the activities coming from different directions. Exposure to various courses, all possessing aims for teaching better, will eventually lead the pre-service teacher to question the effectiveness of his/her teaching practices based on the knowledge, skills and experiences gained in these courses. Therefore, they are likely to develop specific attitudes towards teaching based on the intersection of courses improving both content and pedagogical knowledge. Consequently, the air pre-service teachers breathe at educational faculties will be determining in shaping their teaching knowledge and skills, and help them to possess a unique teacher identity. However, universities need to collaborate with schools more in order to increase teaching experiences of pre-service teachers, which could be actualized by having practical courses for pre-service teachers at earlier stages in their pre-service training programmes in addition to the courses called school experience or practicum. It is reasonable that they first observe the English teachers at schools and then start to teach with real students after they have taken the courses with content knowledge and pedagogical knowledge basis since these courses equip pre-service teachers with the knowledge and teaching experiences they will need in real classroom settings. However, pre-service teachers can be introduced to real teaching circumstances earlier in their courses so that they can associate the theoretical knowledge they learn from books or their lecturers with the events happening in the real classroom settings and draw their own individual conclusions regarding teaching nglish. If pre-service teacher training programmes include the introduction and development of the generic and field-specific teacher competencies, pre-service teachers are likely to be well-equipped with the necessary knowledge and experiences when they become an in-service teacher and step into their real classes. The parallelism of pre-service teacher training programmes with these competencies can also bridge the gap between what is learnt at universities and what actually happens in real educational contexts. Thus, quality of teacher training seems to be the key solution rather than the quantity of the teacher training programmes. If pre-service teachers are equipped with these teaching competencies, they may not have difficulties in adapting to their real schools and can enhance their existing competencies in line with their individual teaching experiences and with the help of in-service teacher training services.

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GENİŞ ÖZET

1. Giriş

İyi donanımlı öğretmen adayları yetiştirmek uzun vadeli başarı için yeterli olmayabilir ve hizmet içi öğretmenlere de mesleklerini devam ettirmelerini sağlamak ve tükenmişlik belirtilerini ortadan kaldırmak için önem verilmelidirler. Aksi takdirde, eğitimsel politikalar devam ettirilemeyebilir ya da amaçlar etkin bir şekilde gerçekleştirilemeyebilir. Öğretmen eğitimi programlarının önemi öğretmen adaylarını gelecekteki sınıfların karmaşık gerçeklerine hazırlamaları açısından kolaylaştırıcı rolü hususunda vurgulanmaktadır. Her birey gibi öğretmen de benzersizdir ve geçirdikleri değişim, deneyim ve dünya görüşlerine bağlı olarak birbirlerinden farklılıklar göstermektedir. Hizmet öncesi öğretmenlik eğitimi farkındalık yaratabilir ama öğretim bağlamlarındaki gerçekleriyle nasıl başa çıkılması gerektiği esasen hizmet içinde alınan eğitime bağlıdır. Eğer öğretmen adayları yetersizlik duygularıyla mezun olursa ya da hizmet içi öğretmenler kendi mesleki bilgi ve becerileri hakkında memnuniyetsizlik hissederse, mesleklerinde başarılı ya da mutlu olmaları beklenemez ve dolayısıyla onların eğittiği öğrencilerin de başarılı olacağı umulamaz. Öncelikle öğretmen yeterlikleri gözden geçirilmeli, öğretmenlerin neye ihtiyaç duydukları ve eksik yönleri bilinmeli ki ihtiyaç duydukları yönlendirme etkinlikleri yapılabilsin. Bu sayede öğretmenler kişisel ve mesleki gelişimleri için daha gerçekçi amaçlar belirleyeceklerdir. Bu yüzden bu çalışma İngilizce öğretmeni adaylarının ve hizmet içi İngilizce öğretmenlerinin Millî Eğitim Bakanlığı (MEB) genel ve İngilizce öğretmeni yeterlikleri hakkındaki görüşlerini belirlemeyi amaçlanmaktadır. Böylelikle öğretmen eğitimindeki aksayan yönler ve sorunlu uygulamalar belirlenebilecek ve buna bağlı olarak eğitimsel politikaları ve öğretmen eğitimi programları gözden geçirilebilir.

2. Yöntem

Bu çalışma açıklayıcı araştırma modeline sahiptir çünkü bu çalışma genel ve özel alan öğretmen yeterliklerinin katılımcıların bakış açısına bağlı olarak güncel durumunu belirlemeyi ve bir adım öteye geçerek bunun altında yatan sebepleri açıklamayı amaçlamaktadır.

Çalışmanın evreni Türkiye'deki İngilizce öğretmeni adaylarından ve hizmet içi İngilizce öğretmenlerinden oluşmaktadır. Çalışmanın örneklemi ise Türkiye'deki İngilizce öğretmeni adayları (İngilizce öğretmenliği son sınıf öğrencileri) ve farklı öğretim deneyimine sahip olan ve farklı tür okullarda görev yapan hizmet içi İngilizce öğretmenlerini kapsamaktadır. Bu amaçla araştırmaya Gazi Üniversitesi, Hacettepe Üniversitesi, Orta Doğu Teknik Üniversitesi (ODTÜ) ve Pamukkale Üniversitesi olmak üzere toplam 4 devlet üniversitesinden İngilizce öğretmeni adayları ve Ankara, Denizli, Gaziantep, Zonguldak, İstanbul, Yozgat, Aksaray, Bolu, Afyon, Şanlıurfa ve Niğde

olmak üzere 10 farklı şehirde görev yapan hizmet içi İngilizce öğretmeni katılmıştır. Veri toplama aracı olarak yazılı mülakat formu oluşturulmuştur ve bu formda yer alan sorular öğretmen eğitimi ve öğretmen yeterlikleri konusundaki çalışmalardan esinlenilerek hazırlanmıştır. Uzman görüşü elde etmek amacıyla bu form İngilizce Öğretmenliği Bölümündeki 6 öğretim üyesine gönderilmiş ve gelen dönütler doğrultusunda form şekli ve içeriğinde çeşitli değişiklikler yapılmıştır. Bu çalışma nitel bir çalışmadır çünkü veri toplama aracı yazılı bir mülakat formudur ve elde dilen veriler gömülü teorinin sürekli karşılaştırma yöntemine göre analiz edilmiştir. Nitel veri analizinin kodlama, yorumlama ve sınıflara ayırma aşamalarında, objektifliğini artırmak amacıyla araştırmacı dışında, bağımsız ikinci bir kodlayıcı da veri analizine dâhil olmuştur. Bu sayede kodlayıcılar arası güvenirlik çalışmaları yürütülmüştür. Ayrıca, kodlayıcıların kendi içindeki güvenirliğini artırmak için her bir kodlayıcı önce bireysel olarak nitel veriyi yorumlayıp sınıflara ayırmış ve yaklaşık 3 hafta sonra da oluşturdukları sınıflandırmaları tekrar gözden geçirip bazı değişiklikler yapmışlardır. Toplam verinin %25'inin kodlanma işlemlerinin bitirilmesinin ardından elde dilen ana ve alt kategorilerin uyum seviyelerinin belirlenmesi için Miles ve Huberman (1994: 64) tarafından önerilen formül uygulanmış ve kodlayıcılar arası güvenirlik %80.1 olarak bulunmuştur. İlgili formüle göre iki kodlayıcının analiz etmiş oldukları verinin ortaya çıkan ana ve alt kategorilerindeki uyum oranının en az %70 olması gerekmektedir ve ilk hesaplamada bu seviyenin üstüne çıkılmıştır. Daha sonra verinin geri kalan kısmı her iki kodlayıcı tarafından bağımsız olarak analiz edilmiş ve tüm veri her iki kodlayıcı tarafından analiz edildiğinde kodlayıcılar arası uyum seviyesi tekrar hesaplanmıştır. Tüm mülakat sorularına verilen cevapların analizi tamamlandığında, kodlayıcılar arası güvenirliği belirlemek için yine Miles ve Huberman (1994: 64) tarafından önerilen kodlayıcılar arası güvenirlik formülü hesaplanmış ve bu kez uyum seviyesi %90.1 olarak bulunmuştur fakat her iki kodlayıcı arasında %100 görüş birliği sağlanana değin görüş alışverişi devam etmiştir. %70 oranının uyum seviyesi açısından kabul edilir olmasına rağmen nitel veri analizi süreçlerinin güvenirliğini belirlemek ve sağlamlaştırmak adına böylesi güvenirlik testi tekrarına başvurulmuştur.

3. Bulgular, Sonuç ve Tartışma

Bu çalışma İngilizce öğretmeni adaylarının ve İngilizce öğretmenlerinin mesleki kimliklerini geliştirmesi açısından MEB tarafından geliştirilen öğretmen yeterliklerine ilişkin görüşlerini bulmayı ve karşılaştırmayı amaçlamıştır. Elde edilen bulgular ışığında olumlu, olumsuz, karışık, cevapsız ve ilgisiz olmak üzere 5 farklı kategori ortaya çıkmıştır. Kimi katılımcılar olumlu kimi katılımcılarsa ilgili yeterliklerin öğretmenlik kimliğini geliştirmesi konusunda olumsuz görüş bildirmişlerdir. Karışık görüşlere sahip olan katılımcılarsa hem olumlu hem de olumsuz görüşlere sahip olan ya da koşul cümleleriyle görüş bildiren katılımcılardır. Buna göre 163 (%44.6) İngilizce öğretmeni adayı olumlu görüş, 16'sı (%4.4) olumsuz görüş ve 9'u (%2.5) karışık görüş bildirmiştir ve 17 (%4.6) katılımcı koşul olarak bazı kriterler ileri sürmüştür. Son olarak da 10 (%2.7) katılımcı ilgili mülakat sorusuna ilgisiz yanıt vermiştir. Özetle öğretmen adaylarının çoğunlukla MEB öğretme yeterliklerinin öğretmenlik kimliklerine katkısı hakkında olumlu izlenime sahip olduğu söylenebilir. Hizmet içi İngilizce öğretmenleri için de olumlu, olumsuz, karışık, cevapsız ve gereksiz kategorileri ortaya çıkmıştır fakat bu grupta ayrıca "etkisi yok" kategorisi de ortaya çıkmıştır ki bu gruptaki katılımcılar ilgili öğretmen yeterliklerinin kendi öğretmenlik kimlikleri üzerinde herhangi etkisinin

olmadığını belirtmişlerdir. MEB tarafından geliştirilen genel ve İngilizce öğretmenliği yeterliklerinin öğretmenlik kimliğine olan etkileri kapsamında; 21 (%25) öğretmen adayı olumlu görüş bildirirken 8 (%9.6) öğretmen olumsuz görüş bildirmiştir. Buna ek olarak, 2 (%2.4) öğretmen hem olumlu hem de olumsuz görüşü kapsayan karışık görüş bildirmiş, 1 (%1.2) öğretmen koşul olarak bazı kriterler ileri sürmüştür ve 1 (%1.2) öğretmen ilgili yeterliklerin öğretmenlik kimliği üzerinde herhangi etkisinin olmadığını ileri sürmüştür. Son olarak 3 (%3.5) öğretmen ilgili soruya ilgisiz yanıt vermiştir. Özetle, öğretmen adayları gibi öğretmenlerin de bu yeterliklerin kendi öğretmenlik kimliklerine olumlu katkı sağladıklarını düşünmektedir. Görüldüğü üzere her iki grup katılımcı da MEB öğretmen yeterliklerinin öğretmenlik kimliği üzerinde olumlu etkiye sahip olduğunu belirtmektedir. Bu nedenle hem genel hem de İngilizce öğretmeni yeterliklerinin hizmet öncesi ve hizmet içi öğretmen eğitimine dâhil edilmesi gerekmektedir çünkü bu yeterlikler öğretmenlerin mesleki kimliklerine çeşitli şekillerde katkı sağlayabilir. Öncelikle öğretmen adayları ve öğretmenler güçlü ve zayıf yanlarını belirlemek ve bu doğrultuda hareket etmek için bu yeterliklere ortak kriter olarak başvurabilirler. Başka bir ifade ile bu yeterliklerin öz değerlendirme formları mesleki gelişim ve uygulamalı deneyimi artırmak için takip edilmesi gereken çerçeve, genel ilkeler ya da standartlar şeklini alabilir ki bu da öğretmenlerin öz güvenini artırmaya yardımcı olacaktır. İlgili yeterliklerin öğretmen eğitiminde kullanılması, öğretmenlere dönüt verilmesi ve öğretmenlerin yeterliklerinin ölçülmesi öğretmenlik kimliği hakkında farkındalık oluşturacak ve deneyimlerden yola çıkarak öğretmenlik kimliği hakkında senteze ulaşmasında rehberlik edecektir.

APPENDIX A

WRITTEN INTERVIEW PROTOCOL (WIP)[1]

1. Are you informed about both the generic teacher competencies and English teacher competencies set by Turkish Ministry of National Education (MoNE)?

2. When and how were you informed about the above-mentioned MoNE competencies?

3. What do you think of the generic teacher competencies and English teacher competencies set by Turkish Ministry of National Education (MoNE)?

4. Do you find the generic teacher competencies and English teacher competencies set by Turkish Ministry of National Education (MoNE) sufficient and realistic enough? Why or why not?

5. How do you think the generic teacher competencies and English teacher competencies set by Turkish Ministry of National Education (MoNE)contribute to your professional identity?

6. Do you think there should be support from other stakeholders like experienced colleagues, administrators, inspectors, and parents for improving the generic teacher competencies and English teacher competencies set by Turkish Ministry of National Education (MoNE)? If yes, in what forms do you think it will take place?

7. What do you think of the role of inspection in the teaching profession in Turkey? How does inspection affect the generic teacher competencies and English teacher competencies set by Turkish Ministry of National Education (MoNE)?

8. How would the closure of education faculties affect the teaching profession in terms of the generic teacher competencies and English teacher competencies set by Turkish Ministry of National Education (MoNE)?

9. Please indicate if you have any other comments regarding the generic teacher competencies and English teacher competencies set by Turkish Ministry of National Education (MoNE).

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[1] It should be noted that the answers to the 5th and 9th questions are included in this study.