REPUBLIC OF TURKEY
ÇUKUROVA UNIVERSITY
INSTITUTE OF SOCIAL SCIENCES
DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHING

A STUDY OF EFL INSTRUCTORS' MULTICULTURAL TEACHING COMPETENCE AT TERTIARY LEVEL IN TURKEY

Akın GÜRBÜZ

PhD. DISSERTATION

ADANA / 2021

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PhD. DISSERTATION

ADANA / 2021

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bildirir, aksi bir durumda aleyhime doğabilecek tüm hak kayıplarını kabullendiğimi beyan ederim. …. / …. / 2021

Akın GÜRBÜZ

To my beloved Mom...

ÖZET

TÜRKİYE'DE YÜKSEKÖĞRETİM KURUMLARINDA YABANCI DİL OLARAK İNGİLİZCE ÖĞRETEN ÖĞRETİM ELEMANLARININ ÇOK KÜLTÜRLÜ ÖĞRETİM YETKİNLİKLERİNİN İNCELENMESİ

Akın GÜRBÜZ

Doktora Tezi, İngiliz Dili Eğitimi Ana Bilim Dalı
Danışman: Prof. Dr. Rana YILDIRIM
Nisan 2021, 180 sayfa

Son dönemlerde sınırların ötesinde meydana gelen çatışma ortamlarından dolayı bütün dünyayı saran büyük çaplı göç hareketleri meydana gelmiştir. Dünya üzerindeki birçok ülkeye kıyasla, ülkemiz bu göç dalgasından en fazla etkilenen ülkelerin başında gelmektedir. Bu insan hareketliliğinin bir sonucu olarak sosyal, kültürel, siyasi vb. birçok alanda bir etkileşim oluşmuş ve formal eğitim kurumlarında daha önce hissedilmeyen birtakım güçlükler gün yüzüne çıkmıştır. Öğrenci merkezli öğretim anlayışını sürdürme gayretindeki öğretmenler, farklı kültürlerden gelen bu karma öğrenci kitlesi karşısında çeşitli güçlüklerle karşılaşmakta ancak yine de Türkiye bağlamında çokkültürlü eğitim alanında yapılan çalışmalar, çokkültürlü eğitimin hizmet öncesi öğretmen yetiştirme programlarına dahil edilmesi gerektiğini ve öğretmenlerin bu ilkeleri benimsemelerinin teşvik edilmesi gerektiğini göstermektedir (Aydın & Acar-Çiftçi, 2014; Erbaş, 2019; Unlu & Orten, 2013; Aydın & Tonbuloğlu, 2014). Ç*okkültürlü öğretimin* temel amacı, eğitim-öğretim ortamlarında tüm bireylere eşit mesafede yaklaşabilme, birlik ve bütünlüğün sağlanarak aidiyet duygusunun kazandırılması ve tüm öğrenciler arasında fırsat eşitliğinin sağlanarak farklı dil ve kültürel geçmişe sahip gruplar arasındaki akademik başarı farklılığının ortadan kaldırılmasıdır (Banks, 1995a; Bennet, 1995; Gay, 2001; Gorski, 2010; Talbot, 2003). Bu bağlamda araştırma, (1) yabancı dil olarak İngilizce öğretimi yapan Öğretim Görevlileri'nin çokkültürlü öğretim yetkinliklerinin (farkındalık, bilgi, tutum ve beceri bouyutunda) incelenmesini; (2) bu sınıfların dil ve kültür bağlamında çeşitliliği itibariyle karşılaştıkları güçlüklerin ve bu güçlüklerle baş etme stratejilerinin tespit edilmesini amaçlamıştır.

Çalışmanın yürütülmesi için karma yöntem araştırma deseni kullanılmış ve veriler

isimsiz anketler, video kayıtlı derslerin incelendiği yüz yüze görüşmeler ve yüzyüze yarı yapılandırılmış görüşmeler yoluyla toplanmıştır. Araştırmanın örneklemi amaçlı örneklem yöntemiyle belirlenmiş ve nicel veriler Gaziantep ve çevre illerdeki (Şanlıurfa Harran Üniversitesi, Adıyaman Üniversitesi, Kahramanmaraş Sütçü İmam Üniversitesi, Adana Çukurova Üniversitesi ve Kilis 7 Aralık Üniversitesi) üniversitelerin Yabancı Diller Yüksekokulu'nda yabancı dil olarak İngilizce öğretimi yapan 114 Öğretim Görevlisi'ne Eleştirel Çokkültürlü Eğitim Öğretmen Yeterlikleri Ölçeği (Acar-Çiftçi, 2016) uygulanarak toplanmıştır. Araştırmanın nitel verileri, Gaziantep Üniversitesi Yabancı Diller Yüksekokulu'nda görev yapan 4 Öğretim Görevlisi ile sınıf-içi video ders kayıtlarının ardından yapılan yüzyüze görüşme ve yine aynı kurumdaki 20 Öğretim Görevlisi ile yüz yüze görüşmeler yoluyla toplanmıştır. Nicel ve nitel verilerin üçlemesi ve karma yöntem araştırma deseni çalışmada elde edilen sonuçların geçerliğini güçlendirmiştir.

Çalışmada elde edilen sonuçlar, yükseköğretimde yabancı dil olarak İngilizce öğretimi yapan Öğretim Görevliler'inin çokkültürlü öğretim yetkinliğinin dört boyutu açısından genel anlamıyla yetkin olduklarını ortaya koymuştur. Her ne kadar ölçek yoluyla elde edilen nicel verilerde Öğretim Görevlileri kendilerini sadece tutum boyutunda yüksek düzeyde; farkındalık, bilgi ve beceri boyutunda ise orta düzeyde yetkin görseler de, nicel yöntemlerle elde edilen verilerin çokkültürlü öğretim yetkinliğinin dört boyutu açısında çeşitliliği ve zenginliği Öğretim Görevlilerinin yetkin olduklarını; sınıf içinde çeşitli zorluklarla karşılaştıklarını ve bu zorluklarla başetmek için çeşitli stratejiler geliştirdiklerini ortaya koymuştur. Özellikle farkındalık boyutunda *öğrencilerin kültürel çeşitliliği*'ne vurgu yaparak, *empati gösterme* ve *önyargılardan kaçınma*'ya; bilgi boyutunda *deneyimin temel rolü*'ne; tutum boyutunda çokkültürlülüğün bir *zenginlik* olduğuna ve *yabancı dilde iletişim* ve *farklılıklar hakkında bilgi sahibi olmak için bir fırsat* olduğununa; beceri boyutunda *farklı gruplardan öğrencileri biraraya getirebilme* becerisine vurgu yapılmış; karşılaşılan zorluklar açısından en çok *dil ve iletişim kaynaklı* sorunlar yaşandığı; ve iletişim kopukluğuyla başetmek için *jest, mimik, başka kelimelerle ifade, beden dili* ve *çeviri* gibi gibi *dilsel stratejiler* kullandıkları ortya çıkmıştır. Araştırma süreci ve sonuçları göz önüne alındığında, eğitimin birçok paydaşı için çeşitli pedagojik çıkarımlar elde edilmiş ve öneriler sunulmuştur.

Anahtar kelimeler: Kültür, çokkültürlü eğitim, çokkültürlü öğretim yetkinlikleri, öğretmen yeterlikleri.

ABSTRACT

A STUDY OF EFL INSTRUCTORS' MULTICULTURAL TEACHING COMPETENCE AT TERTIARY LEVEL IN TURKEY

Akın GÜRBÜZ

A PhD Thesis, Department of English Language Teaching
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Recently, due to due to the conflicts that have occurred beyond the borders, there have occurred large-scale immigration movements around the world. Compared to many countries in the world, our country is one of the countries that have been most affected by this migration wave. As a result of this mobility, social, cultural, linguistic, political interactions have been seen in many areas and some difficulties that were not felt before in formal education institutions have come to light. Teachers who strive to maintain a student-centred teaching approach face various difficulties owing to linguistic and cultural diversity in student population; nevertheless, the studies in the Turkish context indicate that there is a need to include multicultural education in pre-service teacher education programs and teachers should be encouraged to adopt its principles (Aydın & Acar-Çiftçi, 2014; Erbaş, 2019; Unlu & Orten, 2013; Aydın & Tonbuloğlu, 2014). The main purpose of *multicultural education* is to approach all individuals at an equal distance in educational environments, provide a sense of belonging by ensuring unity and integrity, and eliminate the gap in academic achievement among diverse groups from various linguistic and cultural backgrounds by ensuring equal opportunities for all (Banks, 1995a; Bennet, 1995; Gay, 2001; Gorski, 2010; Talbot, 2003). In this regard, the present study intends to (1) explore the multicultural teaching competences (namely *awareness, knowledge, attitude and skill*) of the EFL instructors at tertiary level; (2) identify the challenges they experience due to linguistic and cultural diversity, and the strategies they employ in order to cope with the challenges.

A mixed method research design was utilized to conduct the study, and data were collected through Critiacal Multicultural Teaching Competency Scale (Acar-Çiftçi, 2016), video-stimulated interviews, and semi-structured interviews. A purposeful

sampling method was pursued in the selection of participants and 114 EFL instructors working at the School of Foreign Languages in various universities in Gaziantep and surrounding provinces (Harran University in Şanlıurfa, Adıyaman University in Adıyaman, Sütçü İmam University in Kahramanmaraş, Çukurova University in Adana, and Kilis 7 Aralık University in Kilis) in order to collect quantitative data. The qualitative data of the study were collected through video-stimulated interviews with four instructors and semi-structured interviews with 20 lecturers at from Gaziantep University School of Foreign Languages. The triangulation of data collection and the mixed method of research design strengthened the validity of the results obtained in the study.

The results obtained in the study revealed that the EFL instructors at tertiary education were sufficiently competent in terms of four dimensions of multicultural teaching competence. Although, in the quantitative data obtained through the scale, the participating instructors perceived themselves highly competent merely in regards to multicultural attitude and moderately competent in regards to awareness, knowledge and skill dimensions, the diversity and richness of the data obtained by quantitative methods indicated that the participating instructors were amply competent in terms of multicultural teaching. The findings further revealed that the EFL instructors at tertiary level experience various challenges in their language classrooms and they manage to develop numerous strategies to overcome these challenges. In the interviews, the participating instructors particularly emphasized the *cultural diversity of students* and the significance of *showing empathy* and *avoiding prejudices* in regards to multicultural awareness; placed considerable emphasis on *the essential role of experience* for multicultural knowledge; valued diversity as *richness, an opportunity for communication* and *learning about differences* in regards to multicultural attitude; and emphasised *the ability to bring students from diverse groups together* for multicultural skills. On the other hand, the interviews further revealed that the participating instructors most frequently experienced challenges in regards to *language and communication*, and they used *linguistic strategies* such as *gestures, facial expressions, paraphrasing, body language, and translation* to cope with communication breakdowns in their language classrooms. Considering the research process and its results, the current research study provided various pedagogical implications and suggestions for the main stakeholders of education.

Key terms: Culture, multicultural education, multicultural teaching competency, teacher competences.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AACTE : American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education
CMETC : Critical Multicultural Education Teacher Competencies
CMETCS : Critical Multicultural Education Competency Scale
EFL : English as a Foreign Language
ELT : English Language Teaching
EU : European Union
KONDA : KONDA Research and Consultancy
NCATE : The National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education
NCES : National Centre for Educational Statistics
SFL : School of Foreign Languages
UN : United Nations
UNDESA : United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs
YÖK : Yükseköğretim Kurulu (the Council of Higher Education)

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1. Introduction

This study titled "A Study of EFL Instructors' Multicultural Teaching Competence at Tertiary Level in Turkey" is intended to show multicultural competences of EFL instructors working at various universities in Turkey. The frame of the study consisted of the four dimensions, namely *awareness, knowledge, attitude,* and *skill*) of the Critical Multicultural Education Teacher Competencies (CMETC hereafter) suggested by Acar-Çiftçi (2016a) in addition to the challenges EFL instructors experience in their language classrooms in regards to linguistic and cultural diversity, and the strategies they employ in order to overcome the difficulties.

Recent studies (Acar-Çiftçi, 2019; Özkan, 2018; Tecim, 2019; Yanık, 2011) point out that the professionals working in higher education institutions have been working with more and more diverse student populations. Thus, they need to be culturally competent in order to meet the needs of their students who are from diverse racial, ethnic, and socio-economic backgrounds (Darling-Hammond, 2006; Gay, 2002). Because of this change in the diversity of population in higher education, multicultural competence has become a necessary attribute and a professional requirement for EFL instructors addressing multicultural classrooms and struggling to meet the needs of a diverse student population. All these have brought multicultural teaching competence of language instructors to the fore of what needs to be addressed in higher education institutions. In this sense, the current study aims to shed light on the challenges EFL instructors face in their culturally diverse classrooms; depict their knowledge and skill levels, and report their views regarding multicultural competence. The findings of this study are expected to contribute to the professional development of the instructors and provide pedagogical implications and suggestions for the main stakeholders of education.

1.2. Background of the Study

Turkey is home to many ethnic, cultural, religious and linguistic groups which have managed to live together. Aydın (2005) depicts the social structure in Turkey basically containing a set of two populations, indigenous and immigrant populations:

> The indigenous ones are Turks and non-Turks, who are the natives of Turkey's territory (Armenians, Greeks, Jews and Assyrians), Kurdish, Laz, Hamshens, Greek-speaking Muslims and some Arabs. The latter ones are migrant groups. These include predominantly North Caucasians (Circassians, Abkhazians, Chechens and the Ingush), Georgians, Ossetians, Dagestanis (Avar, Lak and Lezgins), Bosnians, Albanians, Pomaks, Gypsies, Cretans, Sudanese, Christian Estons, Kazakh, Malakan, Poles, those Arabs who immigrated from Arab provinces that were lost during the First World War (Aydın, 2005, p. 124).

In addition, Turkey can be considered to be a multicultural society because there are many other aspects of diversity such as race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender, age, disability, religious orientations, and especially linguistic variation. It is a well-known fact that there are "numerous languages spoken in the Turkish society such as Turkish, Kurdish, Abkhazian, Arabic, Albanian, Circassian, Armenian, Georgian, Coptic, Laz, Pomak, Greek, Syriac, Tatar, and Hebrew" (Ünal, 2014, p. 146). This is proof of the existence of many ethnic origins. In regards to linguistic diversity, the multicultural structure of the Turkish society can be seen from a survey held by KONDA Research and Consultancy (KONDA hereafter) in 2006, which revealed that 84.54% of the population speak Turkish, about 12.98% speak Kurdish, 1.38% speak Arabic, and 1.11% speak other languages.

Due to the political and social instability beyond its borders, the number of immigrants and refugees in Turkey has reached a vast number. According to the United Nations International Migrant Stock report in 2019, this number had reached 5.678.800 by 2019, and it has been increasing day by day. According to the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UNDESA) report, the rate of refugee population growth in the world exceeded the general population growth. The report further indicates that the number of migrants and refugees, which was 221 million in 2010, reached 272 million in 2019. On the other hand, while the international immigrants comprised only 2.2% of the total share of population in 1990, it had risen to 7% by 2019. Hence, it can be seen that there is a cultural and linguistic mobility in the total population of the country.

Table 1.

International Migrant Stock: Country Profile- Turkey

	1990	**1995**	**2000**	**2005**	**2010**	**2015**	**2019**
International migrants (thousands)	1 163.7	1 216.2	1.281.0	1 319.2	1 367.0	4 346.2	5 876.8
International migrants as a share of total population (percentage)	2.2	2.1	2.0	1.9	1.9	5.5	7.0
Refugees (thousands)	30.5	12.8	3.1	2.4	10.0	2 753.8	3 787.2
Refugees as a share of international migrants (percentage)	2.6	1.1	0.2	0.2	0.7	63.4	64.4

(Adapted from https://www.un.org/en/development/desa/population/migration/data/estimates2/countryprofiles.asp)

Source: UNDESA, 2019

1.3. Statement of the Problem

The interrelation between language and culture has been a focal point for research inquiry in foreign language classrooms (Kramsch, 1993; Byram, 1989; Liddicoat, 2009; Deardorff, 2006; Liddicoat & Scarino, 2013) and as a result of increased globalization and inevitable growth in migration, there has been a recognition for the need of a multicultural focus in education. In the 21st century, the cultural variety in classrooms cannot be dismissed and instructors in higher education need to be equipped with the necessary skills and a common awareness should be raised so that they can tolerate on one hand and value on the other hand cultural diversity in their classrooms.

Based on the standards found in the Council of Europe's Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (2001), scholars underline the fact that it has been necessary for teachers to be equipped with the necessary skills so as to create an environment of curiosity and inquiry, and guide learners towards building a multicultural mindset due to the ever-changing nature and force of culture (Byram, Gribkova, and Starkey, 2002). Attitudes toward linguistic and cultural diversity need to be considered in the classroom context and teachers have a leading role in this transformation.

The changing landscape of educational institutions require teaching professionals to acquire the necessary skills and competencies in order to effectively address the needs of diverse populations (Kucuktas, 2016). There is a consensus among many scholars (Miranda, 2002; Ameny-Dixon, 2004; Marina, 2004; Pratt-Johnson, 2006; Yang & Montgomery, 2011) who agree that it is vital for educators to become cross-culturally competent in order to meet the requirements of increasingly culturally diverse classrooms.

For instance, Chart 1 shows that there is a significant rise in the number of international students in tertiary education in Turkey according to Student Numbers by Nationality Report by the Council of Higher Education. It can be seen that from 2013 to 2019, the diversity in tertiary education has gone up from about 50.000 to over 150.000. Along with already-existing nationwide cultural variety in the country, such a dramatic change in the population seems to make it inevitable for higher education to reorganize and adapt its institutions to the doctrines of multicultural education.

Chart 1. The number of international students at tertiary education in Turkey (2013-2019)

Formal education for immigrants used to be given to separated groups in shifts until 2017; however, the National Ministry of Education has decided to integrate all the immigrant groups with Turkish students. In addition to primary and secondary education, the rate of immigrant students from various ethnic groups in the higher education has reached to an indisputable level. There are universities where the number of international students has reached thousands. For instance, in Gaziantep University, where this study was implemented, the number of international students has reached over 5.000 and this constitutes more than 10% of the total student population at the university.

Some higher education institutions in Europe have their own strategies for the internationalisation of higher education (e.g. the Ministry of Education in Finland, 2009) by actively taking part in supporting the multicultural higher education community and civil society. Villegas and Lucas (2002) point out that it is necessary to prepare tomorrow's teachers to be ready to deal responsibly with the needs of diverse student

bodies and possible challenges raised by diversity in classrooms. In this sense, the study will examine EFL instructors' *awareness*, *knowledge*, *attitudes*, and *skills* in regards to multicultural competency, and the *challenges* posed by classrooms with linguistically and culturally diverse learners, and the strategies they use in order to ensure sustainable support for the requirements of multinational classrooms.

When the population structure and the distribution of the foreign population in Turkey is examined, it can be seen that there has been a radical change in the last decade (Republic of Turkey Ministry of Interior Directorate General of Migration Management, 2017). Accordingly, there has been a significant rise in the number of international students both in the earlier levels of National Education (namely, primary, secondary, and high schools) and in higher education institutions (the Council of Higher Education, 2019; Ministry of National Education, 2019). Based on the rapidly increasing linguistic and cultural diversity in the country, it can be assumed that there might be a social and cultural transformation not merely in educational institutions, but also in the society as a whole. Consequently, as Gay and Howard (2000) points out, the teaching practitioners already working in the field and teacher candidates enrolled in education faculties will also be directly affected by the rising distribution of diverse students in schools in the future. The question at this point is to what extent teaching professionals are ready to teach students from diverse backgrounds. Another important question concerns the amount of research on multicultural education in Turkey and provision needed for designing and implementing courses geared to improve the skills of teaching professionals to meet the challenges in diverse classrooms. The studies regarding issue conclude that there is a significant need for the provision of multicultural education in teacher education programs (Aydin & Acar-Çiftçi, 2014; Coban, Karaman, & Dogan, 2010; Erbas, 2019; Kaya & Aydin, 2014; Ünlü & Örten, 2013; Aydin & Tonburoğlu, 2014; Yavuz & Anil, 2010). For example, Erbas (2019) concludes that there is a significant need for the inclusion of multicultural education in teacher education programs and encouragement of teachers for the adoption of its principles. He further suggests that teachers need to be educated and trained on the issue and the number of studies should be increased. Likewise, with respect to the necessary acts for the realization of multicultural education in Turkey, Aydin and Acar-Çiftçi (2014) suggest that there is a need for legal regulations, the inclusion of courses on multicultural education in teacher education programs, and provision of in-service training programs for teaching professionals. Hence, the findings of this research study will have significant implications both for instructors and teachers

already working, and candidate teachers studying in educational faculties.

1.4. Purpose of the Study

The overall purpose of the current research inquiry is to investigate the EFL instructors' multicultural teaching competencies as perceived by them in regards to the dimensions of *awareness, knowledge, attitude, and skill*, the challenges posed by the linguistic and cultural diversity of the students, and the strategies they use to overcome these challenges.

In line with the purpose of the study, the following research questions guided the investigation:

1. To what extent do EFL instructors have an awareness of multicultural teaching competency?
2. How do EFL instructors perceive their multicultural teaching competency in terms of knowledge level?
3. What are EFL instructors' attitudes toward having diverse students in their classrooms?
4. How do EFL instructors perceive their multicultural teaching competency in terms of skill level?
5. Do EFL instructors face any challenges due to the multicultural diversity in their language classrooms? If they do, what kinds of strategies do EFL instructors implement to overcome these challenges?

In order to reveal the perceptions of the EFL instructors, the Critical Multicultural Education Teacher Competencies Scale (CMETCS hereafter), video-stimulated interviews and semi-structured interviews were used. By running a mixed methods research design (quantitative and qualitative) and using multiple data collection tools, the researcher aims to collect and integrate data from a variety of methods and tools, and provide a better investigation of the validity and generality of the explanations that are to be developed.

1.5. Significance of the Study

Although the review of literature indicates an increase in the number of studies

focusing on multicultural education in the Turkish context, it seems that there is still a significant need for further studies with a diversifying scope and design. A majority of studies recently conducted are on multicultural competences of teachers of social studies (Ateş, 2017; Demirsoy, 2013; Tecim, 2019; Morkoç, 2019) and educational sciences (Acar-Çiftçi & Gürol, 2015; Akçaoğlu, 2017; Dolapçı, 2019; Kaya, 2013; Özen; 2015; Yanık, 2012). There are very few studies focusing on the multicultural teaching competencies of the EFL teachers or instructors in regards to teaching culturally diverse classrooms (Özkan, 2018). The current study is unique both in terms of the research design it implements and scope of the dimensions it covers. It aims not only to address the perceptions of EFL instructors in regards to their multicultural teaching competencies, but also to explore their actual classroom practices through video-stimulated interviews and semi-structured interviews. A further significance of this current study regarding its scope is the challenges that the EFL instructors experience in their language classrooms due to linguistic and cultural diversity, and the strategies they use to overcome these challenges. Although the numerous studies mentioned above have focused on multicultural competences of teachers, there are no studies in a Turkish context addressing the challenges of teachers or instructors in terms of teaching linguistically and culturally diverse populations. Consequently, the mixed methods research design, and the multidimensional scope of the current study prove the magnitude of the implications that will be derived from the present study.

Last but not least, multicultural education aims to equip teachers with the necessary competences and skills for diverse classrooms, promote teachers with a better acknowledgement of the needs of individuals from diverse backgrounds, guide teachers in picking and employing proper strategies and materials in their classroom instruction, help teachers to make informed curricular choices, and encourage teachers to cultivate positive attitudes and views towards students from various linguistic and cultural backgrounds. Identifying multicultural competencies (i.e. *awareness, knowledge, attitude, and skill*), and exploring challenges the participating instructors face and the strategies they employ in their actual classrooms might help to better prepare multiculturally responsive teaching courses and training.

1.6. Limitations of the Study

It is necessary to consider some restraints in spite of the mixed methods research

design and the triangulated inquiry to carry out a rigorous research study and minimize obstacles to validity. Although the findings are obtained from a variety of instruments and are analysed thoroughly over a period of time, they should be interpreted cautiously.

Another limitation of the study is that it is restricted to the setting in which it has been conducted -a number of universities in the South-East Region in Turkey. Therefore, the findings of this study may be limited in terms of their generalizability and the participants of this study may not represent professionals at other institutions of higher education.

Finally, this study focuses on the perceptions, views and classroom practices of EFL instructors in regards to their multicultural teaching competencies, the challenges they face and the strategies they use. Despite the variety in data collection tools, the acquired findings may not completely reflect what is actually happening in the classroom because of the tendency of social desirability bias. The participants may have provided responses that are socially acceptable.

1.7. Operational Definitions

This section provides the definitions of some key concepts and terms that lay the foundation of this research inquiry.

Culture: It can broadly be defined as an organized set of thoughts, beliefs and norms for interaction and communication among people, which may influence perceptions, attitudes and behaviours (Ingraham & Meyers, 2000).

Cultural diversity: It refers to a number of differences among groups of people from diverse cultural backgrounds (Arredondo, Toporek, Brown, Jones, Locke, Sanchez & Stadler, 1996).

Culturally responsive teaching: It can be defined as the multicultural competence of a teacher to hold the necessary awareness, knowledge, attitudes, and skills so as to teach learners from diverse backgrounds efficiently (Gay, 2010).

Diversity: It indicates to the groups represented in schools who are from various cultural, ethnic and linguistic backgrounds, from different genders, and with special needs (Banks, 2014).

Diverse students: Learners that come from diverse linguistic and cultural backgrounds. Diverse students, and linguistically and culturally diverse students are used

interchangeably throughout the thesis.

Multicultural education: It is an educational reform that enables all students to benefit from education equally, regardless of differences such as religion, language, race, gender, age, social class, economic level, and so forth (Banks, 2008).

Multicultural teaching competency: It is a key term that defines a continuous process that teachers go through in order to (a) reflect on their own beliefs and attitudes toward diversity in their classrooms, (b) construct and raise their knowledge of learners from diverse backgrounds, (c) investigate the effect of this awareness and knowledge on the way and the content they teach, and the effects of these on interactions (Spanierman et al., 2011). The terms multicultural teaching competency and multicultural teaching competence are used interchangeably throughout the thesis.

Dimension of awareness: It is comprised of those values, attitudes, and assumptions of self- and others that are crucial to working with students who are culturally different from a particular professional" (Pope, Annandale, & Morrison-Saunders, 2004).

Dimension of attitude: It refers to the behavioural or emotional reactions that an individual creates based on his past experiences of other people, concepts and events (İnceoğlu, 2010, p. 13).

***Dimension of knowledge*:** It refers to teachers' recognition of teaching in linguistically and culturally diverse environments, and teaching approaches in regards to diverse groups (Spanierman, Oh, Heppner, Neville, Mobley, Wright, Dillon, & Navarro, 2011).

Dimension of skills: The capabilities of teachers to (a) generate, use, and assess strategies that promote learners' personal development and academic achievement, (b) implement culture-sensitive classroom management strategies, and (c) contribute to the school's policy in regards to cultural responsiveness (Spanierman et al., 2011).

1.8. Organization of the Study

This study is composed of six chapters. Chapter 1 introduces the statement of the problem, and the scope, purpose, and significance of the research study. In addition to presenting research questions to frame the scope and purpose of the study, it delineates the limitations of the study and key concepts that are frequently mentioned throughout the study. Chapter 2 provides the theoretical background of multicultural teaching

competency by referring extensively to the origins of the issue, the significance of the notion on a global scale and subsequently in a Turkish setting. Moreover, the notion of multicultural teaching competency has further been interpreted in the Turkish Higher Education context. Chapter 3 clarifies the methodology that the present research inquiry rests on. The research design, instruments of data collection, participants and sampling, settings, and data analysis procedures are all delineated in detail. Chapter 4 submits findings obtained from the CMEC scale, video-stimulated interviews, and semi-structured interviews. In Chapter 5, the discussion of findings of both the quantitative analysis of the scale and qualitative content analysis of the interviews, is presented in regards to a review of the literature and research questions of the study. Finally, Chapter 6 provides brief conclusions by suggesting implications for the main stakeholders of multicultural education and further research in the field.

CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. Introduction

This chapter provides a review of the literature in regards to the multicultural education in a broad sense, and the frame of multicultural teaching competencies in particular. The initial part of the chapter concerns with the phenomenon of multicultural education from a global scale, the framework for multicultural teaching competencies and the definition of dimensions, namely *awareness, knowledge, attitude,* and *skill*. The second part of the chapter focuses on multicultural teaching in higher education, in which the significance of the multicultural teaching competency in teacher education programs, and the educational benefits of multicultural teaching competency in higher education have been discussed. The final part of the chapter focuses on the scope of multicultural teaching competencies in Turkey, and provides a review of the studies conducted in the Turkish context.

2.2. Multicultural Education

2.2.1. Multicultural Education from a Global Perspective

Due to an increasing globalisation of our world since World War II, there is a continuous and dynamic shift in demographic structures and population characteristics of countries (Grant and Khurshid, 2009). This dynamism requires governments to make reforms in their policies to promote multiculturalism and societies to adopt multicultural approaches in almost every scope of life (Sutton, 2005). One of the crucial areas that helps people to understand and adopt multiculturalism is education. Although multicultural education is a concept that is highly discussed due to definitional differences across countries (Banks, 2009; Gundara, 2015), it is generally described as a socially just and equal education for all children who come from different cultural groups (Cha, Gundara, Ham & Lee, 2017). In this manner, the aim is to raise citizens of the future equipped with the necessary knowledge and skills, and able to live in a new form of democratic society which embraces multiculturalism (Sutton, 2005).

The history of multicultural education goes back to the 1960s when civil right movements emerged due to ethnic, racial and gender discriminations (Gorski, 1999).

Despite the initial conservative resistance to multiculturalism in education (Gorski, 1999), because of the acceleration in technological advancements and economic market sharing, multicultural education has gained attention in numerous countries over the years (Banks, 2004). This increased awareness across the world and institutionalized multicultural practices in education have eventually led to an evolution of a new community concept on a global scale called multicultural citizenship. Based on this new multicultural citizenship concept, governments have started to acknowledge multicultural schooling as a formal way of education (Cha, Ham and Yang, 2017).

2.2.2. Multicultural Education as a Framework for Educational Reform

In order to understand how multicultural education inaugurated and influenced educational reforms, the historical foundations behind the notion should be well understood. Gorski (1999) asserts that the history of multicultural education was commenced by civil right movements that goes back to the 1960s. The first movements were initiated by especially those African Americans who shook the United States of America to its core at the time (Davidman & Davidman, 1997). United States is a highly integrated society which is accommodating populations from various nations in itself. However, as Patterson (2000) asserts, it has suffered from noticeable issues in terms of eliminating discrimination in many aspects such as law, economics, and education. A cornerstone of the civil rights movement was 'Brown v. Board of Education' that helped to authorize the precedent for 'separate-but-equal' education and endorse educational reforms to enhance equality among racial groups in schools (Sunstein, 2004). The Brown case prompted schooling of African Americans and European Americans together in the same school environment (Patterson, 2000).

Gay (1990) cites that bringing two racial groups together in a school environment launched attempts to change curriculum, but it was soon realised that bringing two groups physically together was not enough to decrease segregation. According to Gay (2004), the first initiative was very simplistic compared to today's perspective yet it tried to enhance the representation of different ethnic and racial groups in instructional materials and content. However, there was a huge conflict even in this first attempt because of the diversity of the racial groups consisting of Asian Americans, Latinos, Natives and African Americans (Gay, 2004). Each group was struggling to take its own place in the curricula. This conflict resulted in the emergence of a race-specific educational model -the

application of educational studies for each ethnic group (Gay, 1990).

Changes in curriculum and school context stimulated research on the effects of a multicultural school environment on students in different fields such as psychology (Harring, 1992; Sue., Arredondo & McDavis (1992); Nishimura, 1995). The result of these studies showed that the representation of different racial groups in school materials were even deepening segregation by implementing prejudicial thoughts and damaging self-concepts and learning achievement of minorities (Gordy & Pritchard, 1995; Healey, 1974). This development further supported the enhancement of the curriculum to encourage a more positive approach and information in the educational content. Gay (2004) claims that instructional quality is much more important than the curriculum itself, and hence there needs to be an improvement not only in the curriculum but also in the way teachers deliver instruction.

Later in the 1970s, the women's rights movement further pushed forward the changes in the educational curriculum. Feminist and women activists increased their voice for changes in curriculum to be more inclusive to embody women in school life (Banks, 1989). As one of the six measures on which a consensus emerged, this movement struggled for equal and unsegregated education for all racial and ethnic groups, so the sphere of this act encompassed the approval of women in general at the time (Burkett, 2020).

In the light of all these movements and changes in social structure, educational reforms took place first in the curriculum and then in the instructional methods of school education. Different ethnic groups had started to be recognized for the first time in educational content and materials in the 1960s although it could not achieve the competency and effectiveness it was to (Gay, 2004). Then, the curriculum was further evolved to comprise the content that displayed important events and issues of other ethnic and racial groups rather than depicting simply exceptional examples of individuals from those groups. This further proposed that focusing on leaders and politicians, different organizations, agencies or social movements of different racial and ethnic groups ought to be recognized as part of multicultural education. Therefore, the aim was to teach students that it is not just a dilemma between two races, but a broader inequality problem with more serious outcomes that has been continuing for more than a few decades (Gay, 2004).

Even though these developments contributed to the scope and prevalence of multicultural education in later years, it was still restricted to education of social sciences

and language studies in schools. To be able to expand a multicultural view in all aspects of education from high-level math sciences to testing, it became essential to develop standards and typologies that would implement multicultural education into curriculum systematically (Banks, 2001b). According to Gay (1995), standards and typologies in general assert that there are basic necessities for the recognition and acceptance of variety; knowledge and practice requirements for mastery; and improvements in teachers' performance for better quality in multicultural education and thus, meeting these principles is suggested in order to make multicultural teaching more feasible.

Through a more holistic approach in educational reforms on multiculturalism and significant pedagogical developments in the US, teachers began to acknowledge that students from minority groups experience 'cultural deprivations and disadvantages' and in order to fill this gap, 'compensatory education' system started to be implemented by applying 'early interventions' and 'cultural exposures' (Kaplan, 1972). Over the years, findings in other fields such as anthropology, sociology and psychology (Gay, 2000; Ladson-Billings, 1995) aroused recognition in the lack of understanding of diverse racial and ethnic groups in the educational design and helped to open the way for further enhancements. Therefore, multicultural education has continued its evolution in educational reforms by seeking new techniques to implement teaching styles that might provide rapport between home cultures of diverse racial groups and school culture (Shinn, 1972). In this way, 'culturally relevant, receptive and responsive teaching' was aimed at (Ladson-Billings, 1995). For this purpose, examples and scenarios that depict cultural elements of different ethnic backgrounds and life experiences are seen as crucial to make students understand the value systems, life styles and communication styles of others and to help teachers to be aware, but put aside their own cultural backgrounds in the classroom (Darder, 1991).

Educational reforms on multicultural teaching placed the emphasis on teachers and their practices at school. Spindler (1987) reports another reversal as an educational reform seen in both in classroom and out of classroom assignments of students of colour: teachers were criticized for having negative attitudes and low expectations of students of colour which led them to give disproportional assignments to them. As a consequence, these students had difficulties in obtaining similar success rates to white students, which eventually revealed teachers' prejudiced attitudes and behaviours towards them (Spindler, 1987; Au, 1993). According to Bowman (1994), children from poor families and those from diverse ethnic backgrounds such as African, Latin and Native Americans were more

prone to fail at school or required to get special-needs education compared to other students at school. He further asserts that these children might not be expected to participate in the social life and contribute to the economic development of the country unless there is a change in their performance at school.

For the American context, Olson (2000) further suggests that Americans need to ensure that the skin colour of children, their linguistic backgrounds, the places they live, and also their parents' income and educational levels do not hinder the opportunities they receive throughout their education. Addressing the question 'What does that mean for teachers?', he further asserts that teachers are increasingly aware of the fact that they need to interpret much more about their students' cultural backgrounds and the social groups they belong to even though cultural diversity is sometimes reduced to food and holiday in school curriculums. Teachers need to comprehend that the students come into the class from various cultural and linguistic backgrounds and this requires a wide variety of pedagogical and curricular qualifications.

Despite the recent increase in theoretical research on school reforms, instruction, and curriculum, the educational needs that stem from increasingly culturally diverse classrooms have not comprehensively been addressed yet. Learners inevitably carry their multiple social group identities such as gender, race/ethnicity, immigration status, sexual orientation, dis/ability, age, socioeconomic status, and religion into the classroom environment (Garibay, 2015). Studies indicate that there is a significant relationship between student achievement and positive classroom climates where students are encouraged (Gurin, 1999; Terenzini, Cabrera & Bernal, 2001; Gurin, Dey, Hurtado & Gurin, 2002). Antonio and colleagues (2004) revealed that classrooms with an average level of heterogeneity (where students from diverse groups composed about 35% of enrolled students) illustrate constructive effects on learners' problem-solving and group skills (Antonio, Chang, Hakuta, Kenny, Levin & Milem, 2004). They further claimed that there was a higher integrative complexity in the group discussions when they included viewpoints from diverse students. Moreover, Gurin et al. (2002) suggest that learners demonstrate better commitment in exercises that require active thinking when they collaborate with diverse peers. According to Gorham (2001), although teachers may not sufficiently hold the required skills, it will be necessary for them to equip themselves with the necessary knowledge, skills and attitudes in order to meet the demands of the broad array of students from different cultural backgrounds.

During all this reformation process, it could also be observed that theoreticians were

split into three approaches that are a conservative, a liberal and a critical approach (Jenks, Lee & Kanpol, 2001). The conservative approach mainly supports assimilation of minorities into the mainstream by education to sustain the stability of social structure; hence, Jenks et al. (2001) claim that the educational system should bring other ethnical groups into line with the main ethnic group. The liberal approach, on the other hand, accepts the inherent equality of all racial and ethnic groups and respects their differences (Kubota, 2004) and further states that the only race is humanity. According to the liberal approach, skills and effort are the key points of evaluation of students' success and this is why this approach is also seen as a meritocratic approach to education (Kincheloe & Steinberg, 1997). It supports giving equal opportunities to all students by avoiding discriminative behaviour and policies; however, this approach is criticized for its too simplistic view that neglects specific requirements that each culture inherits in itself (Güngör, Buyruk & Özdemir, 2018). As a result of and reaction to these two approaches, the critical approach suggests that critical thinking should be taught to students for social justice and equality rather than showing tolerance to different cultures or unquestionable acceptance of equality (Kubota, 2004). It aims to make students active agents of social change by teaching them the formation and reproduction dynamics of power relations among social groups in daily practice (May & Sleeter, 2010). It accepts teachers and students as active parts of knowledge production and endeavours to make them culturally sensitive and responsible (Ukpokodu, 2003).

2.2.3. The Purpose of Multicultural Education

Spanierman et al. (2011) report that there has been a significant rise in the minority groups in the public schools (National Centre for Educational Statistics [NCES], 2000) in the United States and the percentage of ethnically and racially diverse populations doubled from 22% in 1972 to 45% in 2008 (NCES, 2008). Despite this demographic change, most teachers in primary and secondary education do not hold the required competency to teach in multicultural classrooms (Gay, 2001; Mazzei, 1997). Although government organizations like The National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) encourage diversity in the education system by promoting scholarships (e.g., Banks, 2006; Banks & Banks, 2007; Cochran-Smith, 2004; Gay, 2000; Grant & Sleeter, 2007; Nieto, 2004), teachers are not well prepared to instruct racially and culturally diverse populations.

In a broad sense, multicultural teaching is regarded as an instructional pattern that helps teachers to exploit students' cultural strengths in the curriculum (Gay, 2000; Ladson-Billings, 1992). The main purpose of multicultural education is to create a homogenous class environment for all students from different cultural and ethnic backgrounds (Banks, 1995a). Banks (1993) tries to designate the purpose of multicultural education and he states that it has three different components. These are 'an idea or concept, an educational reform movement, and a process' (p. 623). Based on his research, observation, and study of the field, Banks (1995a) devised five dimensions of multicultural education which could also be used in teacher training: (a) content integration (b) the knowledge construction process, (c) prejudice reduction, (d) equity pedagogy, and (e) empowering school culture and social structure (p. 20).

According to Baptiste (1986), multicultural education determines the ways to protect the educational and social rights of culturally diverse groups and assure equal opportunities for all. Banks (1993) outlines multicultural education as an educational reform movement, which attempts to accomplish a transformation in the structures of educational institutions, aims to unveil an awareness for the importance of sociocultural diversity in educational institutions and promotes equal opportunities for members of these institutions, no matter what ethnic or cultural identity they possess. Bennett (1995) introduces four dimensions of multicultural education in order to define it comprehensively: (a) a comprehensive school transformation toward impartiality, (b) a multiculturally responsive curriculum that incorporates global perspectives, (c) an awareness of becoming multiculturally responsive individuals, (d) a struggle against biases and inequities by promoting proper beliefs, attitudes, and considerations (p. 36).

The dimension of content integration refers to usage of examples from different cultural contexts. In this way, key principles, theories and concepts of that discipline could be illustrated. The knowledge construction dimension refers to classroom activities and teaching methods that teachers used to make students understand and question the assumptions, biases and perspectives of cultures. Teachers also try to teach how these implicit essences of cultures affect the knowledge construction about those cultures (Banks, 1995a). In this way, it also aims to help students understand how knowledge about cultures is influenced by individuals' and groups' race and ethnicity (Collins, 1990).

Another aim of the multicultural education lies in the prejudice reduction dimension. This dimension implies that teachers should help students who come from

various cultures to improve their values and attitudes in a democratic way. For this purpose, they also try to decrease 'white bias' that both students of colour and white students have even from the very beginning of their school education (Spencer, 1982). One of the important aspects of this dimension is that democratic values and attitude development interventions should start at an early age to obtain efficient results because it becomes harder to change students' misconceptions as they grow older (Banks, 1995b).

A further purpose of multicultural education is to increase the academic achievement level of students who have different ethnic and cultural backgrounds. In that sense, the equity pedagogy dimension of Banks (1995a) refers to changes in instructional methods of teachers to enhance students' academic achievement. For this purpose, teachers should use the cultural and linguistical strengths of students in their teaching methods, especially for multicultural students and for those who have low socio-economic status. In order to effectively create equality among students, teachers are anticipated to be 'warm demanders', having high expectations from their students no matter what social groups they belong to (Cohen & Lotan, 1995).

Research in the field indicate that students from diverse backgrounds are disadvantaged in terms of academic achievement. Horm (2003) claims that teachers' paucity of multicultural knowledge and awareness leads to lower academic achievement for minority groups in their classes (p. 232). Furthermore, students from different ethnic and cultural backgrounds tend to fail in terms of social and academic attainment when teachers do not provide the required multicultural responsiveness (Townsend, 2002). In their study on multicultural teaching in preschool, Leung and Hue (2017) state that one focus of teacher development programmes in Hong Kong preschool education is multicultural teaching competence. The presence of those students from diverse ethnic, linguistic and cultural backgrounds such as Indian, Indonesian, Nepalese, Pakistani, Filipinos, and Thai were ignored in the education system until the Hong Kong Racial Discrimination Ordinance was issued in 2008 and these children suffered from low academic success, low family income, lack of social support and orientation (Chong, 2005; Hue, 2011; Hue & Kennedy, 2012; Kennedy & Hue, 2011). Hence, Leung and Hue (2017) claim that it is essential for teachers working with linguistically and culturally diverse populations to have competence in multicultural teaching in order to provide proper learning climates for all.

The last dimension 'empowering school culture and social structure' is concerned with the whole social system in the school rather than referring to separate aspects of the

educational process. This dimension suggests that the school is a larger system than a mere physical structure of teachers and students. Therefore, an educational reform in line with the purposes of multicultural education should be operational throughout the entire system and a new structure in relation to the diversity is expected to be constructed (Banks, 1995a).

According to NCATE standard 4 (2008), a good understanding of diversity is necessary for the curriculum, and candidate teachers are supposed to be aware of various learning styles and adapt instruction properly for students, including linguistically and culturally diverse students. They are further expected to associate the content with learners' cultures and backgrounds, and create a classroom and school climate that values diversity. Finally, candidate teachers are required to show attitudes in the classroom that are compatible with equity and the belief that all students have a potential to learn. NCATE strongly emphasises that candidate teachers possess the required knowledge, attitudes, awareness, and skills to teach multiculturally diverse classrooms efficiently.

Furthermore, Darling-Hammond (1993) state that multiple dimensions of multicultural education need to be analysed and interpreted meticulously in order to acknowledge and perform it in school practices. According to Banks (2001a), multifaceted endeavours were required in order to implement multicultural education in schools. He described multicultural education under five dimensions which stimulate the consideration of multicultural teaching at schools. The dimensions Banks (2001b) suggested were (a) the integration of the content at different levels of approaches, (b) the course of knowledge acquisition, (c) reduction of biases by promoting interactions among diverse learners, (d) provision of equal opportunities with regard to multiculturally responsive teaching approach, and (e) a comprehensive school culture, which inspires inclusion of all school parties into school practices (p. 236)

In later years, Banks (2001b) developed a model that would be a guide for teachers to assess multicultural aspects of their both lesson plans and in-class attitudes. This model consists of four approaches: contributions, additive, social action and transformation. Among these approaches, the contributions and additive ones are the least tangible and authentic, and yet are the most common approaches. Therefore, they mostly serve the recognition of stereotypes. On the other hand, the transformation approach helps gathering opposing views and opinions together, and so helps the reinforcement of critical thinking. Finally, social action encourages students to initiate and plan for positive change. The key descriptors of these approaches can be seen in the figure below.

Figure 1. Key descriptors of Banks' model for multicultural education
Source: Ford, 2013, p. 61

Acar-Çiftçi and Gürol (2015) assert that the conventional aim of education is to establish students' socialization by helping them receive prevailing ideologies, policies, and practices, in a country or society; yet the ultimate goal of multicultural education is to promote the establishment, utilization, and preservation of social justice and equal opportunities through which social transformation could be ensured (Gorski, 2010). They further claim that this transformation could be achieved through a radical change in the education system and curriculum and thus, teacher and teacher candidates need to be trained in accordance with this understanding as the competencies they need to maintain will undeniably differ in this paradigm. Likewise, Bennett (1990) defines multicultural education as an approach to teaching and learning, which is based on democratic principles that facilitate cultural pluralism and this approach helps to achieve educational equality, develop curricula that promotes understanding about ethnic groups, and cope with biased practices.

While traditional education aims to make students accept dominant ideologies, rules and practices without questioning (Banks, 2004; Hahn, 1998), the primary objective of critical multicultural education is to encourage societal critical thinking and transformation among students, and develop their decision-making capabilities (Banks, 2004). He further asserts that multicultural education proposes students take initiative and make decisions on significant social issues and raise societal change and democratic values. Equal and fair social opportunities could be ensured through the reform movement in schools which prepare students for the future.

Based on previous models and approaches, Cırık (2008) has summarized the main purposes of multicultural education as:

- Termination of racism, prejudices, gender discrimination and all other segregation,
- Inclusion of other cultures into educational environment,
- Integration of inheritance, experiences and point of views of other cultures, and creation of a connection between real life experiences and what is learned in classroom for students who have different cultural backgrounds,
- Provision of schooling equality for all individuals,
- Scientifics research for integration of different cultures,
- Humanistic initiations for understanding and valuing different cultures,
- Considering content and process, structure and essence, action and projection, knowledge and values, philosophy and methodology, educational context and results as a whole,
- Acknowledging systematic change as a developmental process,
- Understanding that variety enriches educational content,
- Organizing programs that might help teachers to understand how characteristics of ethnic groups affect students' behaviours,
- Development of educational programs that might help students to understand knowledge is constructed socially,
- Supporting participation of students to latent programs that would affect their academic success and relationship with each other and promote development of their ability and attitude,
- Teaching students about prejudices on racial and ethnic relations,
- Teaching common values to students,
- Equally supporting all schools economically by education managers,
- Using multifaceted and culturally sensitive teaching and assessment techniques to evaluate students' complex cognitive and social skills (p.32).

2.2.4. Current Status of Multicultural Education

As the populations in educational institutions gets more and more ethnically, linguistically and culturally diverse, the equity for characteristic aspects of minority groups gains significance as well. Scholars have identified the dominant cultural heritage of majority local population as monoculturalism and emphasized the tendency in acknowledging its superiority over the cultural heritages of minority groups. Jones (1997) defines monoculturalism as unfair power status practices in the society, and finds it harmful as one group has superiority over others. Similarly, Sue (2001) asserts that it is a common belief in the society that the cultural, linguistic, and historical heritage of a group is more remarkable than the heritage of minority groups. He claims that initially, people intentionally or unintentionally begin to believe that the norms and values of the majority population is more sophisticated. Then, the cultural heritage of other minority groups is seen as less remarkable, and members of these groups are considered uncivilized. Next, the beliefs and standards of dominant group are imposed on culturally and linguistically

diverse populations. The values and structures of monoculturalism, from all aspects, are posed in all social organisations, and finally, attitudes, mindsets, and perspectives of individuals develop completely as a product of social conditions. According to Sue (2001), monoculturalism is harmful as it delineates reality, and it creates an environment where people socialize along predominant views, unfair values, and prejudiced attitudes. People cultivate and disseminate biases against members of diverse populations (p. 808).

As opposed to a monocultural approach in educational institutions, scholars have suggested numerous applications of multicultural education in different countries throughout the years (Cırık, 2008; Banks, 1995a). Moodley (2007) states that there has been an increasing demand for 'multicultural' education in most public school and colleges around the world and this is urging them to revamp the teaching and learning process into an education system which tries to undertake for the needs of minority groups (Hill & Allan, 2004), immigrant or refugee populations (Figueroa, 2004; Van de Vijver, Breugelmans & Schalk-Soekar, 2008). Countries like the USA, Canada, Australia and the UK, where the proportion of ethnic diversity is remarkable in relation to population, have already been applying multicultural education for a long time (Vatandaş, 2002; Arslan, 2016). One of the important steps was taken from the European Council as 'the Education, Youth and Culture Council' in 2001. They made the statement that 'Education and training systems have to lead people to acknowledge that racism and intolerance have no place in our society, and that discrimination is unacceptable in any way' (Council of European Union, 2001, p. 13). In parallel with this statement, the European Council made another declaration (Directive 2003/109/EC) in 2004 to ensure that long-term resident third country nationals in Europe retain equal treatment with the country's nationals in fundamental areas of life such as employment, education, social security and so forth in spite of certain restrictions by the country in case of a need. The main purpose of the Council is therefore to make all individuals of the society play their role in the society as an 'active citizen'. This aim not only promotes the education of individuals but also ensures development of democratic societies (Faas, Hajisoteriou & Angelides, 2014).

Directives of the European Council essentially aim to establish an equal basis of education to all of its residents, and promote democracy by the potential of education. However, Faas et al., (2014) claims that some of the institutional actors in Europe are still observed not to have fully adopted these education policies while others try to apply them for all migrant children without considering their legal status. The core reason of this institutional difference is the belief that these policies have still not been officially written

in documents that are legal grants of immigrants' rights in their immigration status in the EU. Furthermore, equal educational and employment opportunities are provided to individuals of third country nationals after a certain length of residency is reached, or a family member enters into a contract for an employment. Therefore, children who could not yet reach these criteria have issues about benefiting from equal education standards and this is criticized in terms of the gaps in the European Council implementations. Following the criticisms, 'the European Monitoring Centre on Racism and Xenophobia' analysed data from Standard Eurobarometer survey and European Social Survey that were conducted in different years between 1997 and 2003. The findings presented that at least 60% of European citizens aged 15 and above think that multiculturalism implementations are limited in certain aspects. Furthermore, they think that these limitations have increased considerably since 1997. These results were more prominent in the older members of the European Union (such as Britain, Germany, Ireland and Greece) whereas they were less prominent in the new members (such as Spain, Finland, Sweden and Italy). In addition, it is monitored that the socio-economic status of immigrants affected on their access to equal education opportunities and so their opinions about the limitations of opportunities (Faas et al., 2014).

Another point stressed by the European Commission was the importance of education systems in providing social cohesion (European Commission, 2001). Inclusion of students not only in the school environment but also in social life was seen to be feasible only by the improvements in education. According to the Council of European Union, education is the promoting power that helps raise active citizens who 'fully participate to the civic life', based on knowledge of social and political concepts and structures and a commitment to active and democratic participation (Council of the European Union, 2006). On the grounds of this view, they have declared Decision 1904/2006 which mentions the establishment of a programme called 'Europe for Citizens' that would last for a period between 2007 and 2013. Based on this, they specified the importance of creating a 'civic education curricula' that would help to fulfil the commitment of active citizenship (Faas et al., 2014, p. 310).

Like Europe and the USA, Asia is also struggling with increased multicultural structure of its society especially because of the immigrations that have significantly increased in last few decades due to globalization (Grant & Ham, 2013). Although Asia has stood as an ordinary immigrant region throughout the years (Lim, 2012), immigration policies in Asian countries are more restrictive than Europe and Asia. Yamanaka and

Piper (2005) assert that two types of immigration policies are generally seen to be applied in these countries. In the first type, Countries like China, Taiwan, Malaysia and Singapore give permission to migration for only high-skilled immigrants while they do not accept low-skilled ones. The second type of immigrant policy is that most foreigners are not accepted as immigrants while they get permission as students, visitors, or trainees. Martin (2009) claims that these countries are more welcoming to high-skilled people from Asian regions than they are for high-skilled white foreigners. Some of the examples of those Asian countries are Japan and South Korea, which have intense nationalism and which once experienced post-colonialism (Kang, 2010).

Although they apply more restrictive immigration policies, Asian countries inevitably face challenges of multicultural social structure, too. Therefore, they are also obliged to accept new policies with a multicultural perspective in various fields including education. After all, in the last few decades they have already begun to implement multicultural education policies (Shibuya, 2011). However, educational policies differ from one country to another. In Japan, for instance, multicultural education policies focus on 'international understanding' of education. On the other hand, it is seen that multicultural education initially focused on education of Korean children who constitute the largest proportion of international population in Japan because of their colonial roots. Therefore, there was more Korean-focused ethnic education in the 1990s rather than the multicultural education in the way it is understood today (Tai, 2007). However, as the number of Korean citizens decreased because of their naturalization as Japanese citizens (Tai, 2006), the focus on Korean ethnicity in education has also reversed to the idea of living together by including other nations (Tai, 2007). In another Asian country, Taiwan, the focus of multicultural education is more identified as 'issues about ethnicity, ethnic cultures, gender equality, social class and disadvantaged students' (Liu & Lin, 2011). In China, on the other hand, multicultural education is understood as more like creating an educational environment that blends 'contemporary China' with 'China's indigenous tradition' in a Confucian pedagogical discourse (Wu & Han, 2007).

Many scholars and researchers comply with institutional transformations in curricula, teaching approach and materials, teacher and administration attitudes, awareness and behaviours, school goals, policies and culture so that multicultural education could be attained efficiently (Banks, 2004; Banks, 1992; Bennett, 2001, Sleeter & Grant, 1999). According to Gorski (2010), fair and equal learning opportunities at school indicate fair and equal opportunities at societal level. Hence, it is significant for

multiculturally responsive teachers to comprehend the connection between their life experience and their perceptions, and be aware of detrimental consequences of any prejudices on students' learning experiences. Thus, teachers need to reflect on and transform themselves constantly. Institutions and education programmes ought to be evaluated critically and comprehensively so that multicultural education might perform its function appropriately. Accordingly, it is the responsibility of teachers to obtain critical thinking and transformation skills (Gorski, 2010).

Teachers holding multicultural perspectives make the commitment of changing the society into a democratic way and restraining discrimination. Fullan (1999) regards teachers as the operator of transformation in the society, and Villegas and Lucas (2002) impose moral responsibility on teachers to promote change. According to Villegas and Lucas (2002), once teachers take the responsibility of change, they might better acknowledge the interrelation between schools and society. Although education has the capability to promote fair and equal opportunities for all, without the involvement of multicultural values, the focus of schools might substantially be on beliefs and attitudes of the dominant culture, which might reproduce inequalities. Hence, teachers need to recognize that education is quite a complex process in terms of the political and moral aspects in its nature. Multiculturally responsive teachers perceive and attempt to handle these social, institutional, professional and personal drawbacks (Acar-Çiftçi & Gürol, 2015). Studies in the field of multicultural education significantly stress that teachers should initially be aware of their own cultural identity, and then obtain sufficient knowledge about ethnic, cultural and linguistic identities of the diverse populations they are teaching (Banks, 1991; Bennett, 1995; Zeichner & Hoeft, 1996).

2.3. A Framework for Multicultural Competency

2.3.1. A Definition of Multicultural Competency

A review of literature on cultural competencies indicates that the focus has broadly been on personal competencies including components as such: knowledge, skills, values (Perso, 2012; Weaver 1997), value/attitude, knowledge, skills (Sue, 2001), attitude/value, knowledge, skills (Cross et al., 1989, Martin & Vaughn, 2007). According to Gorski (2010), the competencies of teachers who are expected to teach in a culture-responsive manner cannot merely be defined with these personal and partially professional qualities since the fundamental purpose of multicultural education is to stimulate the formation,

operation, and conservation of social justice and equality, so that a social transformation might be widely ensured. This manner intends to establish a powerful society that can meet the needs and benefits of diverse groups by addressing the prejudices and injustice in the society (Sleeter & Grant, 1988). That can be accomplished by forming a link between learning and social life and directly adapting that knowledge to the daily lives of students. Students need to be empowered individually with strong knowledge and shared effort in order to contribute to social transformation (Sleeter & Grant, 1988). Teachers are the agents of change to empower their students and promote democratic values in such an approach (Banks, 2004).

As the eventual aim of multicultural education is to transform the society responsively, Acar-Çiftçi and Gürol (2015) states that it would be inadequate for teachers to hold multicultural competencies only at a personal and partially professional level. Villegas and Lucas (2002) on the other hand, claim that a multiculturally responsive teacher has six main qualities: (a) has sociocultural awareness, that is, reality might be perceived differently and this perception could be influenced by one's own background; (b) maintains the attitude to properly understand students from various backgrounds, perceives differences as an opportunity for learning rather than a drawback; (c) makes a commitment and hold the talent to conduct transformation of school to provide equal educational opportunities for all, (d) interprets how different students learn and has the ability to encourage them for learning; (e) has adequate knowledge about the nature of learner population; (f) uses his knowledge about students for more effective teaching (p. 21). Villegas and Lucas (2002) regard these six traits as the central themes that provide consistency of the teacher education framework they envision.

Spanierman et al. (2010) claim that multicultural competency is a perpetual progress through which teachers constantly (a) recognize their attitudes and beliefs about diversity, (b) construct knowledge on diverse groups, and (c) observe the effects of this knowledge and awareness on their teaching and interactions with learners and families. They further assert that the interactions within this active process comprises of micro-level components, which include teachers and other staff, learners and families, and so forth, and macro level components, which include political economy, ethnic affiliations, civic policy, and so forth (p. 444).

Similarly, Sue and colleagues (1982) outline a tripartite model of multicultural competence, which includes dimensions as (a) awareness of personal cultural beliefs and prejudices, (b) knowledge on mindsets of diverse populations, and (c) skills for effective

interventions with diverse groups (p. 48). Crowder (2013) delineates culturally competent approach in three domains as (a) cultural variety, (b) favouring cultural diversity, and (c) acknowledgement of diversity in the society and public institutions (p. 8). Multicultural education aims to ensure equal learning opportunities for linguistically and culturally diverse groups and promote communication among all parties to create a respective community (Banks & Banks, 1995a, p. 391). Talbot (2003) states that contrary to general objective of traditional education, which aims to transfer knowledge and skills from one generation to the next among a group of people engaged, multicultural education aims to provide a comprehensive climate that stimulates awareness among learners for ethnic, linguistic and cultural differences. According to Washington (2003), for responsive multicultural teaching, teachers need to recognize their knowledge, beliefs, and awareness as essential dimensions of multicultural competence. Furthermore, Taylor and Quintana (2003) highlight numerous levels of multicultural teaching capabilities as personal, classroom, and school, which are essential for inclusive multicultural education. Milner (2006) outlines a progressive framework by means of in-class discussions, tasks and interviews in order to reveal knowledge, capabilities, and attitudes acquired from a curriculum focused to construct multicultural responsiveness. He found that multicultural competence consists of such essential aspects as consciousness on ethnic diversity and socio-politic realities, acknowledging one's own culture and different cultures, and integrating theory with practice.

Kostelnik and colleagues (2002) claim that in order to develop multicultural teaching, one needs to acquire knowledge, respect, and ability to collaborate efficiently with people from different ethnic or racial backgrounds, and also acknowledge unfair treatment towards them (Kostelnik, Whiren, Soderman, Stein & Gregory, 2002). Research suggests that teachers as individuals may have an opportunity to establish a strong basis for multiculturally responsive teaching once they are encouraged to reflect on their feelings and attitudes, remain open to acquire new information, and have favourable circumstances to meet people from different cultural backgrounds. In their study on early childhood teachers' multicultural responsiveness, Han and Thomas (2010) state that children can be provided with the support and care that they might need if teachers recognize the importance of variety as a crucial source to teach them respect and promote broader perspectives in their learning and development (p. 471). Han and Thomas (2010) propose multicultural awareness, knowledge, and skill as three perspectives that can be applied to complement teachers' multicultural understanding.

They assert that multiculturally responsive teachers are expected to (a) be aware of their own prejudices and presumptions, (b) hold necessary knowledge about the particular type of populations they are working with, and (c) be competent in applying suitable strategies for the classrooms with diverse populations (p. 472).

Dimension of Awareness: Teachers with an awareness regarding multicultural teaching competencies accept that it is not possible to make teaching culturally neutral and universal unless they admit that they themselves hold a personal background and they bring this into the classroom. According to Sue and Sue (2003), multiculturally responsive professionals develop in a way that they become aware of their own presumptions about others' attitudes, values, prejudices, biased perceptions, respective limitations, and so forth. Nevertheless, it turns into a very helpful and rewarding circumstance once the teachers acknowledge their own identity and how this identity forms their teaching and learning practices in a diverse society (Han & Thomas, 2010).

Dimension of Knowledge: Multiculturally responsive teachers are those who acquire general and specific knowledge and information about the group they are working with. Sue and Sue (2003) define the dimension of *knowledge* as knowledge about values, perspectives, social norms of one's own and other cultures. According to Byram (1997), multicultural knowledge involves knowledge of how social groups and identities function rather than primarily focusing on a specific culture; knowledge about self and how other people see oneself; knowledge about self and other (auto-stereotypes -stereotypes a person has about his/her own culture and hetero-stereotypes -stereotypes a person has about other cultures); and knowledge about social interaction (p. 90).

Dimension of Attitude: Multiculturally responsive teachers are curious and open to learning about different cultures and ethnic backgrounds, ready to suspend disbelief about other cultures, and willing to establish a connection with their own values, beliefs, and behaviour. According to Byram (1997), despite holding particular values because of belonging to social groups and to a given society, teachers having multicultural competency have attitudes of the intercultural speaker and mediator. Besides, they disseminate the idea that no one's own beliefs are the only possible and correct ones; on the contrary, they have the ability to 'decentre' –to see how their own values, beliefs, behaviours might look from the perspective of an outsider who has a different set of values, beliefs, behaviours (p. 90).

Dimension of Skill: Multiculturally competent teachers are expected to provide a

safe and caring classroom environment and ensure equal treatment and assessment for all. Sue and Sue (2003) depict multiculturally responsive professionals as individuals who are in a perpetual process of development and applying proper, consistent, and sensitive intervention strategies and skills. Gutierrez-Gomez (2002) states that it is very important for multiculturally responsive teachers to create and maintain a safe and caring environment. Caring is a fundamental support for diverse populations in teaching and learning, and when these groups of learners are deprived of necessary assistance, it would not be possible to allocate educational opportunities equally and promote learner achievement efficiently (Gay, 2000). Consequently, in the process of multiculturally responsive teacher development, sincere care for all learners takes place to a great extent.

According to McLaren (2003), critical multicultural education promotes diverse cultures and learners in the same environment by upholding curricula, pedagogic processes, interpersonal relations, and democratic enterprises at schools. In critical multicultural education, teachers are considered as students who go through a transformation by their personal means and interactions with others (Freire, 1998). Racial and ethnic biases are questioned from a critical perspective; however, there is a need throughout all educational practices for a diverse, multicultural, democratic, equal and comprehensive social revolution. Therefore, as Hopkins-Gillispie (2011) asserts, the world has to change from the critical multicultural education point of view.

Research on multicultural education indicate that knowledge displays one's social, cultural and power status (Banks, 1993; Tetreault, 1993). People are influenced by inaccurate information gained about culturally diverse groups (Dovidio & Gaertner, 1999; Sue, 2001) and are influenced to dread and be filled with resentment towards racially and culturally different groups (Jones, 1997). Prejudiced or biased attitudes towards diverse groups are not innate feelings but are acquired by people's free will (Sue, 2001; Sue, 1999). According to Dovidio and Gaertner (1999), people generally demonstrate their fair or biased attitudes unintentionally and unconsciously. Thus, it is teachers' responsibility to be knowledgeable about conscious and unconscious beliefs, equal and biased attitudes of their cultural reference points (Acar-Çiftçi and Gürol, 2015). Villegas and Lucas (2002) state that multiculturally reflective teachers display an attitude to appropriately understand students from diverse backgrounds. Furthermore, teachers' attitudes and behaviours firmly influence the learning process of students, and these attitudes and behaviours ultimately form students' anticipation about their learning

(Irvine, 1990; Pang & Sablan, 1998; Villegas and Lucas, 2002). Research indicates that supportive and constructive approach reinforce student learning (Ladson-Billings, 1994; Lucas, Henze, & Donato, 1990; Nieto, 1996) and multiculturally respective teachers recognise that students from diverse cultures and backgrounds are also capable and bring diversity in attitude, thinking, and interaction in class when a unity is created to a class atmosphere (Delpit, 1995).

Multicultural competency refers to raising an awareness of one's own cultural identity and prejudices, having a tendency to learn the perspectives of other cultures, and developing skills for being culture sensitive (Bennett, 1993; Gay, 2001). It is a noticeably inquired topic in applied sciences such as psychology, sociology, social services and education (Moodley, 2007). In their explicit and inclusive definition of multicultural competency, Pope, Reynolds and Mueller (2019) identified core features of multicultural competency in a dynamic model. These core features are 'multicultural awareness, knowledge and skill', 'helping and advising', 'assessment and research', 'teaching and training', 'ethics and professional standards', 'theory and translation', and 'administration and management' (p. 136). With regard to multicultural awareness, Pope et al. (2019) insert that one should be aware of his or her self, abilities, limitations, beliefs, values, attitudes and biases and understand his or her own culture and its effects on his or her worldview. Multicultural knowledge refers to having information about specifics of others' cultures, dynamics of oppression and their effects on others' feelings, attitudes and behaviours. In order to develop multicultural skills, one needs to design appropriate interventions to use learned information effectively in real life circumstances, to analyse and evaluate his and others' core beliefs, and to be able to effectively manage conflicts stemming from cultural diversity. On helping and advising, it is suggested that all our interactions are shaped by our perceptions and former experiences, and it should be well understood that similarities and differences in cultures of all parties affect behaviours, so all these should be well acknowledged to be able to implement culturally sensitive and responsive interventions.

Pope et al. (2019) further assert that multiculturalism should be implemented into all parts of teaching and training and incorporated into preparation programs that form the knowledge and values of professionals to be trained or else, lack of multiculturalism in educational interventions leads to an incomplete and a more markedly deficient education. 'Ethical belief systems and principles' that individuals bring to every interaction should be appropriate and meaningful for all individuals from diverse cultural

backgrounds to create a mutual and respectful social integrity. They define 'theory and translation' as the application of assumptions and theory into real context, and making deductions from conclusions (p. 77). Therefore, it is essential to acknowledge that theory and translation into real environments is a dynamic process that continuously evolves. Considering 'administration and management', they finally claim that it is essential to apply multicultural interventions consisting of paradigm shifts and the use of alternative strategies to all levels and divisions of institutions, which would make multicultural change authentic and long lasting.

2.3.2. Factors Constraining Multicultural Competency

Multicultural education has encountered considerable challenges for over half a century since it became a widespread subject debate. According to Banks (1993), it was initially attacked by eminently formed and well-financed Western traditionalists as they dreaded losing their social and economic privilege by the transformation the societies were going through. Bennett (1995) stated that unfavourable attitudes might be demonstrated towards cultural diversity when it is extremely emphasized and consequently, students might feel superior towards other cultures. For example, it may be considered as a segment attached to current curricula to satisfy those minority groups from African, Asian, Latin and other backgrounds. (Glassman, Swatos & Denison, 2004).

In her Multicultural Teaching Concerns Survey (MTCS-Marshall) Marshall (1996) included four concerns: (a) familial/group knowledge, which regards teachers' knowledge on family or cultural-group backgrounds of diverse populations in their classrooms; (b) strategies and techniques, which defines teachers' concerns about implementing proper content and approaches; (c) cross-cultural competence, which reflects teachers' concerns regarding their capability to interfere with students from various cultures and backgrounds, teachers' awareness about their own beliefs and biases and consciousness about the effect of these prejudices in the assessment of students; and (d) school bureaucracy, which focuses on teachers' knowledge about the negative effects of school policies on meeting the needs of diverse groups (p. 375).

Research in the field of multicultural education suggests that teachers perceive multicultural teaching in various ways and the way they comprehend the term connects to the way they implement it in their teaching process (Fong & Sheets, 2004). On one hand, there are those who take the responsibility of equity in their classrooms, and

encourage working together with diverse groups and put an effort into the prevention of isolation in their classrooms (Leonard & Leonard, 2006; McCall, 1995; Montano, Lopez-Torres & DeLissovoy, 2002). On the other hand, there are those who consider multicultural education as a term of ethnic studies and human relations, and associate cultural diversity with respective groups of learners (Greenman & Kimmel, 1995; Larke, 1990). Zimmerman (2006) asserts that some teachers interpret diversity with a quite simplistic approach by neglecting the importance of change it is expected to have in the society. Finally, Bell (2002) reports that there are those teachers who believe that they hold a neutral position and an impartial ideology in the society and this restrains them from discussing discrimination or the presence of diversity.

Despite the constructive effect of the courses regarding multicultural education in teacher education programs on teachers' beliefs (Edwards & Kuhlman, 2007; Wiggins, Follo & Eberly, 2007), Schoorman and Bogotch (2010) stress numerous constraints in teacher education programs in terms of multicultural teaching and unsuccessful attempts in implementing the multicultural understanding teachers gain from pre-service and in-service programs (Ahlquist, 1992; Holm & Nations-Johnson, 1994; Leonard & Leonard, 2006; Sleeter, 1992; Zimmerman, 2006). Addressing these constraints, Wiedeman (2002) states that regarding multicultural education, most teacher education programs focus on the orientation of diversity instead of focusing on the orientation of equity; Fong and Sheets (2004) assert that universities introduce multicultural teaching as a significant but not practical reality that teachers and students face in their schools; Montano et al. (2002) depicts the limitation as a lack of social equity in empirical opportunities; and Fong and Sheets (2004) further report a paucity of awareness on multicultural education among teachers and teacher educators of professional development units. According to Schoorman and Bogotch (2010), it is a long-term developmental process for teachers to gain an awareness on cultural variety, multicultural responsiveness, and responsibility for social equity, which have been defined as the three dimensions of multicultural education. According to Fong and Sheets (2004), teachers tend to consider multicultural education as a series of standards they are forced to comply with since it is a perplexing issue and it is marginalised or isolated in teacher education programs (Brown, 2004; Zimmerman, 2006) rather than being integrated into the curriculum as a fundamental concern (Nieto, 2000).

Due to the increased diversity in educational institutions, educators face far more challenges to having multicultural competency. It is obvious that ethnic, racial and

cultural diversity has increased over the past years due to high rates of immigration, and this causes teachers to face diverse populations from diverse cultures and compel them to be aware of all of their characteristics at the same time (Ancis, 1998; Tai, 2007). Gay and Howard (2000) assert another interconnected challenge is that prospective teacher candidates frequently show a subtle resistance to the need of understanding and acknowledging multicultural aspects of education, and thus, they show less willingness to acquire the necessary knowledge and skills that will actually help them to increase the quality of their teaching methods in culturally diverse classrooms. This resistance may be seen in different ways such as denying the existence of cultural variety in teaching and learning or having fear of reality of cultural diversity and engaging with different cultures. In addition, some of them acknowledge the existence of cultural diversity in class but they do not accept the necessity of implementing multicultural approach in teaching methods. Much of this resistance and fear come from teacher candidates' prejudice and lack of knowledge about other cultures or being not sure of the rightful implementation of multicultural approach in classrooms. Some teacher candidates express their lack of knowledge and worries in statements such as "There are too many cultures and ethnic groups and I do not know enough to teach them all" and "Inadvertently saying something stupid or hurtful and embarrassing themselves or offending people from other ethnic groups" (Gay and Howard, 2000, p. 4). Teaching culturally diverse populations demands an absolute consideration of minority cultures and multilingual learners, and an essential mindset of 'we-and-them thinking' (Lorentz & Bergstedt, 2006 in Strandberg & Lindberg, 2010). Moreover, another challenge arises when teacher candidates who unwillingly accept the cultural diversity in class and its place in teaching and learning have misassumptions and unfavourable attitudes to diversity. They mostly stay very simplistic in in-class conversations and cannot present the necessary pedagogic attitudes and behaviours (Gay & Howard, 2000).

In their study on diversity in New Zealand tertiary institutions, Clark and McGowan (2010) report that there is a significant difference between Asian international students' expectations and perception of what comprises teaching and learning depending on the scope of cultural and educational backgrounds they deliver to the tertiary classrooms and that of their instructors. They claim that tertiary education institutions, which are struggling to provide distinguished instruction to international students, face noticeable challenges. According to Butcher and McGrath (2004), due to lecturers' insufficient support and lack of awareness and knowledge of instructional requirements for diverse

groups, there has been a significant decrease in the number of international students from China, Japan and South Korea at tertiary institutions in New Zealand.

Gay and Howard (2000) further convey a challenge that is mostly seen in reaching multicultural competency because teacher candidates underestimate the effects of race and ethnicity in social discrimination. In their study, teacher candidates mostly stated that there are more discriminative factors such as gender or socio-economic status than race, culture or ethnicity. Therefore, they see the focus in diversity in classroom as less necessary than focusing on other issues which should be taken consideration in other environments. They further seem to accept the idea that 'people are more alike than different' and race is a 'social construction' (Gay & Howard, 2000).

Scholars stress that it has turned into a requirement for pre-service and in-service teacher education programs to put greater emphasis on diversity, cultural awareness and social equity (Cochran-Smith, 1995; Cockrell, Placier, Cockrell & Middleton, 1999; Gay, 2005), and Townsend (2002) even suggest making it compulsory for teachers to get certificates in multiculturally responsive pedagogy. Similarly, Gay (2005) proposes several approaches for challenges in culturally diverse classrooms like (a) additional multicultural pedagogy separately, (b) thoroughly consolidated methodologies, and (c) a binary-curricular methodology that incorporates ethnic and cultural differences into teacher education programs and sustains it as a separate expertise (p. 224). Scholars further emphasize that apart from awareness and knowledge on diverse groups as fundamental dimensions of multicultural education, it is also necessary for teachers to recognize their own beliefs, prejudices, and competences in instructing groups from various ethnic and cultural backgrounds (Gallavan, 1998; Gay, 2002; Grant & Gillette, 2006; Jackson, 1996). Spanierman et al. (2010) assert that teacher education programs can make use of various methods in appraising their efficiency in ensuring multicultural responsiveness.

Gay (2001) suggests that institutional context cannot be ignored in any attempt regarding multicultural education. Schoorman (2000) further asserts that multicultural responsiveness should be considered as an inclusive and continuous institutional transformation process which integrates diversity sensitive practices into institutional operations. Thus, teachers and schools need to cooperate on an ongoing process to proceed notably and throughout this process, there are various approaches and dimensions of multicultural education to map out the route to be taken (Schoorman & Bogotch, 2010). In his study on the role of school regarding multicultural competence, Coste (1997) states

that schools should equip students with a multilingual and multicultural competence in addition to capability in using learning materials, experiencing different learning methods, improving their understanding and awareness of languages and cultures respectively.

2.3.3. Characteristics of Multiculturally Competent Educators

Multicultural competency of teachers and individuals in the field of education has been described in terms of personal and professional traits they hold. For instance, Gudykunst and Kim (1984) depict an individual with multicultural competence as someone:

'…who has achieved an advanced level in the process of becoming multicultural and whose cognitive, affective, and behavioural characteristics are not limited but are open to growth beyond the psychological parameters of only one culture. The multicultural person possesses an intellectual and emotional commitment to the fundamental unity of all humans and, at the same time, accepts and appreciates the differences that lie between people of different cultures' (p. 230).

In terms of multicultural education, Washington (2003) portrays two different approaches for the competency of teachers. One of these approaches is called 'Multicultural and Academic Competences for Teacher'. It states that teachers can achieve multicultural competency by understanding themselves, understanding others' cultural backgrounds and being academically-multiculturally competent (p. 496). Another approach called 'From Novice to Expert: Multicultural Competence for Teachers' evaluates competency from the perspective of occupational development. In the first stage of the approach (novice stage), teachers assume cultural diversity of the students as a problem that should be dealt with individualized teaching methods (p. 508). On the other hand, they reach the expert stage by gaining the necessary ability to understand educational process, themselves and their students. Teachers in this stage are effective problem solvers, observers and evaluators of various cultural experiences (Washington, 2003, p. 508).

Banks (1991) suggested another approach for multicultural competency in which he sees multicultural competency of teachers in three dimensions. The first dimension is the personal level of competency. In this level, teachers are expected to know and search for his or her cultural identity and history. The second level is the class level of

competency. In this level, teachers are expected to understand class culture and its effects on learning, not see minorities as ‘others’, create a class environment that respects all cultures represented in the class and school, use culturally sensitive curriculum and teaching strategies, communicate with all students and encourage students to communicate with each other. In the third level of the competency, the institution/school level, teachers are expected to construct a multicultural philosophy and tasks, make clear accountability criteria for all teachers, form policies for multicultural environments and make financial and managerial support for multicultural education implementations.

Chisholm (1994) states that teachers gain a better understanding of their own beliefs and attitudes underlying cultural assumptions by raising their awareness on diversity. Once they become aware of their life experiences and biases, teachers tend to become more sensitive towards multicultural groups, respect differences, and realize how these affect their relationships with students, classroom management, teaching processes, and assessment. Multiculturally responsive teachers recognize and accept the presence of diverse speech, views, learning and thinking styles. He lists some significant traits that teachers are expected to possess, recognizing their personal beliefs on cultural differences and interpersonal relations, and understanding intercultural relations properly. Studies on interaction between diverse cultures assert that those who are culturally competent are able to (a) handle the psychological and behavioural burden of being different, (b) easily develop relationships with others, (c) interpret other people’s feelings, (d) interact with people from diverse backgrounds, and (e) react inaccurate information accordingly (Giles, Coupland, Williams & Leets, 1991, p. 120).

Gay (2000) suggests some other criteria for multicultural competency of teachers. According to him, a multiculturally competent teacher should be aware of his or her own cultural identity and prejudices, have a tendency to learn worldviews of other cultures, and be able to develop culturally sensitive teaching strategies. These criteria have later been extended by Villegas and Lucas (2002) to six criteria for a multiculturally competent teacher as (a) socioculturally conscious; (b) able to see learning resources of all learners and approaching them as not problems that should be dealt with; (c) capable and aware of his or her own responsibility in promoting educational transformation for the school’s function of providing educational wealth and diversity; (d) able to acknowledge learners’ process of knowledge construction and support them in this process; (e) have information about learners’ lives; and (f) able to redesign teaching with the information acquired about students’ lives (p. 21).

The first criterion suggests being socioculturally conscious. This criterion refers to being aware that each individual has his or her own thinking and behaving style and these are affected by ethnicity, language and social class (Villegas and Lucas, 2002, p. 22). Asking himself or herself 'who am I as a social and cultural being', 'which social and cultural groups do I belong to', 'how my belongingness has shaped my personal and family experiences' 'how would these enhance teachers' social consciousness' (Başbay & Bektaş, 2009, p. 38).

The second criterion is to be able to see learning resources of all students and approaching them as not problems that should be dealt with. Seeing learning resources of students helps to acknowledge that people who come from different cultures already know many things, they have different languages and experiences, and so they can extend their own learning, and help to promote the learning of other students in the classroom context. Teachers with this awareness see students from different cultures as learners who carry their rich knowledge and experience to school (Villegas and Lucas, 2002, p. 23). Therefore, to be able to confront negative attitudes towards minorities or different cultures, they teach their students how to observe their own learning, expect high performance from them and support them to meet these expectations, help students improve themselves by adding new information to their personal and cultural values that they bring to school (Başbay & Bektaş, 2009).

The third criterion is to be aware of his or her own responsibility in the school's function of providing educational wealth and diversity. Therefore, teachers are also described as 'change agents' whose responsibility is to do the best for development of all students. The fourth criterion is to be able to understand how students structure information and support it in that process. This is also stated as a constructivist perspective. It refers to students' process of producing new meanings as a result of new experiences and ideas. Denying students' knowledge that comes from their personal and cultural experiences and forms the basis of their learning also means denying the students' process of knowledge construction. Teachers are responsible for bridging the learners' existing knowledge with their new learning.

The fifth criterion is that teachers should have information about their students' lives. As has been mentioned above, teachers should link students' existing knowledge with their new learning. To be able to do that, they should also know their students and have information about students' experiences outside school. If teachers know about the student's family, he or she can better understand students' behaviour at school. For this

purpose, teachers can use methods such as home visiting, family interviews and getting opinions from people who are familiar with that culture. This would decrease the risk of students' resistance to learning, and the kind of feeling that information taught is irrelevant to what they experience outside school. Finally, the sixth criterion is to redesign teaching with the information acquired about students' lives. It is not enough just to know the students; teachers should also know how to share information with their students and develop their teaching skills with the new information they acquire, so that they can implement cultural sensitivity to their teaching practices. Within culture-sensitive teaching practices, it is necessary to involve students in the process of knowledge construction, recognize their personal and cultural richness, help them examine the curriculum from various perspectives, and use various assessment methods that addresses all the students impartially.

Culturally responsive teachers manage to have a significant influence on the learning process of their students (Stoicovy, 2002). As Brown indicates (2007), there is a consensus among educators that being competent in terms of pedagogical and content knowledge plays an important role in effective teaching. Chisholm (1994) and Irvine (1990) emphasize that for effective teaching in classrooms with a diverse population, teachers need to create equal learning opportunities for students to improve academically and personally, and consider the presence of students from different backgrounds in the application of teaching strategies and the delivery of content. They further assert that, for this to occur, teachers need to be perceptive about the way diverse students perceive the world, process information, and construct knowledge. Through an awareness on personal attitudes and views, teachers recognize that there is no single truth and that universal norms vary. According to Chisholm (1994) and Cardelle-Elawar (1992) teachers need to develop metacognitive strategies which promote an understanding of their multicultural knowledge and skills, and develop an awareness of the way these affect students' learning.

Coste (1997) states that individuals who have the capacity to correspond with culturally and linguistically diverse groups in multicultural interactions hold plurilingual and pluricultural competence and these people generally carry the experience and knowledge in various languages and cultures. He further claims that knowledge of various languages and cultures will most probably help to achieve multicultural competence and expand the aptitude for learning.

Researchers have employed qualitative methods to identify key considerations that

are connected with multiculturally responsive approaches. Bergeron (2008) investigated a novice teacher's achievement in constructing a multiculturally conscious climate in his/her classroom and discovered that exchanging ideas with colleagues, and support from school management, and participation in professional development activities played a significant role in this achievement. Likewise, Bondy and colleagues (2007) examined three novice teachers and revealed that in order to create a culturally responsive classroom, it is fundamental to promote interaction with diverse groups and form an explicit anticipation of attitudes and achievement (Bondy, Ross, Gallingane & Hambacher, 2007). These studies indicate that there are certain factors that play an essential role in the competence of a novice teacher's dealing with groups from different ethnic and cultural backgrounds. Cochran-Smith (2004) claims that since multicultural education is not only a political but also pedagogical issue and as there is no consensus in the field of multicultural education on most effective approaches, further inquiry is required to present practical support for different facets of teacher education that encourages teachers to be multiculturally responsive.

When teachers work with multiculturally diverse populations, they have a chance to revise and improve their teaching skills, acknowledge the learning and thinking styles of different students, and promote interaction in the classroom (Leung and Hue, 2017). Teachers can design lessons in a multiculturally responsive way by all these experiences they gain in classrooms. Leung and Hue (2017) further claim that teachers cannot be multiculturally competent unless they experience diversity in their actual classrooms.

Multiculturally responsive teachers adopt an approach that cultural aspects in the curriculum and content of teaching support effective learning (Gay, 2000; Ladson-Billings, 1992). Schools need to encourage individuals to construct knowledge, respect and skills to interfere with linguistically and culturally diverse populations effectively and acknowledge biased and inequitable behaviours towards them (Kostelnik, et al., 2002). Kostelnik and colleagues (2002) claim that individuals can establish multiculturally responsive teaching if they become aware of their own beliefs and attitudes, be receptive for new information, and interact with people from diverse cultures and backgrounds. Moreover, teachers are expected to consider diversity as significant conveniences to instil respect and widen horizons of learners towards differences in order to deliver proper support to their learners (Han & Thomas, 2010). Those involved in multicultural teaching are required to hold the responsibility for developing oneself to be competent as an instructor, capable of delivering the tasks, and knowledgeable about learners and their

learning styles.

Teachers who hold multicultural competency also put considerable emphasis on providing a caring and safe classroom environment for all students. Garibay (2015) describes the effect of a learning environment where all students feel safe, valued, and respected on student engagement and performance as seminal for students so that they can achieve and reveal their full capability. Because an unfavourable environment may be a hindrance to learning, it is essential to provide and endorse a positive climate for all students. He further asserts that in addition to the physical elements of learning environment like providing necessary materials or reducing noise, the psychosocial aspects like student feelings or how they are treated in the classroom should be addressed. In order to create an inclusive climate for diversity in a classroom, students need to be supported equally in terms of all the components of the course.

In their study, Acar-Çiftçi and Gürol (2015) identify four salient components of teachers' cultural competencies: (a) awareness; teachers recognize how their own beliefs and values are influenced by cultural conditions, (b) knowledge; teachers acknowledge that diverse populations have different mindsets and perceive reality differently, and that teachers gain knowledge on diverse populations, (c) attitude; teachers' feelings, views and behaviours towards multicultural populations are formed by their interpretation of multicultural awareness and knowledge levels; (d) skill; teachers are capable of employing proper interventions in order to promote multicultural teaching. The researchers further assert that the components framed above are interrelated and interact with each other closely and they should not be considered separately, and the converging point of these components is interpreted as cultural competency area.

2.4. Multicultural Teaching Competency in Higher Education

2.4.1. Culturally Competent Teaching in Higher Education

Changing student demographics over the globe has rapidly increased the number of teacher education programs that cover multicultural education courses. In the USA, the National Council for the Accreditation for Teacher Education (NCATE) has seen such courses as a requirement in graduate and undergraduate teacher education programs. Also, teacher education programs in 39 states are required to equip candidate teachers with competency to meet the demands of racially, culturally, linguistically, and so forth diverse classrooms. When increased global opportunities for getting education overseas

are considered, it might be said that multicultural education is actually gaining more and more importance for higher education (Larke and Larke, 2009, p. 8). Therefore, presenting ways and standards of culturally competent teaching in higher education is also essential. For this purpose, Larke (2013) has identified two approaches (D2 and E2) and an implementation method for multicultural competency.

The D2 approach consists of two sub-components: the first component refers to developing a knowledge base for multicultural education, and the second component refers to designing a course according to basic principles of culture responsivity. According to the D2 approach, development of knowledge base can be acquired by acknowledging diversity is beyond race or gender. It is a broader concept with all elements of culture. Then, lecturers dealing with culturally diverse classrooms should design their courses based upon the knowledge they have acquired. Similarly, the E2 approach also consists of two sub-components: while the first component of the E2 approach refers to engagement with students, the second component indicates the evaluation of both course content and progress of students (Larke, 2013).

Culturally competent teaching is applicable in higher education for various reasons. Gay (2000) suggests three premises of culturally responsive pedagogy: (a) academic success for all learners; (b) leaners' cultural competence; and (c) critical consciousness (Gay, 2000, p. 160). Larke (2013) considers these components of culturally competent teaching as most applicable in higher education since learning can be enhanced by operating cultural traits, backgrounds and views of diverse students as a channel of teaching. She further asserts that lecturers can assist students in acknowledging the relationships in the society by developing a comprehensive mindset of socio-political awareness, and increase academic achievement of culturally and racially diverse students by making use of cultural backgrounds of the students in their classroom practices.

2.4.2. Benefits of Diversity in Higher Education

Through a progressively diversifying world, where countries are reconstructed as global communities, it has been fundamental to review the eventual meaning of active and productive state of belonging to a society. Under these circumstances, the essential role of higher education institutions has resolved as promoting students in becoming active members of society with required knowledge, skills, and competencies. The mission of a higher education institution indicates the values it holds, the significance it

attributes to a college or university, and its recognition of truth (Milem, 2003). Kuh and colleagues (1991) state that it is the mission of an institution that identifies its educational strategies, curriculum and, applications (Kuh, Schuh, Whitt, Andreas, Lyons, Strange, Krehbiel & MacKay, 1991).

There have been substantial debates on developmental aspects of diversity on educational programs. Scholars (Duster, 1993; Hurtado, 2007; Anderson, Avery, Pederson, Smith & Sullivan, 1997; Tierney, 1993), educational executives (e.g., Bollinger, 1997; Rudenstine, 1997; Shapiro, 1995), and educational associations suggest that ethnic, linguistic and cultural diversity promote assets for students individually, for colleges and universities, and for the society as a whole. The American Association of Universities claims that in diverse classroom environments, students considerably benefit from each other and take the opportunity to exchange knowledge with those from diverse backgrounds. Moreover, the students undergo a transformation which equips them with the necessary skills they need for real life outside the classroom. In addition to showing initiative and experiencing challenges, the students acknowledge the importance of working and living together, and the significance of unity and harmony through extracurricular enterprises (Association of American Universities, "On the Importance of Diversity in University Admissions," The New York Times, April 24, 1997, p. A27).

The influence of ethnic, linguistic and cultural variety on developmental and transformational processes the students undergo while they are at university has been investigated through numerous studies at tertiary level (Astin, 1993; Feldman & Newcomb, 1969; Pascarella & Terenzini, 1991). One of the most significant aspects of this progress has been observed on students' individual developments, which identifies the educational experiences and consequences of diversity on campus. Milem (2003) characterizes the outcomes of diversity on learners individually in terms of their intellectual, emotional, and social aspects. Moreover, Alger (1997) states that despite the universality of gain through the interaction of those from diverse backgrounds, members of majority groups on campus considerably benefit more than those of minority groups.

Research suggests that students can benefit from diversity on campus in various ways (Gurin, 1999; Milem, 2003). According to Gurin (1999), the first consequence of diversity at tertiary level is learning outcomes, which are attributed to the commitment and inspiration that learners display, acquisition and cultivation of academic competencies, and the significance they associate with these competencies after they graduate. Democratic outcomes are the second benefit the learners gain through

interaction of learners from various backgrounds. Because the societies outside the schools are becoming more and more varied and complicated, students learn to participate actively in the activities held in higher education. A further outcome Gurin (1999) suggests is that learners perceive the competence of living and working efficiently in a diverse society. Milem (2003) defines the primary goal of education at tertiary level as to equip learners to survive in their lives and help fight against discrimination in the society. He adds two more individual benefits for learners, 'process outcomes' and 'material outcomes' (p. 5). While the former refers to students' conceptualisation and gratification of campus environment, the latter refers to the benefits that accrue to students such as higher salaries as a result of attending different colleges.

Research in higher education mainly suggests that there is a significant relationship between appreciation of diversity on campus and awareness on ethnic variety. For example, in his longitudinal study on the effect of diversity at tertiary level, Astin (1993) displayed that faculty courses on diversity had a constructive influence on the students' perception of diversity and appreciation of college. Similarly, Villalpondo (1994) obtained results which indicate positive relationships between cultural components of faculty courses and student gratification. Furthermore, Tanaka (1996) reported that there was a strong connection between a constructive campus environment and students' perception of society, recognition of cultural differences, acknowledgement of ethnic diversity and appreciation with activities held on campus. Likewise, Gilliard (1996) revealed that providing a supportive environment at tertiary level was essential for the academic achievements of both minority and majority groups in faculties.

Milem (1992, 1994) further asserted that students proved to extend their levels of understanding and awareness towards ethnic and cultural diversity, and hold liberal views when they commit to more debates on socio-political issues, express their opinions about ethnic and cultural diversity, interact with students from various backgrounds, participate in workshops focusing on raising awareness towards ethnic diversity, and engaged in courses on ethnic studies. Pascarella and colleagues (1996) found that students valued ethnic and cultural variety and become more open to differences when they participated in workshops aimed at raising cultural awareness (Pascarella, Whitt, Nora, Edison, Hagedorn & Terenzini, 1996). Following the workshops, students demonstrated constructive views and attitudes towards ethnic variety on campus and developed critical thinking skills.

Research on the institutional effect of diversity in higher education indicates that

educational facilities are affected by the characteristics of faculties. Inclusively diverse bodies in tertiary education improve the quality of teaching and learning practices and promote the academic endeavour considerably (Easton & Guskey, 1983). Milem (2003) reports that executives of international companies particularly seek for employees who hold multicultural skills in order to meet the needs of global market. He further states that ethnic and cultural diversity in universities maintains an ideal campus climate where students can establish these required competencies. According to Bikson and Law (1994), institutions can benefit from diversity, if handled properly, by promoting such individual and professional traits as flexibility and adaptability towards colleagues of various backgrounds, empathy and openness to different cultures, and inspirational and original perspectives.

2.4.3. Multicultural Teaching Competency as a Component of Teacher Preparation Programs

Preservice teacher education programs provide a pivotal development for candidate teachers in order to promote multicultural perspectives of teaching and cultural responsiveness. Candidate teachers can be equipped with necessary qualifications to support all learners to achieve academic competency and prepare them for professional life in the future. Valli and Rennert-Ariev (2000) claim that a multicultural transformation is required for teacher candidates who believe that they are insufficiently prepared and thus hesitant to teach in schools with high populations of diverse groups. Although some teachers might be well-equipped in terms of conventional teaching methodologies, they might not hold the necessary knowledge, attitudes, and competencies to address multicultural classrooms (Vavrus, 2002).

In her inquiry of staff development and multicultural education, Sleeter (1992, in Vavrus, 2002) found that despite the assumption of mostly feeling competent and not needing any outside assistance, classroom teachers impede the endeavours provided by multicultural reforms. Therefore, even educators with perceived instructing accreditations and prominent careers may not hold the required multicultural competencies and responsiveness to enhance culturally diverse students in terms of academic and interpersonal skills. Multicultural teaching is commonly recognized in teacher education programs as an exceptional or optional extension of a Eurocentric foundational program which is reinforced by traditional methodologies and assessment techniques (Bowser,

2008).

Teacher education programs have generally perceived multicultural education as a possible elective or singular addition within a Eurocentric core curriculum that is supported by conventional pedagogies and systems of evaluation. Multicultural education reform helps teachers recognize and address the issues that lead to academic incompetency of different learners and as Nieto (1997) states:

"…[multicultural education] allows educators to explore alternatives to systemic problems that lead to academic failure for many students . . . it fosters the design and implementation of productive learning environments, diverse instructional strategies, and a deeper awareness of how cultural and language differences can influence learning. School reform with a multicultural perspective thus needs to begin with an understanding of multicultural education with a socio-political context." (p. 389)

Multicultural education and development concern the process which instils cultural awareness and sensitivity in teachers. Ladson-Billings (1995) places multicultural teaching at a crucial position between theory and practice. The American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education considers cultural variety as a precious wealth that is supposed to be conserved and enhanced (AACTE, 1989, p. 1) and suggests four basic objectives for teacher education: a) teaching qualities that promote diversity, b) stimulating the development and consolidation of local cultures, c) encouraging different lifestyles, and d) reassuring multilingual and multidialectal diversity. The AACTE report deduces that multicultural teacher education should transcend prevailing circumstances and understanding which are provided on conventional programs, and cover educational endeavours from all aspects and promote an understanding for responsive teaching (AACTE. 1989, p.2).

2.4.4. Assessment of Multicultural Teaching Competency

Nowadays, various higher education institutions are attempting to accomplish diversity and multicultural objectives including goals for student outcomes like cultural competency in a diverse community and workplace. Nevertheless, it is not always so easy to attain these objectives as there has been constrained discussion and inquiry with respect to the characteristics (e.g. knowledge, skills, attitudes) that comprise multicultural competence (King & Howard-Hamilton, 2003). King and Howard-Hamilton claim that further discussion and research on multicultural teaching and its components might well

contribute to the education of students on the issue.

One of the significant studies on the components of multicultural teaching competency in higher education was conducted by Pope and Reynolds (1997) and they organized 33 items under three main dimensions: awareness, knowledge and skills. For example, ‘a belief that differences are valuable and learning about difference is necessary and rewarding,’ ‘an openness to change and belief that change is necessary and positive,’ and ‘awareness of self and the impact it has on others’ were some of the competencies they listed for multicultural awareness (p. 271). For knowledge competency, they included ‘a belief that differences are valuable and learning about difference is necessary and rewarding,’ ‘an openness to change and belief that change is necessary and positive,’ and ‘awareness of self and the impact it has on others’ (p. 271). Finally, multicultural skills were indicated by the competencies to be able to work in culturally diverse settings. They listed these competencies as ‘ability to identify and openly discuss cultural differences and issues,’ ‘capability to empathize and genuinely connect with individuals who are culturally different from themselves,’ and ‘ability to gain the trust and respect of individuals who are culturally different from themselves’ (p. 271).

Howard-Hamilton, Richardson, and Shuford (1998) identified a comparable set of aspects on multicultural competency and they used these competencies as a directory in teaching and learning processes of faculty education and preparation of curricula. The components they covered were ‘knowledge of self as it relates to one’s cultural identity,’ ‘ability to identify similarities and differences across cultures and the ability to articulate that with others,’ and ‘pride within one’s own cultural group’ (p. 11).

Another study was carried out by King and Howard-Hamilton (2003) on multicultural competency levels of graduates, educators and student affairs staff members in higher education. In this study, they found that all three groups of participants perceived themselves highest on the awareness, skills and knowledge components respectively. King and Howard-Hamilton (2003) assert that the lower scores on multicultural knowledge suggest that participants acknowledge the load of knowledge they need to acquire about different cultures and the knowledge base each culture has, which makes the competency over knowledge daunting. On the other hand, they identify multicultural competency over awareness as a more essential component and might be attained before other components of multicultural responsiveness (King & Howard-Hamilton, 2003).

The assessment of multicultural competence was also addressed as an issue of

counsellor educators, researchers, and practitioners as the new types of professional competencies they are expected to hold. Sue and colleagues (1982 in Cartwright et al., 2008) identified three basic components of multicultural competency: beliefs/attitudes, knowledge, and skills. Sue, Arredondo, and McDavis (1992) clarified these three fundamental components with a set of 31 subcomponents of multicultural competency and these competencies were approved by the Association for Multicultural Counselling and Development (AMCD) in 1992. These achievements have inspired the development of various instruments to assess multicultural competence: the Multicultural Counseling Awareness Scale–Form B (Ponterotto, Sanchez, & Magids, 1991), the Multicultural Awareness Knowledge Skills Survey–Counselor Edition–Revised (MAKSS-CE-R; Kim, Cartwright, Asay, & D'Andrea, 2003), Multicultural Awareness, Knowledge, and Skills Survey (D'Andrea, Daniels, & Heck, 1991). The development and application of these instruments provided empirical data regarding multicultural competency levels of various participants including students and practitioners for educators and researchers.

2.5. The Scope of Multicultural Education in Turkey

2.5.1. Multicultural Approach to Education in Turkey

Turkey, as a country, is home to numerous ethnic, religious, and cultural populations. There has been a distinct culture oriented and prevailing central education enterprise in the country since the establishment of Turkish Republic. The education system was reformed with the Education Consolidation Act in 1924 in order to unify the educational programs and institute Turkish as the medium of teaching in the whole country (Kaya, 2011). An educational program that is mainly based on the knowledge and understanding of ethnic, cultural and linguistic majority population in Turkey and neglecting the languages, cultures, and backgrounds of minority groups will lose its effectiveness and have unfavourable results not only for minority learners, but also for local learners (Acar-Çiftçi & Gürol, 2015).

Multicultural education refers to the educational dimension of multiculturalism and in its most basic sense, it is defined as an education reform that ensures all students benefit from education equally, regardless of their differences such as religion, language, race, gender, age, social class, and economic level (Acar-Çiftçi & Gürol, 2015). Kazancigil (1994) defines multiculturalism as an inclusive and systematic reaction to cultural and ethnic diversity, which includes educational, linguistic, financial, social and precise

institutional mechanisms. He further asserts that the significance of ethnicity and cultural identities has been rediscovered and this has created an awareness to deal with ethnic and cultural diversity through policies encouraging participation of ethnic and cultural minority groups, albeit preserving the unity of the country. In this respect, multicultural education in Turkey is comprised of populations from numerous linguistic and cultural backgrounds, and aims to prepare learners to be able to conveniently live and efficiently work in a multicultural environment.

Since culture has a significant influence on the learning process and acquired skills of a child at school, profoundly established cultural socialization might become perilous in an educational setting where the instructional processes prioritize a single cultural model over others, or where culturally diverse students are forced to revoke all their cultural heritage as a prerequisite for achievement at school. Although not very prevalent, research conducted in Turkey indicate that children from minority groups tend to fail or drop out of school compared to the children from dominant culture (Alp & Taştan, 2011). In a descriptive inquiry, Polat (2009) intended to determine the extent to which pre-service teachers show personality traits for multicultural education. He concluded that prospective teachers were not in a favourable position in terms of emotional stability, which was defined as one of the sub-dimensions of multicultural personality (Van Oudenhoven & Van der Zee, 2003). This indicates that pre-service teachers need training on emotion stability. Another finding of the study was that the perceptions of candidate teachers' multicultural personality were not affected by the variables of gender, type of education, the settlement they live in, and the number of siblings, but they were affected by the variable of the department in which they were studying. Polat (2009) claims that the personality can be developed through education and the dissemination of multicultural education in the courses of education faculties will provide an opportunity for students to develop their multicultural personality, which will help to equip candidate teachers with the essential needs of modern age.

Yıldırım and İlin (2013) conducted an inquiry on the cultural adaptation of exchange students of an ELT department and found that students face such problems as adaptation to a new culture, accommodation, lack of guidance from the host country, and prejudices towards students' home country, which mainly emerges from incorrect knowledge about their culture. Yıldırım and İlin (2013) suggest that students' home culture should be addressed through a process of 'culture synergy', which is defined as claiming collective endeavour from both host teachers and exchange students to

acknowledge each other's culture. In addition to the elimination of prejudices, they indicate that there should be room for mutual understanding between students' home and host cultures by encouraging in-class activities and social gatherings that might allow students to introduce cultural aspects from their home countries (p. 120).

On the other hand, there are numerous studies in Turkey that indicate teachers, students, principals and academics in general have a positive attitude towards multicultural education (e.g. Acar-Çiftçi, 2016b; Damgacı & Aydın, 2013; Demir, 2012; Çoban, Karaman & Doğan, 2010). In their study, Çoban, Karaman & Doğan (2010) examined post graduate students' perspectives on cultural differences and found that students have a positive attitude towards cultural differences such as political and religious views, gender roles, disability, and socioeconomic status. Demir (2012) conducted a study in order to determine the significance of multicultural teaching for lecturers in Erciyes University and concluded that multicultural education is very important for them. In this study, Demir (2012) also revealed that faculty members attach great importance to integrating the multicultural education theory into the class, basically adding multicultural elements to lesson content and reducing prejudices. Similarly, Damgacı and Aydın (2013) conducted a study on the attitudes of lecturers in education faculties in İstanbul and reported that the attitudes of the lecturers towards multicultural education are highly positive. In their study, they also investigated whether the attitudes of the lecturers towards multicultural education differ according to gender, ethnicity, age, experience, and university they work at, and found that the views of the lecturers did not differ according to these variables.

Damgacı and Aydın (2013) administered another inquiry regarding the education faculty lecturers' perspectives on multicultural teaching. The results they obtained indicated that as the initial practitioners, the academics in charge of educating teachers highly promote integration and conduction of multicultural education. A more current study was conducted by Acar-Çiftçi, (2016b) on preschool teachers' perceptions on critical multicultural education competencies. The findings of the study indicated that participant teachers considered themselves as sufficiently competent in terms of skill and attitude, and moderately competent in terms of the knowledge and awareness dimensions. She further reported that gender, age, ethnic background and native language indicate a considerable difference in terms of the perceptions of participant teachers.

Aydın (2013) states that countries advanced in technology, military, and education in the world have kept multicultural education on their agenda for the past thirty years

and have made the transition to this education. These countries with a multicultural structure (the USA, Switzerland, Sweden, etc.) have resolved the ethnic and cultural problems they experience within its borders thanks to multicultural education (Damgacı & Aydın, 2013, p. 329). According to a report, 36 different ethnic identities are living together in Turkey (KONDA, 2011). Turkey has been experiencing numerous social and cultural issues stemming from this diversity for years and is expected to overcome these problems with an active and effective implementation of multicultural education. Therefore, the Ministry of National Education should undertake various reforms in the education system, take into account the positive attitudes and views of academics on multicultural education, and include them in the preparation of a multicultural education program (Damgacı & Aydın, 2013).

2.5.2. Multicultural Teacher Competences in Turkey

According to Article 43 of the Basic Law of National Education n.1739, teaching is a specialization profession that takes the State's education, training and related management duties on. Teachers are obliged to perform these duties in accordance with the objectives and basic principles of Turkish National Education. Preparation for the teaching profession is provided by general culture, special field education and pedagogical formation. A teacher is also one of the most important factors in achieving the goals of education. It has been revealed in many studies on multicultural education that the teacher needs to have necessary competencies in accordance with the basic philosophy of multicultural education in order to achieve the main goal of education. According to Spiecker and Steutel (2001), the 21st-century teacher should hold such democratic attitudes and qualities as tolerance and flexibility for multicultural perspectives and different lifestyles, respect for other citizens' equal rights, and a strong stance against discrimination. It is essential for teachers to be aware of that the students they teach might have different religions, language, race, gender, geographical region, experience, expectation, and political views (Çoban, et al., 2010). Cluster (2008) lists the qualifications that a teacher should possess as understanding the ability to work in a multicultural environment and respecting for difference and the ability to teach in heterogeneous classes (in Kilimci, 2011). One of the characteristics that a responsive teacher should have is to respect and reconcile different beliefs, views, and groups (Çelikten, Sanal & Yeni, 2005). Ural (2011) included multiculturalism among the first

stage courses in the three-stage education model developed for teacher education programs. Teacher training programs in EU education policies aim to train prospective teachers who offer a professional education for each student to prepare them for the future, regardless of gender, cultural and ethnic backgrounds (Karslı & Güven, 2011).

Multicultural education and teachers' multicultural competences is a recent field of study in Turkey and thus, there have been a few studies carried out recently. For instance, in his critical overview study on multiculturalism in Turkey, Yanık (2011) concludes that the cultural, ethnic, and linguistic potential of the country cannot be ignored, but Turkey's historical, political and social characteristics exhibit a different structure from Western countries. Thus, for promoting intellectual, academic and political discussions in the area of multiculturalism, he suggests that it is essential to consider the specific structure of the country. In another research inquiry in regards to the opinions and approaches on multiculturalism by candidate teachers in the Major of Social Sciences Teaching, Demirsoy (2013) found that prospective teachers consider multiculturalism as the presence of multiple cultures and different cultural groups and their co-existence in the same society; and that their approach to multicultural education is that different cultures, cultural groups and cultural elements should be included in the educational curriculum and educational institutions.

In a case study that was held by Kaya (2013) in Turkey, it is indicated that teachers have positive attitudes towards multiculturalism, multicultural education, and bilingual education and that there is a strong connection between ethnic origin and teachers' views on multicultural education. In his experimental investigation on the effect of multicultural education practice on teacher candidates' multicultural attitude and efficacies, Akçaoğlu (2017) found a statistically significant difference between the pre-test and post-test scores of the teacher candidates with regards to multicultural attitude and efficacy and that Banks' (1995c) content integration dimension significantly affected teacher candidates' multicultural attitude and efficacy. In another study Ateş (2017) obtained highly positive attitudes from Social Sciences teachers' perceptions on multicultural education. However, the researcher further claimed to have found that social sciences teachers acknowledged the biggest disadvantage of multicultural education in Turkey to be an issue open to abuse in the country.

Özdemir (2018) conducted a study on Physical Education teachers' attitudes of multicultural education and revealed that multicultural personality traits do not play role in the identification of the attitudes of physical education teachers towards multicultural

education, but personality traits are important in determining the teacher competency. The researcher further suggested that cultural empathy personality trait was a significant predictor of awareness, skill, and knowledge subscales of multicultural competency and the emotional stability personality trait was also a significant predictor of teachers' awareness as part of their multicultural competence.

Dolapçı (2019) conducted a study on teachers' attitudes towards refugee students and his findings displayed that participating teachers held a high level of perception in regards to multicultural competence, supportive size of school climate, and their attitudes towards refugees. His study further indicated that the supportive school climate and in-service training played a significant role on teachers' positive attitudes. Another case study that aimed to investigate the perceptions of Social Science teachers' multicultural education indicated that although most of the participating teachers had a highly positive attitude towards multicultural education, two-thirds of the participants believed in the significance of education in the official language since they are concerned about disintegration in the society (Morkoç, 2019). A further inconsistency revealed in the study is that even though most of the participants sustain a high level of responsibility in regards to multicultural education, they were not found to be very familiar with multicultural enterprises.

Tecim (2019) administered a study on academics' experiences on teaching international students and obtained that those learners who needed academic, social, and cultural supported tended to be ignored and the academics did not have a systematic or standard multicultural approach in dealing with these students due to the lack of an institutional multicultural policy at the university. However, this insufficiency of a standard multicultural policy led to the formation of a spontaneous and self-evolving education management among participating instructors.

On the other hand, the number of studies carried out in EFL classrooms is limited as there are very few studies administered in this field. One of these studies was carried out by Özkan (2018) and the study focused on ELT instructors' intercultural communicative competences in a multicultural context recently. The researcher found that there was not a well-defined connection between instructors' teaching practices and their beliefs about giving a place to culture their language classrooms. The findings in his study further revealed that the participating instructors frequently employed teaching practices that emphasize knowledge over skills development. In another study in an EFL context, Sökmen-Ramos (2019) inquired about ethnic/cultural identity and motivation in

foreign language learning in a multicultural environment and found that multicultural participant learners were attached to their cultural identity and as the positive attitudes of learners on their own cultural identities increase, their attitudes towards language learning decrease. Moreover, she found that despite the learners' high orientation, they were suffering the fear of assimilation in their language classrooms. Consequently, it could be seen that there is a significant need in the direct analysis of EFL instructors' competences of multicultural education.

In order for multicultural education to achieve its aim, teachers essentially need to have certain competencies. However, Polat and Kılıç (2013) claim that Turkey is seen to have a serious deficiency compared to most other countries when evaluating teacher education in respect to multicultural context. They emphasize that the absence of a training or course in the context of multiculturalism in teacher education programs can be regarded as a major drawback despite the presence of numerous ethnic, linguistic and cultural groups in the country. Every year thousands of teachers are assigned and generally meet learners from different cultures and backgrounds in their classroom environments. Especially in our country where individuals are raised and educated with a dominant culture, the attitudes and tendencies of the teachers who will transform and restructure the society are of vital importance. Polat and Kılıç (2013) further state that research on what competencies teachers need to have in a multicultural environment, and how efficiently teachers can implement instruction currently is limited.

CHAPTER III

METHOD OF THE STUDY

3.1. Introduction

This chapter provides the method of the study. It focuses on the rationale of the participant and the setting selection, the procedures administered through the design of the research, and analysis phases as well as ethical review procedure. In line with the aim of the current study which is to explore the EFL instructors' perceptions of their multicultural teaching competencies at tertiary level in Turkey, the study raises six research questions that require systematic handling in methodology.

3.2. Research Design

The design and approach of the current study is convergence model of mixed methods triangulation design (see Figure 2) which is described as a research model that focuses on collecting, analysing, and mixing both quantitative and qualitative data in a single study or series of studies to to validate, confirm, or corroborate quantitative results with qualitative findings (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011). The assumption of mixed methods is that the combination of quantitative and qualitative approaches provides a more comprehensive exploration of the research problems than either approach alone. In comparing and describing quantitative and qualitative content analysis, Dörnyei (2007) defines the former as "manifest level analysis", which provides an objective and descriptive audit of the "surface meaning of the data" while the latter as "latent level analysis" as it regards a second-level, interpretative analysis of the "underlying deeper meaning of the data" (p. 246).

Figure 2. Mixed methods triangulation design: convergence model

Source: Creswell & Plano, 2007 p. 63

In spite of this distinction, numerous scholars have emphasized, in research inquiry, that the two methods are often conducted in combination (Dörnyei, 2007; Flick, 2007; Zhang & Wildemuth, 2009). In fact, mixing qualitative and quantitative approaches is considered to be one of the ways of utilizing triangulation, which, according to Flick (2010), is used as "a strategy of improving the quality of qualitative research" (p. 405). Indeed, they mutually support the benefits of each other and strengthen the validity of the findings, hence both provide obtaining a broader, holistic grasp of the researched field of inquiry (Dörnyei, 2007; Flick, 2007). Similarly, Denzin (1970) asserts that qualitative studies are generally relied on a triangulation, which he defines as the integration of data from a variety of methods and sources of information. He further notes that this strategy decreases the prospect of inferring conclusions from merely the systematic biases or limitations of a specific method, and allows the researcher to acquire a better assessment of the validity and generality of the explanations that are developed. It might be concluded that high quality research studies blend both qualitative and quantitative methods of data collection, and thus, it is considered to be an efficient way to promote the credibility of the research inquiry in regards to validity and reliability. To maintain triangulation, this study utilised three data collection tools, namely CMETCS, video-stimulated interviews, and semi-structured interviews. In the study, the video-stimulated and semi-structured interviews were jointly referred as interviews. The descriptive results obtained from the scale were validated and corroborated with the qualitative findings acquired from the interviews. The purpose of conducting convergence model of mixed methods triangulation research design was to end up the study with valid and well-substantiated conclusions about the phenomenon of multicultural teaching competencies.

3.3. Setting

The setting of the study is the School of Foreign Languages (SFL hereafter) at Gaziantep University, and at various other universities in the neighbouring provinces (Harran University in Şanlıurfa, Adıyaman University in Adıyaman, Sütçü İmam University in Kahramanmaraş, Çukurova University in Adana, and Kilis 7 Aralık University in Kilis). The video-stimulated interviews and semi-structured interviews were conducted in the SFL at Gaziantep University, where the researcher himself has been an EFL instructor. The SFL at Gaziantep University is a significant place for conducting this research study for numerous reasons. First of all, the population in Gaziantep is quite

diverse in terms of linguistic, cultural and ethnic backgrounds. It is the sixth biggest province of Turkey, and located in the south-east border of the country. There are more than half a million people from different countries living in the city, and since it is located at the boarder of Syria, it hosts 451.828 Syrian refugees according to a Refugee Association report submitted in September, 2020. Second, the medium of various departments at Gaziantep University is English, thus it attracts a lot of international students every year. According to a report by the Turkish Higher Education Quality Council in 2020, the number of international students at Gaziantep University rose from 2.398 in 2015 to 4.253 in 2019 (see Chart 2). The SFL itself hosts diverse students from many countries such as Middle Eastern, Near East, African, European countries, and so forth.

Chart 2. The number of international students at Gaziantep University 2015-2019

Source: https://istatistik.yok.gov.tr)

Third, the population of international students in the participant EFL instructors' language classrooms has increased significantly in recent years. Thus, it was considered an ideal setting for the present study. Finally, collecting data for a mixed methods research inquiry at his own workplace granted the researcher certain conveniences especially for the conduction of video-stimulated interviews and semi-structured interviews. Collecting qualitative data demands a great deal of time and effort both for the researcher and for the participants. In addition to getting official permissions at institutional level, it is a well-known fact that personal relationships play a significant role in gaining the confidence of participants and convincing them to contribute to the study. Hence, the researcher has benefited from the ease of data collection with the voluntary contributions of his colleagues.

Table 2.

Demographic Characteristics of the CMETCS Participants (N = 114)

	f	*p*
Gender		
Male	38	33.30
Female	76	66.70
Experience		
1-3 years	3	2.60
4-6 years	9	7.90
7-9 years	28	24.60
10 or more years	74	64.90
Degree		
Bachelor's	51	44.70
Master's	53	46.50
Ph.D.	10	8.80

The participants and the setting of the research inquiry have been purposefully and prudently chosen so that it might promote the chance of collecting deep, rich, and meaningful data from various aspects. The participant instructors who were given the CMETCS for quantitative data were 114 tertiary level EFL instructors working at the School of Foreign Languages (SFL) in various state universities. The demographic variables on the CMETCS included the gender, years of experience, and academic degree of the participants. Table 3 indicates the demographic characteristics of the participant instructors (N=114) and it can be seen that 38 of the participants were male and 76 were female; 74 had 10 or more years of experience, 28 had 7 to 9 years of experience, and 12 had less than 7 years of experience in teaching. In regards to the academic degree of the participant instructors, 51 had bachelor's degree, 53 had master's degree, and 10 had a degree of doctor of philosophy.

Table 3.

Demographic Characteristics of the Interview Participants (N = 20)

	f	*p*
Gender		
Male	6	30.00
Female	14	70.00
Experience		
7-9 years	2	10.00
10 or more years	18	90.00
Degree		
Bachelor's	5	25.00
Master's	10	50.00
Ph.D.	5	25.00

Similarly, the participant instructors who were asked to participate in the video-stimulated interviews (N=4) and semi-structured interviews (N=20) were purposefully selected because they were expected to provide significant information that might not be obtained from other options (Patton, 1990, Maxwell, 1998). Nunan (1992) asserts that the selection of participants based on *typicality* is essential for purposeful sampling. Likewise, in Patton (1990), it is stated that "most sampling in qualitative research neither falls into probability sampling nor convenience sampling, but falls into a third category: purposeful sampling", a strategy by which particular settings, persons, or events are intentionally selected (p. 169). In regards to the conveniences of purposeful sampling, Leavy (2014) notes that nonprobability sampling suits qualitative content analysis for several reasons because it allows the researcher to determine who best to study without missing the critical persons needed in sample; it increases the chance to collect deep, rich, and meaningful data; and it allows the researcher to refine and adapt the sample as one enters the study (pp. 541-542).

Table 4.

Optimal Cut-off Point on the Instructors' Responses to the CMETCS

	f	*P*	*Range of CMETCS scores*
Low	23	20.18	134-153
Medium	71	62.28	154-172
High	20	17.54	173-192
Total	**114**	**100.00**	

The semi-structured interviews were conducted with 20 participant instructors, and the video-stimulated interviews were conducted by recording the lessons of four participant instructors. The interviews were conducted in English. In addition to voluntary participation, the instructors who participated in the interviews were purposefully selected from the SFL at Gaziantep University based on two criteria: the ranges of the scores regarding the CMETCS, and the number of culturally and linguistically diverse students in their classes. In order define the ranges (namely low, medium, high), the optimal cut-off point was calculated by a transformation formula in which the difference between the maximum score (134) and the minimum score (192) on the CMETCS was calculated and divided by the number of levels. The optimal cut-off point was found to be 19.33.

The optimal cut-off points obtained from the CMETCS (see Table 4) disclosed that 20% of the participants were found to be at the range high level (173-192) regarding the scores of the CMETCS, 62% at the range of medium level (154-172), and 18% at the range of low level (134-153). Hence, based on the distribution of total 114 participant instructors, 4 participants were chosen from the range of high level, 12 participants were chosen from range of medium level, and 4 participants were chosen from the range of low level. The number of the participants for each level corresponded with the distribution of percentages on the scale. Another basis for the selection of participating instructors for the interviews was the number of diverse students in the participating instructors' classrooms. The average number of international students in each observed classroom was found to be four or five out of 20 to 22 students (about 25%).

3.4. Data Collection

In this research study, the dimensions of multicultural teaching competencies, the challenges the participating EFL instructors face in their language classrooms and the strategies they use were investigated through quantitative and qualitative data collection tools. The data collection instruments of the study were CMETCS, video-stimulated interviews, and semi-structured interviews.

A series of ethical issues have been considered as the data collection process involves disclosing participant instructors' teaching experiences. This process is principally based on a reasonable degree of confidence and trust between the participants and the researcher. First, required official permission for the application of scales and interviews was primarily taken from the School of Foreign Languages at the universities where the study was carried out. Next, the consent form (see Appendix 4) was revised and signed by all the participant instructors prior to engagement in the interviews to declare their readiness to participate. A second copy of the consent form was provided to the participant instructor in case of a demand. The participants were assured about anonymity of their identities and confidentiality of the information they would provide. Finally, any question posed by participants in respect to the nature and process of the research study was clearly responded and explained prior to commencing the interviews.

3.4.1. The Critical Multicultural Education Teacher Competencies Scale (CMETCS)

In this research study, the CMETCS (see Appendix 1) was used to collect the quantitative data regarding the four dimensions of multicultural teaching competencies. The four dimensions identified on the CMETCS are as follows: (a) *awareness*; an individual's perception of how his/her beliefs and values are influenced by linguistic and cultural diversity. (b) *knowledge*; acquiring knowledge on diverse populations and recognizing the aspects that play a significant role in their mindsets and conceptualization of reality (c) *attitude*; an individual's perception at *awareness* and *knowledge* level that forms his/her mental, emotional and behavioural tendencies (d) *skills*; the utilization of proper interventions to promote multiculturally responsive learning/teaching. Acar-Çiftçi and Gürol (2015) claim that these dimensions would not be separated since the convergence of them can be identified as the zone of multicultural teaching competency.

The CMETCS included 42 statements, 6 regarding the dimension of *awareness*, 9 regarding the dimension of *knowledge*, 8 regarding the dimension of *attitude*, and 19 regarding the dimension of *skill*. Each statement was formed with a 5-point Likert scale (from strongly disagree to strongly agree). The scale was administered to all the participant instructors. The statistical analysis of the data obtained from the scale was analysed on IBM SPSS Statistics 23. The reliability of the scale was found to be .76 (Cronbach's Alpha), which is considered to be reliable. The descriptive findings of quantitative data such as frequencies, mean, and standard deviation for each research question and the CMETCS are presented in the following chapter of the study.

3.4.1.1. Semi-structured Interviews

A second data collection instrument was semi-structured interviews. The interviews were conducted with 20 participating EFL instructors in order to comprehensively explore their perceptions of multicultural teaching competencies, the challenges they encounter, and strategies they use in their language classrooms. Bogdan and Biklen (1998) claimed that face-to-face interviews were adopted as an essential method for data collection since they granted a convenience for "purposeful conversation" (p. 93). In addition, Ladico et al. (2010) state that interviews are convenient tools for purposeful conversations with the participants in studies. According to Merriam (2009), credibility and accountability can be confirmed through triangulation as "comparing and cross-checking (multiple sources of) data". The individual interviews with each participant raised an opportunity for exclusively engaging with each participant instructor and reiterate ambiguous responses or instil multiple interpretations (Denzin, 1989). Moreover, the cross-referencing themes from the interviews and descriptive analysis of the CMTECS enabled a triangulation in the analysis of the quantitative and qualitative data and provided strength to the study findings.

The questions of the interview (see Appendix 3) were mainly adapted from the CMETCS and formed open-ended. In the interviews, the participant instructors were asked to define diversity, express their feelings about the linguistic and cultural diversity in their classrooms, and refer to the positive and negative experiences that diversity brought in their classrooms. A further set of the questions intended to explore whether the participant instructors felt knowledgeable and skilled enough to handle diversity in their classrooms. The participant instructors were finally asked whether they experienced

any challenges due to diversity in their classrooms and the strategies they employed in order to overcome these challenges. The participants were also posed follow-up questions at times when further detail was required to be obtained.

Depending on the demand and ease of participating instructors, the interviews were carried out either in the researcher's office or in the participating instructors' offices at the SFL in Gaziantep University, as the researcher himself works at the same unit. At the beginning of each interview protocol, the purpose of the study was introduced to the participants, and the confidentiality and anonymity of responses to the interview questions was restated. All the participants agreed that the interviews would be audio recorded. The interviews lasted about 20 to 30 minutes. In order to provide precise data references, two audio recorders were used with the second recorder serving as a back-up. The recordings allowed the researcher to attentively listen to participants' remarks through the interviews. Audio-recordings of the interviews were transcribed verbatim within 24 hours to ultimately complement data analysis. The data analysis included content analysis utilising NVivo-12 analysis tool. The findings obtained from the qualitative analysis of the semi-structured interviews are presented in the following chapter.

3.4.2. Video-stimulated Interviews

A final tool utilised for data collection was video-stimulated interviews. As a research method, video-stimulated interviews allow the investigation of cognitive processes by inviting participants to recall their concurrent thinking upon a recorded video sequence or some other form of visual tools (Turnbull, 2009). In this study, the purpose for the use of this tool was to validate the claims of the participant instructors on the CMETCS by observing actual classroom practices through video-recorded classes. The participant instructors were chosen on a purposeful sampling basis, a strategy in which particular environments, individuals, or events are intentionally selected for the significant data they might provide (Patton, 1990; Maxwell, 1998). Four EFL instructors were chosen from optimal cut-off point levels (namely high, medium, and low).

The participants were provided with consent forms both for their and the students' signature to video-record the classes and verbally sought permission to audiotape the interviews. Each of the instructors' classes were video recorded for two hours, and video-stimulated interviews were conducted immediately the day after. In the interviews, the

participant instructors were asked open-ended questions on specific instances ascertained by the researcher regarding multicultural teaching competencies and related practices in the recordings. The interviews were held in the researcher's office with a computer ready to video play the recorded lesson for recall. Furthermore, participating instructors were provided with consent forms at the beginning of each interview, verbally informed about the need for audio recording of the interview and the confidentiality issues (use of data obtained and privacy concerns of identities). The interviews lasted about 20 to 30 minutes and the recordings were transcribed and a qualitative content analysis was applied to the data on NVivo-12 analysis tool. The findings obtained from the qualitative analysis of the video-stimulated interviews are presented in the following chapter with some direct extracts in regards to the themes and subthemes which emerged from the analysis.

3.5. Data Analysis

A mixed methods research design was conducted for collecting, analysing, interpreting, and reporting the data in order to provide the researcher with a rigorous approach to answering the research questions of the study. The breadth and depth of understanding and corroboration was ensured through the combination of the elements of quantitative and qualitative research approaches. While a descriptive analysis was carried out for the quantitative data obtained from the CMETCS, a qualitative content analysis was conducted for the qualitative data obtained from the interviews. As Weber (1990) states "content analysis is a research method that uses a set of procedures to make valid inferences from text", and it holds several benefits in comparison with other research methods (p. 117). First, content analysis is administered directly to texts or transcripts, which are the productions of human communication and the basis of social interaction. Next, high quality studies merge both qualitative and quantitative analysis of texts, and mixing methods is broadly considered as an efficient way of ensuring the credibility of the research inquiry in regards to validity and reliability. Additionally, using different kinds of documents grant a reliable source of information for a longer course of time, since the "lifespan" of these documents might last for several decades or even centuries. Finally, the nature of the data is ensured to be conserved due to the unobtrusive characteristic of this research method; hence, there is little risk that the participants react under the influence of certain assumptions (Weber, 1990; Cohen et al., 2007; Stemler, 2001).

According to Cohen et al. (2007), content analysis can be simply defined as the process of four Cs: coding, categorising, comparing and concluding. Dörnyei (2007), defines *code* as a simple label that is allocated to a chunk of text in order to make the distinct piece of information "manageable and malleable" and delineates coding as a means of reducing and simplifying the data in order to emphasize their precise characteristics in connecting them to more general concepts, e.g. categories. (p. 250). Moreover, categorising is referred to as developing "meaningful categories into which words, phrases, sentences, etc. as the units of analysis can be grouped"; whereas, comparing is defined as making connections between categories. Finally, concluding is referred to as "drawing theoretical considerations on the basis of the text and the results of the analysis" (Cohen et al, 2007, p. 476).

In a broader sense, Cohen et al. (2007) define content analysis as a process of summarising and interpreting written data. However, in a narrower framework, they state that it is "a strict and systematic set of procedures for rigorous analysis, examination and verification of the contents of written data" (p. 475). They assert that an essential characteristic of content analysis is that a massive amount of written data is curtailed into smaller groups of data (Cohen et al., 2007), or as Weber (1990) points out, "long texts with loads of words are represented by fewer words or expressions" (p.117).

A further characteristic of content analysis is that it is a reflective process as in all qualitative analysis. Erlingsson and Brysiewicz (2017) assert that "there is no linear progression in the analysis like 'step 1, 2, 3, 4, done!', which indicates that identifying and condensing meaning units, coding, and categorising are not one-time events. It is a constant practice of coding and categorising and then going back to the original data to reflect on your primary analysis (Erlingsson and Brysiewicz, 2017, p.3). In this respect, the coding of raw data was carried out in a cyclical process with a colleague in six-month intervals in a cross-referencing method in order to ensure interrater reliability with the goal of achieving the highest levels of accuracy in agreement in coding. At the initial step, the researcher and the interrater came to an agreement about codes which were based on the dimensions of the study. After codes were defined, raw data from the interviews were clusterd into themes and subthemes by the researcher and interrater independently. Following the completion of each step in the coding process, the categorization of extracts under relevant themes and subthemes was reviewed and reformulated by referring back to raw data and finalized in the third step.

Figure 3. Coding process of the qualitative data

In this study, the initial four research questions regarded the four dimensions of multicultural teaching competencies (namely *awareness, attitude, knowledge,* and *skill*) and were analysed by using both descriptive statistics obtained from the CMETCS and the qualitative content analysis of the interviews. The quantitative data were keyed into IBM SPSS Statistics 23 manually by the researcher and descriptive statistics with numerical data such as arithmetic mean, frequency, and percentages were analysed. The last set of the research questions concerning the challenges and strategies were analysed through a qualitative content analysis. The qualitative content analysis enabled the researcher to analyse the raw data from verbatim transcribed interviews, and form themes and subthemes, so that a large amount of text was systematically transformed into a highly organised and concise summary of key findings. The overall analysis of the scale and that of the items individually were tabulated with their frequencies and percentages and they were all interpreted along with qualitative findings acquired from the interviews through a triangulation process in the subsequent chapter. The following *research questions matrix* (see Table 5) was used as a tool to help organize the research into a coherent format and address the guiding questions of the study.

Table 5.

Research Questions Matrix

Domain	Research Questions	Survey Questions	Analysis
Dimension of *Awareness*	1. To what extent do EFL instructors have an awareness of multicultural teaching competency?	Critical Multicultural Education Competence Scale 6 Questions (Likert Scale): 14, 16, 17, 25, 31, and 37	Descriptive statistics including frequency distribution, percentages, mean, standard deviation for items and total score
		Video-stimulated interviews, Semi-structured interviews	Qualitative content analysis
Dimension of *Knowledge*	2. How do EFL instructors perceive their multicultural teaching competency in terms of knowledge level?	Critical Multicultural Education Competence Scale 8 Questions (Likert Scale): 3, 4, 7,10, 13, 20, 23, and 29	Descriptive statistics including frequency distribution, percentages, mean, standard deviation for items and total score
		Video-stimulated interviews, Semi-structured interviews	Qualitative content analysis
Dimension of *Attitude*	3. What are EFL instructors' attitudes toward having diverse students in their classrooms?	Critical Multicultural Education Competence Scale 9 Questions (Likert Scale): 5, 6, 22, 24, 26, 27, 33, 40, and 41	Descriptive statistics including frequency distribution, percentages, mean, standard deviation for items and total score
		Video-stimulated interviews, Semi-structured interviews	Qualitative content analysis
Dimension of *Skill*	4. How do EFL instructors perceive their multicultural teaching competency in terms of skill level?	Critical Multicultural Education Competence Scale 19 Questions (Likert Scale): 1, 2, 8, 9, 11, 12, 15, 18, 19, 21, 28, 30, 32, 34, 35, 36,	Descriptive statistics including frequency distribution, percentages, mean, standard deviation for items and total score

		38, 39 and 42 Video-stimulated interviews, Semi-structured interviews	Qualitative content analysis
Challenges	5. Do EFL instructors face any challenges due to the multicultural diversity in their language classrooms?	Video-stimulated interviews, Semi-structured interviews	Qualitative content analysis
Strategies	a. If they do, what kinds of strategies do EFL instructors implement to overcome these challenges?	Video-stimulated interviews, Semi-structured interviews	Qualitative content analysis

CHAPTER IV

FINDINGS

4.1. Introduction

This chapter presents the findings obtained from descriptive analysis of the CMETCS that was distributed to 114 EFL instructors, and from video-stimulated and semi-structured interviews conducted with 20 EFL instructors. The CMETCS revealed the EFL instructors' multicultural teaching competencies in terms of four dimensions, namely *awareness, knowledge, attitude* and *skill*. The video-stimulated interviews and semi-structured interviews solicited the views of 20 participants on the four dimensions of multicultural teaching competency in addition to the challenges posed by diversity, and strategies they applied to tackle those challenges in their language classrooms. The semi-structured interviews and video-stimulated interviews were designed to elicit the EFL instructors' mindset, and underline the critical connection to their practices inside and outside the classroom. The semi-structured interviews and video-stimulated interviews were both referred as "interviews" in this section. The acquired findings concerning the research questions of the study are presented based on the four dimensions of multicultural teaching competency, the challenges and strategies.

The CMETCS was used to investigate the participating EFL instructors' perceptions of their *multicultural education teacher competency* under four dimensions and the following findings were reached. The findings of descriptive data such as frequencies, mean, and standard deviation for each research question and the CMETCS are summarized in Table 6.

Table 6.

Descriptive Statistics on the Scores of Instructors' Responses to the CMETCS and its Sub-dimensions (N=114)

	Min.	Max.	$\bar{x}$	sd
Dimension of *Awareness*	1.67	4.67	2.83	.51
Dimension of *Knowledge*	1.63	4.25	2.89	.59
Dimension of *Attitude*	3.00	4.89	3.81	.40
Dimension of *Skill*	3.16	4.89	3.95	.37
CMETCS	2.81	4.31	3.56	.27

Min.: Minimum, Max.: Maximum, $\bar{x}$: Mean, sd: Standard deviation

As presented in Table 6, according to the average scores concerning the dimensions of the CMETCS, the participant instructors considered themselves competent at most on *skill* ($\bar{x}_{Skill}$=3.95±.37) and *attitude* ($\bar{x}_{Attitude}$=3.81±.40) dimensions. On the other hand, the participant instructors considered themselves least competent on the *awareness* dimension ($\bar{x}_{Awareness}$=2.83±.51), and the *knowledge* dimension followed it ($\bar{x}_{Knowledge}$=2.89±.59). The average score of instructors on *skill* and *attitude* dimensions was at the "Agree" level, and the average score on *awareness* and *knowledge* dimensions were at the "Partly Agree" level. The general mean score of instructors concerning the CMETCS was found to be 3.56±.27. In the scope of this scale, this finding showed that, the EFL instructors who participated in this study perceived themselves as competent/positive though the level was not very high.

4.2. Dimension of Awareness

The first research question of the study intended to investigate the extent to which the EFL instructors have an awareness of multicultural teaching competency. In order to answer this research question, a set of descriptive data was calculated using the data from 6 statements in the survey concerning the *dimension of awareness*. Responses were rated on a 5-point Likert scale with options ranging from "strongly agree" to "strongly disagree". The participants responded to each of these six statements in terms of their own degree of agreement or disagreement. The percentage of the "strongly agree" and "agree", and the "strongly disagree" and "disagree" responses to each of the six statements considering the *dimension of awareness* was summed to determine the percentage of participants who reported having or not having awareness of multicultural teaching competency. The rest of the participants who rated "partly agree" comprised the undecided group.

Table 7.

Instructors' Responses to the Dimension of Awareness

Statements	Strongly Disagree		Disagree		Partly Agree		Agree		Strongly Agree	
	f	*p*	*f*	*p*	*f*	*p*	*f*	*p*	*f*	*p*
I have prejudices stemming from my ethnic background	55	48.20	35	30.70	13	11.40	7	6.10	4	3.50
I am aware of my negative feelings about different students	19	16.70	20	17.50	27	23.70	39	34.20	9	7.90
There is no difference between the culture of different students and that of the school	27	23.70	48	42.10	23	20.20	11	9.60	5	4.40
I have knowledge about my ethnic origin	0	.00	7	6.10	15	13.20	45	39.50	47	41.20
I can continuously review my feelings and ideas about different students	1	.90	6	5.30	18	15.80	71	62.30	18	15.80
I know that I am biased when evaluating different students	62	54.40	27	23.70	12	10.50	10	8.80	3	2.60

f: frequency, *p:* percentage

The percentages of individual responses to the statements measuring *the dimension of awareness* ranged from about 10% to 82% for "agree" to "strongly agree" compared to 6% to 79% for "disagree" to "strongly disagree". A vast majority of the participating instructors (82% agree and strongly agree) stated to "have knowledge about *their* ethnic origin". Likewise, most of the participating instructors (78% agree and strongly agree) claimed that they "can continuously review *their* feelings and ideas about different students". On the other hand, the majority of the participating instructors (79% disagree and strongly disagree) claimed that they did not "have prejudices stemming from *their* ethnic background". Similarly, another majority (78% disagree and strongly disagree) stated they "know that *they are not* biased when evaluating different students". More than half of the instructors disagreed (66% disagree and strongly disagree) with the statement

that “There is no difference between the culture of different students and that of the school”.

In addition, the qualitative analysis of the interviews revealed the following themes and subthemes regarding the dimension of *awareness*:

Table 8.

Themes and Subthemes that Emerged Regarding the Dimension of Awareness

	f
Instructors’ awareness of students’	***56***
Culture	*41*
Worldviews	*8*
Traditions	*4*
Values	*3*
Instructors’ awareness of	**43**
Showing empathy	21
Showing respect	9
Need to be fair	4
Instructors’ awareness of local students’	**16**
Prejudices	10
Conflicts	6

The triangulation of obtained quantitative and qualitative data indicated that participating instructors highly value the presence of diversity in terms of *culture, worldviews, and traditions of students*. For instance, the descriptive analysis revealed that 66% of the participants “strongly disagreed” and “disagreed” with the statement “There is no difference between the culture of different students and that of the school”. Similarly, in the interviews the participating instructors most frequently cited about their *awareness and appreciation of students’ cultures, worldviews, and traditions* (56 citations). A second consistency between the quantitative and qualitative data can be seen in participating instructors’ feelings about different students. While the statement “I can continuously review my feelings and ideas about different students” was responded with “strongly agree” and “agree” by 78% of the participants, the statement “I know that I am biased when evaluating different students” was responded with “strongly disagree” and “disagree” by 78% of the participants. Likewise, the qualitative content analysis of the

interviews disclosed that the participating instructors placed emphasis on *showing empathy* (21 citations*)* in regards to their awareness towards diversity. The findings acquired from the interviews seem to support those acquired from the scale.

4.2.1. Instructors' Awareness and Appreciation of Students' Cultures, Worldviews, Traditions, and Values

In the interviews, the participating instructors were asked to define diversity. The responses acquired from the participant instructors revealed that the most frequently cited theme regarding the dimension of *awareness* was found to be *instructors' awareness of students' cultures, worldviews, and traditions* (56 citations). A vast majority of participant instructors cited *culture* (41 citations), *worldviews* (8 citations), *traditions* (4 citations), and *values* (3 citations) as aspects of awareness that they acknowledge and appreciate about their students.

4.2.1.1. Instructors' Awareness of Students' Cultures

In the interviews, the participant instructors were addressed open-ended questions regarding their feelings about cultural and linguistic diversity in their classrooms. Some of the participating instructors were observed to recognise that when students come into the classroom, they come along with their own cultural backgrounds, and that these students reflect aspects of their own culture in their behaviours. One of the instructors, for instance, attributed cultural variety to diversity, which differs from one student to another, and is a sum of this variety in the same classroom environment. Similarly, another appeared to be aware of the cultural variety her students bring into the classroom and that it is her responsibility as an instructor to help students realize the importance of this variety in the classroom.

Extract 1:

"It [diversity] means variety for me, different students, different cultures, all of them bring different things from their own selves. I think, they bring their own culture in class." (Participant-2, semi-structured interviews)

Extract 2:

"Well, diversity can be defined as cultural differences, for me in a class. It can

change from one person to another, but for me, it generally explains the different cultures in the same class actually." (Participant-15, semi-structured interviews)

Extract 3:

"...they bring their own culture into the classroom. I also try to make other students be aware of their cultural difference." (Participant-1, semi-structured interviews)

4.2.1.2. Instructors' awareness of students' worldviews

As a response to their feelings about diversity in their classrooms, the participant instructors generally emphasized the importance of cultural and linguistic diversity in terms of variety in understanding the world, different perspectives as a practical source for their classroom practices, and different ideas and opinions to avoid monotonous classes. For instance, participant 1 and 12 defined diversity as having a wide range of points of views, while participant 14 found multicultural students' views extraordinary, which she really appreciated because it provides variety in her classes. A majority of the participant instructors were observed to have a positive attitude towards having diverse students in their language classrooms.

Extract 4:

"…they're different; their understanding of the world is different; their appearance is different." (Participant-1, semi-structured interviews)

Extract 5:

"Diversity in general, or if we are talking of [about] the classroom setting, I think diversity is having like different ideas. First of all, having different opinions about different things." (Participant-12, semi-structured interviews)

Extract 6:

"I really love it [diversity] because they always have some extraordinary ideas or not typical and not boring. First of all, they have a different perspective from the others. So, it's a good source for me in my lessons, especially about giving examples and talking about different cultures. I really love it." (Participant-14, semi-structured interviews)

4.2.1.3. Instructors' Awareness of Students' Traditions

Another subtheme that emerged from the analysis of the interviews was found to be *instructors' awareness of students' traditions*. For instance, participant 1 symbolised culture like an iceberg which contains a range of components such as ethnicity, religion, traditions, understanding of the world, food, and so forth. She stated that she appreciated understanding and learning about all these through classroom practices.

Extract 7:

"And to know the culture is just like an iceberg, not only the food, not only the ethnicity, not only the religion, the other things, the traditions, the understanding of the world. It's a good thing to understand and learn all about these." (Participant-1, semi-structured interviews)

Similarly, another participant defined diversity as different norms and traditions from other countries. He further compared this variety with the components of local culture and stated that recognition of these cultural components has a confronting effect on international students and helps them adapt to the classroom atmosphere. It appears that the participant instructor has a distinct awareness of the local culture and cultural backgrounds of diverse learners.

Extract 8:

"Diversity can be about foreign students, it can be about foreign traditions, foreign norms. Sometimes our background is very similar to each other, but sometimes they differ in many ways, so if you give part to their traditions and culture, they express themselves in the class, they feel much better and they feel they belong to the class." (Participant-15, semi-structured interviews)

4.2.1.4. Instructors' Awareness of Students' Values

In the interviews, some of the participating instructors claimed to have considered every one of their students as an individual who has a different character and appearance, comes from a different background, and holds individual differences. For instance, participant 1 attributed the sum of all these gender, ethnic, cultural and personal differences to the definition of diversity in her classroom.

Extract 9:

"As a teacher, I can say that all students are different. Every one of them is different in terms of their character, their hometown, their appearance, and their gender. I consider each of my students as an individual and individuals have differences and this is diversity to me in a classroom." (Participant-1, semi-structured interviews)

4.2.2. Instructors' Awareness of Their Own Feelings About Different Students

The analysis of the semi-structured interviews and video-stimulated interviews revealed that the second most frequently mentioned aspect of multicultural awareness was *instructors' awareness of their own feelings about different students* (43 citations). Some of the participant instructors cited *showing empathy* (21 citations), *showing respect* (9 citations), and *need to be fair* (4 citations) as aspects of the dimension of *awareness*.

4.2.2.1. Showing Empathy

As for the dimension of *awareness*, mainly four themes emerged from the analysis of qualitative data. The most frequently cited theme was *showing empathy* (21 citations). Some of the participant instructors indicated the significance of showing empathy towards culturally and linguistically diverse students in their classes and demonstrated this with explicit phrases like "*putting themselves into their shoes"*, "*if I were him/her*", and "…*need for more understanding*". For instance, participant 14 stated that the starting point for him was trying to understand how he would feel if he were a multicultural student and thus, he always tried to be sympathetic towards them. Another participant instructor asserted that she always puts herself into their shoes and keeps in mind how she would feel and expect her teacher to behave if she were an international student abroad.

Extract 10:

"I always try to be sympathetic towards them, so I just try to figure out how I would feel if I were him/her. So that's my beginning point." (Participant-14, semi-structured interviews)

Extract 11:

"First of all, I put myself in their shoes. If I were a foreigner in another country,

how I would feel and what I would expect from the teacher and how do I expect that teacher to behave. I always keep this in mind." (Participant-18, semi-structured interviews)

Another participant instructor further claimed that people were not sensitive enough about diverse populations and cultures in the society, and she expected more understanding towards differences. This is significant in regard to being a responsive teacher because it carries the scope of awareness beyond the classroom level and makes the instructor behave as the operator of transformation in the society.

Extract 12:

"Because this is something we lack in the society, we need more understanding and more understanding people towards other cultures, different cultures or people coming from other countries." (Participant-16, semi-structured interviews)

4.2.2.2. Showing Respect

Another theme that emerged from the analysis of the interviews was found to be *showing respect*. Some of the participant instructors remarked the significance of *showing respect* (9 citations) as an indication of their awareness of diversity. For example, one stated that she "tri*ed* to respect their culture, and their differences. I also respect [to] their cultural identity" (Participant-1, semi-structured interviews). Similarly, participant 8 stated that he had not experienced any problems inside the classroom as he avoided acting disrespectfully or demonstrating any biased behaviours.

Extract 13:

"I don't know if they have any problems outside the classroom, but I don't have any prejudices and disrespectful behaviours in the classroom." (Participant-8, semi-structured interviews)

In respect to the dimension of *awareness* and acting responsively in their classroom practices, one of the participants stated that as an instructor, she "*tried* to be a model for them [students] to respect each other, and towards other cultures." (Participant-13, semi-structured interviews).

4.2.2.3. Need to be Fair

The findings also revealed that *showing respect* was found to be another theme regarding the dimension of *awareness* (4 citations). For example, participant 18 pointed out to the difficulties in acting fairly and keeping a balance in the beginning years of teaching diverse groups in the semi-structured interview. She stated that it was necessary to "keep your opinion for yourself", but she sometimes found it difficult to keep the balance (Participant-18, semi-structured interviews). She also added that although she still maintains some biases towards diverse groups, she feels compelled to act fairly and not to show her personal-beliefs during her classroom practices.

Extract 14:

"…and then, I always try to act fairly. Sometimes I may feel the other way, but as a teacher I shouldn't show this, so I always force myself to act fairly." (Participant-18, semi-structured interviews).

Additionally, some the participant instructors stated that in order to establish a good relationship with multicultural learners and help them get the best from the classroom instruction, an instructor needs to treat them fairly, adapt the content and curriculum to multicultural classrooms and create an inclusive atmosphere that welcomes all the students from diverse backgrounds. The participant instructors explicitly indicated the significance of treating students fairly and equally as part of responsive teaching.

Extract 15:

"…treating them equally, and integrating them into your classes, as a result, you can see that your students like you as a teacher." (Participant-1, semi-structured interviews).

Extract 16:

"Well, the last thing I would like to say might be like creating an inclusive classroom atmosphere for all students, or for all students from different backgrounds. So that they can get the best from your teaching. And as teachers we should prepare our lessons, our curriculum according to multicultural classrooms. So that we can provide them equal learning opportunities." (Participant-1, semi-structured interviews).

4.2.3. Instructors' Awareness of Local Students' Prejudices and Conflicts

Besides awareness on their own and students' beliefs, values, and cultures, the participant instructors were found to have shown awareness on *local students' conflicts and prejudices* towards culturally and linguistically diverse students. The analysis of the interviews revealed two subthemes: *prejudices* (10 citations), *and conflicts* (6 citations).

4.2.3.1. Instructors' Awareness of Local Students' Prejudices

The findings revealed that *instructors' awareness of local students' prejudices* towards linguistically and culturally diverse students was the most commonly cited subtheme (10 citations) as part of the dimension of *awareness*. For instance, participant 5 asserted that local students tend to hold biased attitudes towards culturally and linguistically diverse students in their classrooms because they cannot interact with each other efficiently.

Extract 17:

"Sometimes the Turkish students are prejudiced about other people. Especially, when they [local students] don't understand other people, or when they can't communicate, they have prejudices." (Participant-5, semi-structured interviews).

On the other hand, participant 7 stated that some of the local students came with an unfavourable mindset towards learning foreign languages and other cultures, yet it was the presence of those culturally and linguistically diverse students that helped them change their negative points of view. It was seen that the participant instructor appreciated diversity in her classroom as it helped to overcome biases of her local learners (*our students* as remarked by herself in the following).

Extract 18:

"I enjoy it a lot because some of our students have negative attitude towards learning English and culture but the other students from other cultures make my students' ideas change." (Participant-7, semi-structured interviews).

4.2.3.2. Instructors' Awareness of Local Students' Conflicts

A further subtheme that emerged from the analysis of interviews was found to be *conflicts between local and diverse students*. To illustrate, participant 15 claimed that

there were some significant issues stemming from cultural differences. He further stated that local students have demonstrated biased and unfriendly behaviours towards diverse students, especially Syrian ones, and they were not eager to communicate with them. As a result, those students were isolated from their classrooms and experienced the feeling of alienation.

Extract 19:

"…the most important problem is the cultural conflict between students. Sometimes, I experience this because in Turkey, especially in recent years, unfortunately Turkish students have had some prejudices against our Syrian students. So, they don't want to communicate with them and then, our Syrian students feel alienated. They really feel the isolation." (Participant-15, semi-structured interviews).

4.3. Dimension of Knowledge

The second research question of the study aimed to seek answers to how EFL instructors perceive their multicultural teaching competency in terms of the dimension of knowledge. Table 9 presents the findings.

Table 9.

Instructors' Responses to the Dimension of Knowledge

Statements	Strongly Disagree		Disagree		Partly Agree		Agree		Strongly Agree	
	f	*p*	*f*	*p*	*f*	*p*	*f*	*p*	*f*	*p*
Wrong information gained on culturally different groups is not free choice	0	.00	6	5.30	56	49.10	40	35.10	12	10.50
My ethnic origin does not affect learning-teaching processes	3	2.60	6	5.30	14	12.30	20	17.50	71	62.50
Different students do not have different styles of thinking, behaviour and speaking	55	48.20	46	40.40	5	4.40	2	1.80	6	5.30
Students who are culturally different do not learn in a different way	23	20.20	50	43.90	24	21.10	13	11.40	4	3.50
Different traits of students do not affect their learning-teaching process	26	22.80	60	52.60	14	12.30	12	10.50	2	1.80
Multicultural education does not necessitate changing the teaching goals	11	9.60	39	34.20	29	25.40	24	21.10	11	9.60
My cultural background does not affect my perception of events	6	5.30	11	9.60	20	17.50	28	24.60	49	43.00
Ethnic origins of students are not influential on their behaviours	20	17.50	55	48.20	29	25.40	8	7.00	2	1.80

f: frequency, *p:* percentage

The percentages of individual responses to the statements measuring the *dimension of knowledge* ranged from about 7% to 80% for "agree" to "strongly agree" compared to 5% to 89% for "disagree" to "strongly disagree". A majority of the participating instructors (80% agree and strongly agree) stated that their "ethnic origin does not affect learning-teaching processes", and that their "cultural background does not affect *their* perception of events" (78% agree and strongly agree). Likewise, most of the participating instructors (78% agree and strongly agree) claimed that they could "continuously review

their feelings and ideas about different students". On the other hand, an overwhelming majority of the participating instructors (89% disagree and strongly disagree) claimed disagreement with that diverse students "do not have different styles of thinking, behaviour and speaking". Similarly, another majority (77% disagree and strongly disagree) stated that different traits of students "affect their learning-teaching process".

In addition to the scale, the participating instructors were addressed open-ended questions concerning the dimension of *knowledge* in regards to multicultural teaching competency in the interviews. The analysis of the interviews disclosed the following themes:

Table 10.

Themes that Emerged Regarding the Dimension of Knowledge

	f
Essential role of experience	*21*
Lacking the necessary knowledge	*20*
Having the necessary knowledge	*16*
Need to avoid prejudices	*15*
Different traits of diverse students	6

The findings obtained from the analysis of the interviews were compatible with the findings obtained from the scale in terms of the *different traits of diverse students*. On the scale, most of the instructors (75%) stated that they "disagreed" with the statements "Different traits of students do not affect their learning-teaching process", and more than half (64%) claimed that they did not "agree" the statement "Students who are culturally different do not learn in a different way". Similarly, the *different traits of diverse students* was found to be a final theme that was referred (6 citations) in regards to the dimension of *knowledge*. Moreover, just as the majority of the participant instructors stated on the scale that their "ethnic origin does not affect learning-teaching processes" (80%), and that they could "continuously review *their* feelings and ideas about different students" (78%), they emphasized the *need to avoid prejudices* (15 citations) in the interviews. As displayed in Table 10, *essential role of experience* (21 citations), *lacking the necessary knowledge* (20 citations), and *having the necessary knowledge* were (16 citations) the other themes that emerged from the analysis of the interviews.

4.3.1. Essential Role of Experience

In the interviews, the participating instructors were asked whether they felt knowledgeable enough to teach linguistically and culturally diverse populations. A significant theme that emerged from the analysis of the interviews was found to be the *essential role of experience.* The findings revealed that the participant instructors most frequently cited (21 citations) that experience was essential in learning how to handle linguistic and cultural diversity in their classrooms. For instance, Participant 3 stated that her involvement in culturally and linguistically diverse classrooms enabled her to grasp something new every day.

Extract 20:

"Experiences, because every day, I learn something else. Maybe I can do this or I can do that. As I practise, I have more ideas. (Participant-3, semi-structured interviews).

The findings acquired from qualitative content analysis further revealed the difficulties some participating instructors experienced at the beginning of their careers and the significance of experience in gaining competency to manage multicultural classrooms. For example, one of the instructors explicitly identified the things she had learned by working in multicultural classrooms over the years. She placed significant emphasis on experience, through which she learned to manage diverse learners in her classrooms over the years. This extract also depicts the significance of having an inclusive horizon for the presence of cultural and linguistic diversity in classrooms, and the merits of being open to learning from diverse students.

Extract 21:

"Because when I first started teaching, I wasn't skilled enough but through the years I have learned many things from these students. How they react to the events, how to solve problems, what kind of difference they have. So, through my experiences I have learned how to treat my students. So, the most import thing is experience, I think." (Participant-20, semi-structured interviews).

4.3.2. Lacking the Necessary Knowledge

A second theme that emerged from the findings is *lacking the necessary knowledge*

to teach linguistically and culturally diverse classrooms. The findings obtained from the interviews justified the descriptive findings obtained from analysis of the scale. Only a few of the participant instructors claimed to have *insufficient knowledge*. For instance, participant 7 stated she did not find herself knowledgeable enough and that she needed help to raise their knowledge and improve her teaching in culturally and linguistically diverse classrooms.

Extract 22:

"I think I need some more support for this [multicultural knowledge], which will make teaching and learning much better. Because first, I need to learn and then I can teach." (Participant-7, semi-structured interviews).

Interestingly enough, one of the participating instructors claimed that teaching in such a diverse environment included lots of risky circumstances in its nature, yet he was trying to improve himself as an instructor. Despite admitting not having sufficient knowledge, he claimed that he did not have any problems stemming from diversity. It can be inferred that some of the participant instructors recognize that becoming knowledgeable is not essential to handle the classrooms with students from linguistically and culturally diverse backgrounds.

Extract 23:

"I can't say that I am knowledgeable, but I try to improve myself in terms of this topic. It's a matter of class management. As a teacher, if you want to manage your class in risky situations, you need to have some extra alternatives for this. So I can't say that I have a lot of problems managing such kind of problems in terms of diversity, but I try to improve myself in terms of that issue." (Participant-15, semi-structured interviews).

Likewise, participant 9 shared her experience with a diverse group a few years ago, in which she claimed to have acknowledged that she did not find herself competent enough to deal with such kind of multicultural groups. She described the group as being disobedient and resistant to the institutional regulations and that they drove her crazy as she did not know how to handle the situation. She further stated that those students from diverse backgrounds were unfamiliar with local culture and persistent in behaving the way they did in their home culture.

Extract 24:

"As I said before, three or four years ago they made me crazy because they didn't want to obey the rules. I understood that I wasn't good at dealing with them. I didn't know much about them." (Participant-9, semi-structured interviews).

4.3.3. Having the Necessary Knowledge

A further theme that was obtained from the qualitative analysis of data is *having the necessary knowledge*. With respect to having the required knowledge, a majority of the participant instructors claimed (16 citations) that they felt knowledgeable enough to handle teaching in culturally and linguistically diverse classrooms. They claimed to have been able to manage their students well and they not to have had any serious problems in their classes so far. The findings acquired from interviews supported the findings obtained from the scale, on which the participant instructors were found to have an above-average score for the dimension of *knowledge*. Similarly, more than half of the participant instructors claimed to feel knowledgeable enough to teach linguistically and culturally diverse classrooms. For example;

Extract 25:

"Well, I think I am knowledgeable. There is no limit in learning, you can always learn more. But so far, I think I have managed my students in my classes well. I haven't had any problems. (Participant-4, semi-structured interviews).

Extract 26:

"To be honest, I don't have any official training or education on multicultural classrooms, but in my experiences and with the experiences of my friends I haven't had any problems so far." (Participant-6, semi-structured interviews).

Likewise, Participant 8 claimed that despite not having any specific training, she faced no problems in her classes and the students felt relaxed as a result of being open-minded and showing patience towards them. She also added that the students in her class did not feel isolated because she considered them as a whole without any discrimination.

Extract 27:

"I guess so [feel knowledgeable]. I haven't had any special training so far, but I

think I am knowledgeable enough because of maybe my senses, because of my being tolerant and patient, because of seeing them as a whole, not discriminating. That's why I think I don't have any problems and the students feel comfortable in my classes. They don't feel isolated." (Participant-8, semi-structured interviews).

4.3.4. Need to Avoid Prejudices

In the interviews, another theme that the participant instructors frequently cited was found to be the *need to avoid prejudices* (15 citations). The interviews revealed that six of the participant instructors identified their own biases and presumptions when they went into classrooms with a diverse population and that these prejudices were reflected in their instruction in some way. For instance, participant 8 remarked that:

Extract 28:

"…it is good to get rid of some prejudices. We, as instructors, have some prejudices, or students have." (Participant-8, video-stimulated recall interviews).

Similarly, participant 4 underlined the importance of acknowledging their own presumptions and the way it might influence learners from various backgrounds:

Extract 29:

"When you try to teach something, the thing you're trying to teach them is reflected maybe from your point of view, but students from different cultures or from different backgrounds could perceive them down in different ways." (Participant-4, video-stimulated recall interviews).

Another participant instructor admitted having some failures in her approach towards international students in the past, but she claimed that after considering the issue and reflecting on her practices, she recognized her biased behaviour and changed her attitude.

Extract 30:

"I've had some failures, but then I thought on the subject and I changed my approach. And then I realized that I had some failures in reaching [my] international students." (Participant-16, semi-structured interviews)

4.3.5. Different Traits of Diverse Students

A final theme that the participating instructors stated views on was found to be *different traits of linguistically and culturally diverse students* (6 citations). Some of the participating instructors expressed views pertaining to their views towards linguistically and culturally diverse students. For example, participant 6 claimed that the international students at school were more competent in speaking compared to local students. Participant 14 emphasized that most of the international students at school were refugees or their children and they came from disadvantaged backgrounds. However, she claimed that this challenge made these diverse groups more motivated and willing to learn, and that they showed their need to learn more than local students. She also asserted that because these students came from more challenging backgrounds, they did not have any other options than an academic career and that they had big dreams, which she identified as the only hope of survival for them.

Extract 31:

"Well, at the beginning they feel the need to learn more than our [local] students. They feel more enthusiastic, and most of the time they learn more quickly than my other students. It seems that they are more motivated than Turkish native students. And they are more willing. I don't know it's just my personal opinion. Maybe they just come from very difficult backgrounds, most of them are just refugees and their children, so they come here after the war. Maybe they know what the difficulties are, or maybe education is their only option. Most of them feel like this, so they learn more in that case. Most of them have big dreams, like becoming engineers, doctors, and so on." (Participant-14, semi-structured interviews).

The video-stimulated interviews displayed that one of the participating instructors identified linguistically and culturally diverse groups as those coming from disadvantaged backgrounds, yet more motivated and enthusiastic to establish a living. She also stated that she was surprised when she learned that they had no other choice than study while she was chatting to them during breaks.

Extract 32:

"I think their purposes, they want to start a new life, they want to finish school as soon as possible. Because of their choices or life conditions I think, they have such

motivation. And they have no other choice." (Participant-7, video-stimulated interviews).

4.4. Dimension of Attitude

The third research question of the study aimed to find out EFL instructors' attitudes toward having diverse students in their classrooms. In order to identify the scores for the dimension of *attitude*, a statistical analysis was conducted on SPSS-12 and the findings pertaining to the attitudes of the participating EFL instructors are presented:

Table 11.

Instructors' Responses Regarding the Dimension of Attitude

Statements	Strongly Disagree		Disagree		Partly Agree		Agree		Strongly Agree	
	f	*p*	*f*	*p*	*f*	*p*	*f*	*p*	*f*	*p*
It is necessary to change teaching materials to ensure equality in education	2	1.80	9	7.90	20	17.50	47	41.20	36	31.60
Culture and language play a role in interpersonal communication	2	1.80	5	4.40	11	9.60	56	49.10	40	35.10
I respect the religions/spiritual beliefs of my students	0	.00	1	.90	0	.00	19	16.70	94	82.50
In my class, I present behaviours that consider differences and support diversity	7	6.10	2	1.80	9	7.90	41	36.00	55	48.20
Discussing ethnic traditions and beliefs causes divisions and debates between students from different cultures	8	7.00	30	26.30	34	29.80	38	24.60	14	12.30
Equal learning opportunities should be offered to different students at schools	0	.00	5	4.40	5	4.40	25	21.90	79	69.30
Different ethnic and cultural groups should be represented in curricula and textbooks	0	.00	14	12.30	29	25.40	35	30.70	36	31.60
I do not support teaching their mother tongue to students	15	13.20	27	23.70	42	36.80	18	15.80	12	10.50
The aim of education is to transfer social culture without change	5	4.40	37	32.50	37	32.50	28	24.60	7	6.10

f: frequency, *p*: percentage

The percentages of individual responses to the statements measuring the dimension of *attitude* ranged from about 26% to 99% for "agree" to "strongly agree" compared to 1% to 37% for "disagree" to "strongly disagree". In general, an overwhelming majority of the participant instructors either agreed or strongly agreed to the statements concerning the dimension of *attitude*. For instance, almost all of the participant instructors (99% agree and strongly agree) claimed that they "respect*ed* the religions/spiritual beliefs of *their* students", and that "equal learning opportunities should be offered to different students at schools" (91% agree and strongly agree). Similarly, most of the participant instructors (84% agree and strongly agree) stated that they presented "behaviours that consider differences and support diversity" in their classes, and that "culture and language play*ed* a role in interpersonal communication". Meanwhile, the participating instructors were observed to have been indecisive about discussing ethnic traditions and beliefs as this "causes divisions and debates between students from different cultures" (30% partly agree); supporting teaching mother tongue (37% partly agree), and considering "the aim of education *as* to transfer social culture without change" (33% partly agree).

Additionally, in the interviews, the participating EFL instructors were posed open-ended questions concerning their attitudes toward diversity in their classrooms. The findings acquired from these questions seem to support those acquired from the scale, as presented in Table 12.

Table 12.

Themes and Subthemes that Emerged Regarding the Dimension of Attitudes

	f
Instructors' positive attitudes	**133**
Richness	33
Opportunity for students to communicate in the target language	23
Opportunity for instructors to learn about differences	21
A positive role model	20
Encouraging mutual respect in the classroom	14
Instructors' feeling of responsibility	10
Opportunity for professional development	9
Adaptation of students to school and/or classroom	9
Being tolerant	8
Equal treatment	6
Instructors' negative attitudes	4

The participant instructors considered themselves to have highly positive attitudes on the scale. In parallel to this, they also claimed, in the interviews, to have positive attitudes toward linguistically and culturally diverse students in their language classrooms (133 citations). They most frequently regarded diversity as *richness* (33 citations) and an *opportunity for students to communicate in the target language* (23 citations). On the scale, almost all of the participating instructors (99% agree and strongly agree) claimed to "respect the religions/spiritual beliefs of *their* students". Similarly, considering the linguistic and cultural diversity in their classrooms, the participant instructors stated in the interviews that they *encouraged mutual respect in the classroom*. Another majority of the participants (91% agree and strongly agree) claimed on the scale that "equal learning opportunities should be offered to different students at schools" just as they favoured *equal treatment* (6 citations) in the interviews. Moreover, a vast majority of the participating instructors (84% agree and strongly agree) stated on the scale that "culture and language play a role in interpersonal communication". Likewise, the participating instructors in the interviews claimed to consider diversity as an *opportunity for students to communicate in the target language* (23 citations). A final consistency between the findings obtained from the scale and the qualitative content analysis of the interviews was found to be on the participating instructors' "behaviours that consider differences and support diversity" (84% agree and strongly agree). In the interviews, the participating instructors asserted to have recognized the *adaptation of students to school and/or classroom* (9 citations). Some other subthemes that emerged from the interviews regarding *instructors' positive attitudes* were *opportunity for instructors to learn about differences* (21 citations), *a positive role model* (20 citations), *opportunity for professional development* (9 citations), and *being tolerant* (8 citations). Of the 20 participant instructors only 3 cited *instructors' negative attitudes* (4 times) in the interviews.

4.4.1. Instructors' Positive Attitudes

In the interviews, all of the participant instructors remarked the *positive attitudes* they displayed in their classrooms at least once. For instance, while participant 3 stressed the benefits of having international students in her classes, participants 12 and 13 explicitly declared their satisfaction in having students from different backgrounds. Furthermore, participant 3 claimed to have planned and changed his teaching in due to

the diversity in the classroom.

Extract 33:

"Diversity is good actually. There are lots of advantages of having foreign students in our classrooms." (Participant-3, semi-structured interviews).

Extract 34:

"If I just define it, maybe the word "positive" can be the key word for me. I have positive feelings about diversity. I had some classes and, in those classes, there were different students from different countries, so it was kind of like an international one, so I really like that." (Participant-12, semi-structured interviews).

Extract 35:

"Actually, I like teaching students from different backgrounds. Diversity is like a positive way for me. I think there should be diversity in the classroom so that I can plan myself according to that, plan my lesson, teaching and methodology[ies] according to that." (Participant-13, semi-structured interviews).

4.4.1.1. Richness

In the interviews, the participant instructors were posed open-ended questions regarding their feelings about having linguistically and culturally diverse students in their language classrooms. They were further asked to define diversity as a follow-up question. One of the most significant subthemes that emerged from the interviews was found to be *richness*. A majority of the participants described cultural and linguistic diversity in their classrooms as richness in some way (25 citations). For example, participant 3 identified diversity as enriching education by exchanging cultural knowledge.

Extract 36:

"It [diversity] makes education rich, richer actually. Er.. They give and take lots of information about culture and about themselves, so it is a good thing in class." (Participant-3, semi-structured interviews).

According to the findings acquired from the interviews, some participating instructors were found to perceive diversity as *richness* that contributes to the learning

and teaching despite certain drawbacks it brought into the classroom. For instance, participant 7 claimed to have regarded it as an essential aspect of in-class instruction. Similarly, participant 17 considered diversity as the spice or key to her classroom practices and pointed out the positive effects of it. She further explained her positive and welcoming attitude towards those students who come from different cultural and educational backgrounds.

Extract 37:

"I think it's richness. I believe that diversity brings richness and I think it makes learning and teaching colourful and easier. Sometimes you may have difficulties because of diversity but because of different points of views and different cultures, it brings richness and variety like the spice of life. I believe we need variety in class and different students bring different ideas and enjoy it." (Participant-7, semi-structured interviews).

Extract 38:

"I like diversity in my classroom and I remember a methodological quote "variety is the spice or variety is the key in our classes". I always believe in the positive effects of diversity. I always tried to be welcoming for the students who don't share the same culture and educational backgrounds." (Participant-17, semi-structured interviews).

4.4.1.2. Opportunity for Students to Communicate in the Target Language

The second most commonly cited subtheme regarding *instructors' positive attitudes* was that the participant instructors claimed to perceive diversity as an *opportunity for students to communicate in the target language.* Majority of the participants pointed out that diversity was a good opportunity for students to have to communicate in the target language (23 citations). In the interviews, some participant instructors claimed that linguistically and culturally diverse students encouraged local learners to use target language in their classroom interactions. For example;

Extract 39:

"And also, if they don't speak any Turkish, it is a motivation for students to speak English because even if they are in A1 classes, even if they don't speak a lot, they tried to communicate with them, even with some words not full sentences. It forces them to speak

English, and it is nice I think, it's a good thing to have diversity in the classroom." (Participant-15, semi-structured interviews).

The findings acquired from the interviews revealed that some participant instructors considered diversity as a compelling benefit for students because it urged them to interact in the target language and helped to improve communicational skills. For instance, participant 11 asserted that the presence of these linguistically diverse students created intrinsic motivation for other learners in a spontaneous atmosphere.

Extract 40:

In terms of students, it is a big advantage I think, because the students, when they try to communicate with these [international] students, they have to talk in English. So, it is a big improvement in terms of their speaking skills. (Participant-11, semi-structured interviews).

Similarly, participant 18 remarked that cultural and linguistic diversity could be a significant opportunity for her students provided it was utilized in a beneficial way. She stressed that diversity created a natural context for students to get in touch and exchange cultures. She further underlined that students not only learned about their field studies at tertiary level, but that they also needed to learn how to act in different context, and thus, she regarded it as a benefit for students and teachers.

Extract 41:

"I feel diversity can be a chance if it is handled in a positive way in classrooms. I mean, it creates a context for students to speak with different people and learn about different cultures. Because university doesn't mean learning only some knowledge about your department, it also teaches you how to behave in different circumstances. So, it's a good chance for both the students, the learners, and the teachers. (Participant-18, semi-structured interviews).

4.4.1.3. Opportunity for Instructors to Learn about Differences

The findings from the interviews disclosed that some of the participant instructors claimed to be open-minded about learning about other cultures, traditions, lifestyles, and so on from international students in their classrooms, and claimed to perceive diversity as an *opportunity to learn about differences*. Some of the participant instructors further

regarded this as an opportunity for local students to widen their horizon. For example, participant 5 stated that he enjoyed having diverse students in his classroom because he is curious about learning about life in different cultures and it gives a lot of opportunities for this. The findings indicated that some participants considered the experience of teaching culturally diverse groups from two perspectives: *students' side* and *instructors' side*. For example, participant 15 stated that:

Extract 42:

"We can divide this kind of experience into two groups: a positive part for the teacher and a positive part for the class. For the teacher, you can learn different traditions from the students, and you try to define a new kind of teaching technique according to their skills. Also, when we focus on the student section, I can say that students learn a lot of things from other students, I mean foreign students, students who come from other countries. So, it widens their horizons, and it works. I think diversity is okay in terms of these." (Participant-18, semi-structured interviews).

In the interviews, one of the participant instructors put the burden on local learners and instructors to behave responsively and to be open to learning about different cultures represented in their classroom environment. She stated that this would prevent prejudices and unfavourable attitudes of local students towards other cultures and help them become willing to learn about others.

Extract 43:

"I think it's so good, it's so good because they, they teach you something. So, they (local students) should be open and so there should be no prejudice and they should know that the teacher is open and the teacher can learn something from them, too and they have no bad feelings about their culture. (Participant-18, semi-structured interviews).

4.4.1.4. A Positive Role-model

The findings acquired from the interviews revealed that some of the participant instructors emphasized the importance of being a *positive role model* as an instructor in their classroom practices in terms of influencing students' attitudes and behaviour towards diversity (20 citations). For instance, participant 16 cited the significance of an instructor's attitude on students as:

Extract 44:

"When you are studying with a diverse group, as a teacher, you have to be a model, I think. Because your approach to the things or the events shapes your students' approach, you are a role model for them." (Participant-16, semi-structured interviews).

In the interviews, participant 17 stated that the learners in his classrooms had a positive attitude towards cultural diversity thanks to his point of view and perspective. Another participating instructor identified the essential position of an instructor as a positive role model in terms of balance and classroom dynamics.

Extract 45:

"Most of the time, because of my attitude I believe, students are also positive about this cultural diversity in my classroom." (Participant-17, semi-structured interviews).

Extract 46:

"I think the teacher's presence and attitude is vital, so you are kind of the balance; you kind of decide the dynamic of the classroom." (Participant-19, semi-structured interviews).

4.4.1.5. Encouraging Mutual Respect in the Classroom

Another subtheme that emerged from the analysis of the interviews is *encouraging mutual respect in the classroom* for diverse populations. A few of the participants remarked on *encouraging mutual respect in the classroom* (14 citations) and claimed that they respected the cultural identity of the students. Some further stated that they firmly warned students about respecting each other in advance and clearly explained the importance of this during the course. For instance, participant 12 asserted that because the students were at tertiary level, they could express themselves and their opinions freely as long as they respect each other and avoid disrespectful attitudes.

Extract 47:

"The students also know that they can say everything freely so long as they are not disrespectful to someone. Because this is my key thing. Even in the first lesson, I write with big letters on the board "RESPECT" and I say this is my first thing in the classroom. You should respect and I say this is university, and this is the best place you can discuss

your ideas, but first respect. If you're disrespectful, you're finished in my class." (Participant-12, semi-structured interviews).

Another participant stated that he clarified the importance of respecting differences and other cultures in advance. He said that he advised his students to be generous in their behaviours towards each other and that he established a rapport with his students to behave respectfully and avoid getting involved in disputes over such issues.

Extract 48:

"Actually, I first try to make them respect each other, respect differences and students from different backgrounds. I tell this beforehand when I enter the classroom. I think about all these things beforehand, and tell students to be generous to their friends, and then they have to respect each other. I tell them not to debate on such things in the classroom. I create a rapport between me and the students, and even between the students. So that all attend the classroom respectfully, and respect each other." (Participant-13, semi-structured interviews).

4.4.1.6. Instructors' Feeling of Responsibility

The interviews also revealed that some of the participant instructors think that showing positive attitudes towards diversity was an issue of *feeling responsible*. Participant 2, for instance, stated that he could not ignore the isolation of these students as it was their responsibility to teach them. He further asserted that he paid special attention.

Extract 49:

"I can't ignore them; they are in my class and I have to teach them. I try my best because when I look at their eyes, they need us. They are here, and we are there to teach, and we have to do something." (Participant-2, semi-structured interviews).

In the interviews, participant 15 pointed out that instructors needed to take responsibility and generate an inclusive climate in the classroom in cases where isolation or alienation occurred. Similarly, participant 18 identified her duty as an instructor was to motivate and ensure classroom participation for linguistically and culturally diverse students. She further asserted that she pushes herself to encourage these students even more than local students.

Extract 50:

"This is a problem but as a teacher your responsibility is here: You need to solve the alienation problem by creating a good atmosphere in the class." (Participant-15, semi-structured interviews).

Extract 51:

"I always remind myself that I should motivate these students maybe more than Turkish students. I always have a closer attitude towards those students." (Participant-18, semi-structured interviews).

4.4.1.7. Opportunity for Professional Development

The findings acquired from the interviews revealed that some of the participant instructors regarded diversity as an *opportunity for professional development*. For instance, participant 2 emphasized that diversity and having students from different cultures had given her the chance of "expanding her horizon and improving herself as an instructor". Furthermore, participant 15 stated that he used to regard teaching diverse groups as a barrier when he was a novice teacher, yet the experience of teaching different groups has made him a good instructor. He also added that teaching in such classrooms has turned into an opportunity for him although he used to identify it as a difficulty.

Extract 52:

"When I was a young teacher, it was the kind of barrier for me, but nowadays, this kind of diversity makes me a good teacher. It was a challenge but it has been a gain for me." (Participant-15, semi-structured interviews).

Likewise, participant 16 pointed out the developmental process she went through and the positive effect of diversity on her classroom management skills. She said that she was *inexperienced at the beginning, but now she feels more self-confident*. Participant 18 identified diversity as an opportunity for professional development as it urges to acquire the ways to manage learners from various backgrounds.

Extract 53:

"In fact, it's a chance for a teacher because diversity means differences, so you learn how to deal with students from different backgrounds." (Participant-16, semi-structured

interviews).

4.4.1.8. Adaptation of Students to School and/or Classroom

When explaining their attitudes towards linguistically and culturally diverse students in the interviews, the participating instructors claimed that they helped *students adapt to the school and/or classroom*. Some of the participating instructors stated that students from diverse backgrounds were more prone to experience difficulties in adapting to the school system and classroom environment. For instance, participant 1 stated that she paid special attention to promoting the adaptation of diverse students into her classroom because she did not want to see them sit in isolation.

Extract 54:

"I don't want to put them into a different position or I don't want to isolate them in the corner of my classroom. I would like to integrate them in the classroom." (Participant-1, semi-structured interviews).

In the interviews, participants 6 and 11 further cited that they focused on the adaptation of minority groups both inside and outside the classroom. For instance, participant 6 asserted that she encouraged local students to invite international students for a coffee and to spend some time together during the breaks at school. She claimed that it would help linguistically and culturally diverse students to integrate into the local culture and school environment. Similarly, participant 11 stated that she was putting a lot of effort into the integration of international students inside and outside the classroom because she did not want them to have problems with anyone else in the classroom as she believed this would affect their academic performance straightforwardly.

Extract 55:

"I also urge our Turkish students to offer these students a cup of tea or coffee, and spend time doing the brakes to help them adapt to our culture and the atmosphere at school." (Participant-6, semi-structured interviews).

Extract 56:

"Here as well, I am also doing my best to help students at that and get used to the system both inside and outside the classroom. I'm also trying to integrate them into the

class because otherwise, if the students feel unhappy or have any problems with any of the students in the class, it directly affects their performance." (Participant-11, semi-structured interviews).

4.4.1.9. Being Tolerant

The findings obtained from the interviews revealed that some of the participant instructors cited the significance of *being tolerant* (8 citations). Some of the participant instructors defined *being tolerant* from two perspectives: *being tolerant as a teacher*, and *encouraging other students to be tolerant*. For instance, participant 1 stated that *being tolerant* was the key to manage diverse classrooms skilfully. Similarly, Participant 16 asserted that she sensibly avoided overreacting when students from diverse backgrounds said something different, or something that might sound strange or odd to the other students in the classroom. She claimed that accepting such things as normal and showing tolerance would help culturally and linguistically diverse students to adapt easily to the classroom and school.

Participant 8 claimed that students could widen their horizon and feel more tolerant when they built a relationship and became familiar with those from different backgrounds. Likewise, participant 5 reported that he encouraged local students to become friends and to show tolerance towards those from diverse backgrounds as they are in a foreign country and might have problems. He stated that he managed to reduce the likely problems to occur in his classroom by encouraging students to be more tolerant and respectful, and showing sympathy.

Extract 57:

"I tell them to be friends with them because they are in another country and they have got a lot of difficulties. So I try to tell them that they have to be more tolerant and show some empathy. I tell them to be more tolerant to them, to be friends, and be respectful for them. So I try to minimize the problems. They will be together for some years, so they have to be tolerant to each other." (Participant-5, semi-structured interviews).

4.4.1.10. Equal Treatment

A further subtheme that emerged from the analysis of the interviews was found to

be *equal treatment* in regards to *instructors' positive attitudes*. The analysis of interviews revealed that a few of the participant instructors claimed to have prioritized *equal treatment* in their classroom practices (cited 6 times). For instance, participant 8 clearly stated that she did not experience any problems in her teaching as she treated each student equally. Furthermore, participant 13 asserted that it was essential to prepare the curriculum and lesson plans in accordance with multicultural classrooms in order to ensure equal learning opportunities for all. He also stated that students could best benefit from lectures if instructors created an inclusive classroom atmosphere that recognizes the students from diverse backgrounds.

Extract 58:

"Also, I behave every student the same and equally. That's why I think there isn't any negativity in the classroom." (Participant-8, semi-structured interviews).

Extract 59:

"Well, the last thing I would like to say might be like creating an inclusive classroom atmosphere for all students, or for all students from different backgrounds. So that they can get the best from your teaching. And do we as teachers should prepare our lessons, our curriculum according to multicultural classrooms. So that we can provide them equal learning opportunities." (Participant-13, semi-structured interviews).

In the interviews, participant 18 emphasized the role of equal treatment on the efficiency of instructors' and learners' classroom practices as:

Extract 60:

"…acting fairly, giving extra attention, and making them participate the lesson in my opinion solve the problems often negative experiences of challenges of diversity in your classroom. All problems will be resolved if you behave them equally." (Participant-5, semi-structured interviews).

4.4.2. Instructors' Negative Attitudes

In the interviews, some of the participating instructors claimed to have some *negative attitudes* (4 citations) towards linguistic and cultural diversity in their classrooms. For instance, one of the participating instructors found herself to be lucky

when she had only two students from diverse backgrounds in her classroom (Participant 9, semi-structured interviews). In the interviews, another participant identified diversity as a complex situation:

Extract 61:

"Sometimes I'm a bit pessimistic, and sometimes I'm a bit optimistic about that. Sometimes I am worried about them." (Participant-10, semi-structured interviews).

In the interviews, one of the participating instructors complained about the load and difficulty of the work that diversity brought into classroom, especially with those who had a very low level of linguistic competency in the target and local language, but the participant instructors seemed to be uncaring for these students:

Extract 62:

"I thought there was a lot of work to deal with, I don't know I didn't try it. It was also because she needed a lot of care starting from the very beginning even the alphabet [linguistic problems], a lot of things. I was just like, okay good luck (laughing)." (Participant-12, semi-structured interviews).

Extract 63:

"It's really difficult to deal with those students outside, so I feel like that it's not my responsibility, after some point. I feel a little bit different I don't know." (Participant-12, semi-structured interviews).

4.5. Dimension of Skill

The fourth research question of the study aimed to explore how EFL instructors perceive their multicultural teaching competency in terms of the dimension of *skill*. A descriptive analysis was conducted on their responses to the 19 statements regarding the dimension of *skill* on the scale, and the findings are presented in Table 13.

Table 13.

Instructors' Responses to the Dimension of Skill

Statements	Strongly Disagree		Disagree		Partly Agree		Agree		Strongly Agree	
	f	*P*	*f*	*p*	*f*	*p*	*f*	*P*	*f*	*p*
I can help fix the issues in my class stemming from the differences of students	0	.00	1	.90	9	7.90	67	58.80	37	32.50
I can help my students analyse their prejudices and biases	1	.90	1	.90	17	14.90	73	64.00	22	19.30
I can analyse the prejudiced and biased in teaching materials	0	.00	5	4.40	17	14.90	77	67.50	15	13.20
I can develop appropriate teaching materials for a multicultural classroom	0	.00	5	4.40	25	21.90	64	56.10	20	17.50
I can continuously consult with my colleagues on the suitable teaching methods for different students	0	.00	8	7.00	17	14.90	54	47.40	54	47.40
I can organize activities that can improve the self-confidence of different students	0	.00	1	.90	20	17.50	69	60.50	24	21.10
I treat different students equally	2	1.80	4	3.50	11	9.60	36	31.60	61	53.50
I can organize activities in my class that teach respect for different groups	0	.00	3	2.60	24	21.10	58	50.90	29	25.40
When offering a new piece of information, I can take into account the cultural background of students from different groups	0	.00	4	3.50	11	9.60	67	58.80	32	28.10
I can help my students understand the perspectives of ethnic and cultural groups who are different	0	.00	1	.90	16	14.00	66	57.90	31	27.20
I can help my students view historical and contemporary events from different perspectives	1	.90	3	2.60	15	13.20	57	50.00	38	33.30
In group activities, I can form groups bringing together students from different groups	0	.00	0	.00	18	15.80	59	51.80	37	32.50

In order to meet the needs of different students, I can adapt various teaching methods	0	.00	6	5.30	12	12.50	67	58.80	29	25.40
I can develop teaching methods that will eliminate negative discourses on different groups	0	.00	2	1.80	22	19.30	65	57.00	25	21.90
I do not reflect my racial beliefs, attitudes and emotions on people from different ethnic groups	1	.90	4	3.50	8	7.00	36	31.60	65	57.00
I can plan teaching based on the personal and cultural knowledge of different students	2	1.80	11	9.60	27	23.70	58	50.90	16	14.00
I can interfere with school practices that might harm different students	8	7.00	11	9.60	36	31.60	44	38.60	15	13.20
I can develop close relations with the families of my different students	15	13.20	27	23.70	45	39.50	21	18.40	6	5.30
I can understand what my different students want to say from their attitudes	1	.90	7	6.10	18	15.80	73	64.00	15	13.20

f: frequency, p: percentage

The percentages of individual responses to the statements concerning the *dimension of skill* ranged from about 24% to 95% for “agree” to “strongly agree” compared to 0% to 37% for “disagree” to “strongly disagree”. The findings indicated that the participating EFL instructors considered themselves to have necessary skills to teach linguistically and culturally diverse classrooms and they generally agreed to the statements concerning the dimension of *skill*. For instance, an overwhelming majority of the participating instructors (95% agree and strongly agree) claimed that they “can continuously consult with *their* colleagues on the suitable teaching methods for different students”, and that they “can help fix the issues in *their* class*es* stemming from the differences of students” (91% agree and strongly agree). Similarly, it can be seen that most of the participant instructors (89% agree and strongly agree) stated that they avoid “reflect*ing their* racial beliefs, attitudes and emotions on people from different ethnic groups” and that they consider “the cultural background of students from different groups” when they offer a new piece of information (87% agree and strongly agree). The only statement that the participant instructors were seen to be indecisive (40% partly agree) was “I can develop close relations with the

families of my different students", which in nature is not a common practice in higher education.

In addition to the findings acquired from the scale, the qualitative analysis of the interviews revealed the following themes and subthemes regarding the dimension of *skill*:

Table 14.

Themes that Emerged Regarding the Dimension of Skill

	f
Bringing students from diverse groups together	22
Having necessary skills	16
Integrating the elements of diverse students' cultures into teaching	14
Treating and assessing different students equally	13
Providing a safe and caring environment	13
Cooperating with colleagues	12
Increasing diverse students' self-confidence	10
Helping linguistically and culturally diverse students adapt to school and/or classroom	9

When posed open-ended questions concerning the dimension of *skill* in regards to multicultural teaching competency, the participant EFL instructors most frequently cited *bringing students from diverse backgrounds together* (22 citations) as part of their classroom practices. Similarly, a majority of the participating instructors (74% agree and strongly agree) claimed that they "can form groups bringing together students from different groups" in group activities. A second theme that emerged from the findings was *having necessary skills* (16 citations). This was found to be consistent with the findings acquired from the scale since an overwhelming majority of participating instructors (91% agree and strongly agree) claimed that they were able to "help fix the issues in *their* class*es* stemming from the differences of students". Moreover, the participant instructors remarked *treating and assessing different students equally* (13 citations), *providing a safe and caring environment* (13 citations), *and cooperation with colleagues* (12 citations) in the interviews. Likewise, most of the participating instructors claimed to have the sufficient skills to "treat different students equally" (85% agree and strongly agree), and "consult with *their* colleagues on the suitable teaching methods for different students"

(95% agree and strongly agree) on the scale. The findings acquired from the scale are remarkably consistent with those acquired from the interviews. It can be said that quantitative and qualitative data derived from the scale and the interviews supported the findings derived from each.

4.5.1. Bringing Students from Diverse Groups Together

The interviews disclosed that participant instructors most commonly cited *bringing students from diverse groups together* in their classroom practices. Some participants, for instance, claimed to have brought students from different linguistic and cultural backgrounds together so that they might benefit from each other:

Extract 64:

"And most of the time I tell the other [local] students to benefit from these international students and I tell them to sit next to them, and during the breaks to spend time together. They learn about their culture and then learn something from them." (Participant-7, semi-structured interviews)

Extract 65:

"I grouped them [local students] with international students, and believe me they learned a lot from each other. A few times I have changed their places, then they sit together. In pair- or group-work activities, I try to match them with the other [diverse] students in order to encourage them to communicate with each other." (Participant-9, semi-structured interviews)

In the interviews, some participant instructors also stated that they intentionally paired or grouped local and international students with each other, so that they could support and explain to each other if they had any challenges:

Extract 66:

"I also try to make them [diverse students] pairs with Turkish [local] students, in pair- and group-work activities. I encourage them to get help from their friends when they have problems in understanding." (Participant-18, semi-structured interviews).

Extract 67:

"I just mix them all. I never keep like the Syrians [diverse students] at one side and the Turkish [local students] at the other side. I always mix them up." (Participant-19, semi-structured interviews)

4.5.2. Having Necessary Skills

The findings acquired from the interviews supported the findings obtained from the scale as they had the highest score for the dimension of *skill* out of the four dimensions on the scale. In the interviews, a majority of the participating instructors claimed to *have necessary skills* to teach linguistically and culturally diverse students (16 citations). For example, one of the instructors stated that she felt "confident and did not find it challenging to manage culturally diverse classrooms" (participant-8, semi-structured interviews). Furthermore, another participant asserted that she is she was skilled enough to deal with possible challenges of diversity in her classes and she had not experienced any serious difficulties.

Extract 68:

"I think I am skilful about solving problems or deal with the negative sides of that issue. I'm skilful about that. We didn't experience anything negative. If there is a problem with students, I can solve that easily. So yeah, I am not perfect but I am skilful, I think." (Participant-20, semi-structured interviews)

In the interviews, another participant identified multicultural skills as coping with challenges and stated that:

Extract 69:

"Well, I am [skilled]. Because in [from] my experience, I've never had any big problems. And when I had some problems, I overcame these problems with not a lot of difficulties. I mean, I could overcome these problems." (Participant-5, semi-structured interviews).

4.5.3. Integrating the Elements of Diverse Students' Cultures into Teaching

Another theme that emerged from the analysis of the interviews was found to be *integrating the elements of diverse students' cultures into teaching*. In the interviews,

some of the participant instructors claimed to have carried out teaching in accordance with personal and cultural knowledge of diverse learners (14 citations). For instance, some participants emphasized the solid connection between language and culture and cited that:

Extract 70:

I like them giving examples from their cultural backgrounds. Especially in reading, while teaching there is always something about culture, language is strictly linked to culture as you know. (Participant-13, semi-structured interviews)

Extract 71:

Our topics are about daily life, are from real life. Whatever the topic is, there is a connection to the culture, so I can just ask them to give examples from their own culture. (Participant-17, video-stimulated recall interviews)

In the interviews, another participant instructor pointed out the significance of *integrating the elements of diverse students' cultures into teaching* as a means of raising motivation.

Extract 72:

I allow them to talk about their own culture, traditions and customs, special days for example. I allow them to talk about them more. Diversity helps my classroom I think because students are really interested about different things or surprising things about other cultures. (Participant-19, semi-structured interviews)

4.5.4. Treating and Assessing Different Students Equally

A further theme that emerged from the interviews is *treating and assessing different students equally*. A few of the participant instructors claimed to have competency in terms of equal treatment and assessment towards students from diverse backgrounds (13 citations). For instance, one of the participants emphasized the significance of *equal treatment and assessment* despite some prejudices towards linguistically and culturally diverse students in their classes.

Extract 73:

"I think especially with the rubrics and all the criteria we have to evaluate, even the teacher's evaluation mark is based on a criterion. Because some people can be biased, but it's not so common, I think. It's almost impossible to give personal marks to students because of the criteria we have." (Participant-14, semi-structured interviews)

Another participant instructor pointed out the relationship between *treating and assessing students equally* and classroom participation. She further related instructors' classroom management skills with equal treatment and assessment as:

Extract 74:

"…acting fairly, giving extra attention, and making them participate the lesson in my opinion solve the problems, often negative experiences of challenges of diversity in your classroom. All problems will be resolved if you behave them equally." (Participant-18, semi-structured interviews)

In the interviews, participant 16 claimed to have integrated linguistically and culturally diverse students into her classes easily because these students were aware of the fact that she was providing them with equal opportunities and avoiding treating them differently. She also added that she managed to create unity in the classroom atmosphere at the beginning of the term and that those coming from diverse backgrounds were aware of that.

Extract 75:

"First of all, the international student can adapt to the class more easily. They can feel that as a teacher I put them to the same platform as the others in the classroom. They wouldn't feel themselves like an ugly duck in the classroom. Because as far as I have observed, most of the students, the international students, feel like that at the beginning of the term." (Participant-16, semi-structured interviews)

4.5.5. Providing A Safe and Caring Environment

The findings acquired from the qualitative analysis of the interviews indicated that participant instructors claimed to have *provided a safe and caring environment for linguistically and culturally diverse students*. The findings acquired from interviews revealed that a majority of the participant instructors claimed to have cared for the

creation of a safe and inclusive classroom environment which was believed to have promoted the active participation of all students regardless of their linguistic and cultural diversity (13 citations). A close inquiry of the interviews indicated that the participant instructors primarily emphasized the importance of the adaptation of diverse groups, establishing unity and encouraging interaction among students from diverse backgrounds, and favouring tolerance in order to provide a caring classroom atmosphere for all. For instance, participant 1 stated that she inspired students to acknowledge that it is essential to establish good communication with their classmates and that they feel happy and free in the classroom.

Extract 76:

"I would like to connect my students to each other, and make them feel themselves that they belong to the group, and their class is a lovely place, a place that they would like to come every morning. It is important and you can create a good teaching environment in the classroom. It provides a good relationship between teacher and students." (Participant-1, semi-structured interviews)

In the interviews, another participant portrayed adaptation to the classroom as an initial step for a caring and safe learning environment and that he stimulated exchange among students to turn the classroom into an enjoyable and welcoming place.

Extract 77:

"Also, when they see that other students are interested in learning about their culture, they feel more comfortable in the classroom. These are good steps to adapt to the classroom because they share something new with each other and it really makes them happy." (Participant-6, semi-structured interviews)

Similarly, another participant instructor pointed out that she intended to create an inclusive classroom that embraces all and offers a friendly and caring environment by avoiding alienation and humiliation.

Extract 78:

"Well, I try to create an inclusive classroom which welcomes all students, helps them feel safe and comfortable, not be embarrassed because they are in a very friendly classroom and they can. They're not isolated. (Participant-13, semi-structured interviews)

4.5.6. Cooperating with Colleagues

The analysis of the interviews displayed that half of the participating instructors claimed to have *cooperated with colleagues* in order to manage diversity in their classrooms. Some of the participant instructors cited that they cooperated with their colleagues when they encounter problems regarding linguistically and culturally diverse classrooms (12 citations). For instance, one of the instructors stated that they experienced "similar problems" and shared these during breaks, so that they could "learn and get opinions from each other" (participant-7, video-stimulated recall interviews). The analysis of the interviews further displayed the contentment some instructors felt:

Extract 79:

"I'm also happy to work with such a big group of colleagues and also the administration. They are really helpful, so as a teacher also I am not feeling alone. So in this case, I know that I can get help from my colleagues and from the administration any time I need." (Participant-11, semi-structured interviews)

In the interviews, instructor 16 remarked the importance of exchange with colleagues as:

Extract 80:

"When I go to instructors' hall or when I go to my office, if I feel that I couldn't make the topic clear enough, I ask my colleagues for their opinions or their suggestions. I also talk to them about the practices in their classroom and how do they teach a similar topic in the classroom. I ask for their opinions and it works." (Participant-16, semi-structured interviews)

4.5.7. Improving the Self-confidence of Diverse Students

As part of the dimension of *skill*, the findings from the interviews revealed that some of the participant instructors claimed to have *improved the self-confidence of diverse students* (10 citations). For example, some of the participant instructors stated that they made linguistically and culturally diverse students feel relaxed and gain self-confidence by giving place to the aspects of their social and cultural backgrounds in their classroom practices. One further claimed that he asked diverse students to talk freely about their backgrounds, which the participant instructor believed to help them feel

knowledgeable.

Extract 81:

"And I compare international students' backgrounds with ours [local students'], so that they can feel themselves knowledgeable about the topic. And feel themselves free to talk about the topic. I think, they feel good because they feel more interested, first of all. They can speak better because they know about their personal lives, it is easier to talk with each other." (Participant-5, semi-structured interviews)

In the interviews, another participant instructor asserted that he encouraged learners from diverse backgrounds to participate in classroom activities by giving examples from their countries and cultural backgrounds. He claimed that students enjoyed this and felt eager to talk because they felt valued when they were allowed to share something from their backgrounds.

Extract 82:

"I ask international students if there is anything interesting, …how is it in their countries? They like that as well. They feel more relaxed if I ask such cultural questions. They feel eager to speak, and tell about it. They like it because they feel valued when they share something from their own background." (Participant-13, semi-structured interviews)

4.5.8. Helping Linguistically and Culturally Diverse Students Adapt to School and/or Classroom

A final theme that emerged from the analysis of interviews was found to be *helping linguistically and culturally diverse students adapt to school and/or classroom*. In the interviews, a few of the participant instructors claimed to have assisted students from diverse backgrounds to adapt the school and/or classroom (9 citations). For instance, one of the participants asserted that she tried to learn more about diverse students and put particular emphasis on their integration and participation in classroom practices so that they are not lost or isolated.

Extract 83:

"I try to know them [diverse students] and I try to integrate them into my classroom.

I don't want to put them into a different position or I don't want to isolate them in the corner of my classroom. I would like to integrate them in the classroom." (Participant-1, semi-structured interviews)

Moreover, another participant stated that she encouraged local students to offer a drink and spend some time with international learners, which she believed might help the adaptation of these students.

Extract 84:

"I also urge our Turkish students to offer these students a cup of tea or coffee, and spend time doing the brakes to help them adapt to our culture and the atmosphere at school." (Participant-6, semi-structured interviews)

In the interviews, a further participant cited the relationship between learners' adaptation and academic achievement and asserted that:

Extract 85:

"Here as well, I am also doing my best to help students at that and get used to the system both inside and outside the classroom. I'm also trying to integrate them into the class. Because otherwise if the students feel unhappy or have any problems with any of the students in the class, it directly affects their performance." (Participant-11, semi-structured interviews).

4.6. Challenges Posed by Diversity and Instructors' Strategies

The final research questions of the study intended to investigate whether EFL instructors face any challenges due to diversity in their language classrooms, and the kinds of strategies they implement to overcome these challenges. The qualitative content analysis of the interviews revealed the following themes pertaining to the challenges the participating instructors experience and strategies they employ in their classroom practices, as displayed in Table 15.

Table 15.

Themes that Emerged Regarding the Challenges Posed by Diversity and Strategies Used

CHALLENGES	***f***	**STRATEGIES**	***f***
Learners' lack of proficiency in the target (English) and local (Turkish) languages	32	Strategies used for facilitating learners' comprehension: use of non-verbal language, and translation	29
Isolation of diverse students	16	Encouraging peer support	19
Conflicts regarding cultural, religious, and political issues	13	Taking necessary precautions	16
Diverse students' lack of classroom participation	9	Encouraging classroom participation	11
Diverse students' difficulties improving English language skills	7	Paying extra attention to students' difficulties and assigning remedial tasks	22
Instructors' lacking the necessary multicultural teaching competencies	8		

As displayed in Table 15, the participating EFL instructors most frequently cited *learners' lack of proficiency in the target (English) and local (Turkish) languages* (32 citations) pertaining to teaching linguistically and culturally diverse students. For this challenge, the findings acquired from the interviews revealed that the participating instructors claimed to have used *strategies for facilitating learners' comprehension: use of non-verbal language, and translation* (cited 29 times). Most of the participant instructors remarked that they experience challenges pertaining to *learners' lack of proficiency in the target (English) and local (Turkish) languages* with and between students due to the linguistic diversity in their classrooms, and provided certain *non-verbal language strategies* that might facilitate learner comprehension.

In the interviews, the second most commonly cited challenge was found to be the *isolation of linguistically and culturally diverse students* (16 citations). A vast majority of the participating instructors claimed to *encourage peer support* (19 citations) in order to prevent the exclusion of diverse students. In the interviews, the participating instructors further cited to have faced such challenges as *conflicts regarding cultural, religious, and political issues* (13 citations), *diverse students' lack of classroom participation* (9 citations), *diverse students' difficulties improving English language skills* (7 citations), and *instructors' lacking the necessary multicultural teaching competencies* (8 citations). On the other hand, the findings also revealed that the participating instructors claimed to

have used such strategies as *taking necessary precautions* (16 citations), *encouraging classroom participation* (11 citations), and *paying extra attention to students' difficulties and assigning remedial tasks* (22 citations) in order to overcome the challenges that they encountered in their language classrooms.

The findings pertaining to the challenges and the strategies were also found to be consistent with the findings acquired from the descriptive analysis of the statements concerning the dimension of *skill* on the scale. For instance, an overwhelming majority of the participant instructors (91% agree and strongly agree) claimed on the scale that they "can help fix the issues in *their* class stemming from the differences of students", and that they "can adapt various teaching methods in order to meet the needs of different students" (84% agree and strongly agree). Similarly, despite the challenges they encounter in their language classrooms, the participant instructors claimed to have used (97 citations) various strategies. Moreover, the findings acquired from the scale also supported those acquired from the interviews in regards to "bringing together students from different groups" in forming groups (84% agree and strongly agree). In the interviews, the participating instructors claimed (19 citations) to have *encouraged peer support* by pairing or grouping students from diverse backgrounds.

4.6.1. Learners' Lack of Proficiency in the Target and Local Languages

In the interviews the participating instructors were posed questions regarding the challenges they encountered in their language classrooms. A noticeable theme that emerged from the qualitative analysis of the interviews was found to be *learners' lack of proficiency in the target (English) and local (Turkish) languages*. The interviews revealed that a majority of the participating instructors frequently claimed (32 citations) to have faced these challenges while instructing linguistically and culturally diverse groups. In the interviews, one of the participants identified the main problem in dealing with diverse students as communication breakdown. She cited linguistic challenges as a fundamental issue when students from diverse backgrounds are unable to speak either the target or the local language.

Extract 86:

"I always try to tell them and talk to them to involve them in class, but to what extent is it really possible I don't know because there is a communication breakdown.

And they feel isolated. Language is the main problem, they [international students] don't know English or Turkish, how can it be possible?" (Participant-1, semi-structured interviews)

In the semi-structured interviews, another participating instructor remarked the linguistic challenges as to cause time management problems for the teacher, and motivational problems for other students. She stated that the language barrier between the teacher and linguistically diverse students slowed down the pace of teaching and might cause a loss of concentration and motivation for other students.

Extract 87:

"Certainly, if their Turkish is very bad and if they don't know any Turkish and if they are weak learners, I may have some difficulties. That affects the pace of the class and slows down the course. I may have some difficulties in teaching period and my other students might lose their concentration and motivation because they are a part of the class." (Participant-7, semi-structured interviews)

The interviews displayed challenges pertaining to diverse students' linguistic incompetency, which some of the participating instructors perceive as the possible source of some further complications such as academic failure and lack of participation. For instance, one of the participants stated in the interviews that she considered the students from diverse backgrounds who speak "poorly either in local language (Turkish) or in target language (English)" as a serious challenge because it "raises a barrier in communication" (Participant-8, semi-structured interviews). Moreover, another participating instructor remarked the twofold challenge in the lack of communication with diverse learners: First, as an instructor, although she makes an effort to engage these students, she cannot manage that. Second, the learners from diverse backgrounds face the risk of isolation because of the communicational challenges among students.

Extract 88:

"With low levels, communication is really difficult for us and it is challenging both for the teacher and the students. They feel more isolated, I think. They cannot speak Turkish or they cannot speak English, just their own [native] language. It's really difficult, but sometimes I really want to communicate with these students." (Participant-10, semi-structured interviews)

4.6.1.a. Strategies Used for Facilitating Learners' Comprehension: Use of Non-Verbal Language, and Translation

Although most participants emphasized *learners' lack of proficiency in the target (English) and local (Turkish) languages* as initial difficulties, in the interviews, a majority of the participant instructors frequently remarked some strategies to help them survive in their linguistically and culturally diverse classrooms (29 citations). The *strategies used for facilitating learners' comprehension* that emerged from the interviews were found to be the *use of non-verbal language* and *translation* into diverse learners' mother tongue with the help of a student from the same linguistic background. For example, participant instructors 5, 14, and 20 stated that they claimed to have received help from those international students who were more competent in target language to assist those from the same linguistic background who face serious problems in understanding instructions for classroom practices. The interviews displayed *translation* as one of the strategies used to overcome challenges, just as another participant claimed:

Extract 89:

"Also, as I said, if there are any other Syrian students, they help me a lot. Most of the time they translate into their mother tongue for their friends [other students from the same linguistic background]." (Participant-7, semi-structured interviews)

The analysis of the interviews revealed some other interactional strategies that some of the participating instructors claimed to have used *non-verbal language* on clarification requests from linguistically diverse students (Participant-20, semi-structured interviews). In the interviews, another participant pointed out the necessity of using such kinds of facilitating strategies:

Extract 90:

"I use my gestures, my mimics or maybe some pictures to make something clear and I paraphrase a lot or simplify the language and I can make sentences simpler." (Participant-20, semi-structured interviews).

Extract 91:

"I also made use of lots of videos, pictures, audio's, gestures, mimes and body language. I had to because it was difficult and we didn't expect them to be competent in

academic skills." (Participant-20, semi-structured interviews).

In addition to the clarification strategies mentioned above, another participant claimed to have used available realia and technology in the classroom to facilitate communication for diverse students:

Extract 92:

I act out or use body language in the classroom. I also try to exemplify it. For instance, if the topic is suitable, I try to make it clear by using, let's say people, students or the things in the classroom. I also make use of realia in the classroom. Maybe sometimes videos if we have Internet connection in the classroom, I may get help from the Internet. (Participant-1, semi-structured interviews).

4.6.2. Isolation of Linguistically and Culturally Diverse Students

Another theme that emerged from qualitative analysis of the interviews was found to be the *isolation of linguistically and culturally diverse students* as a challenge for participant EFL instructors. In the interviews some of the participating instructors remarked (16 citations) that students from diverse linguistic and cultural backgrounds feel isolated and lose connection with the local students in their classrooms. Some of the participants cited this as a problem or a disadvantage of diversity. For instance, one of the participants defined this as an unfavourable aspect of diversity and a reason for the loss of motivation:

Extract 93:

"In my class, Syrian students sometimes feel themselves isolated, demotivated, and they don't feel that they belong to that classroom atmosphere. So, this can be a negative aspect of diversity." (Participant-18, semi-structured interviews)

In the interviews, another participant claimed that local students treated students from diverse linguistic and cultural backgrounds as if they were outsiders in the classroom. The participating asserted that it was a problem that was to be coped with by the instructor himself/herself.

Extract 94:

"Because sometimes the other [local] students pretend to be like they are aliens and they feel isolated. (Participant-10, semi-structured interviews)

Extract 95:

"And then our Syrian students feel alienated. They really feel the isolation. This is a problem but as a teacher your responsibility is here: You need to solve the alienation problem by creating a good atmosphere in the class." (Participant-15, semi-structured interviews)

4.6.2.a. Strategy: Encouraging Peer Support

In the interviews, the participant instructors claimed that the encouragement of peer support in order to avoid students' isolation forms a consensus among students and promotes mutual benefit for both local and diverse students. A majority of the participant instructors cited *encouraging peer support* (19 citations) as a strategy for overcoming challenges pertaining to the isolation of diverse students in their classrooms. For example, one of the participating instructors stated that she engaged students from various backgrounds and encouraged them to support each other.

Extract 96:

"We are trying to motivate them in class, maybe telling our (local) students to help them about the lesson. I'm trying to mix them. I'm trying to make them sit with another pair, and help. Because they have to sit like this, they can't understand each other. Because the [local] student in native language should help the other student." (Participant-9, semi-structured interviews)

In the interviews, another participant claimed to have inspired local and diverse students to cooperate and support each other when they have difficulties. She further asserted that she stimulated the development of mutual benefit among learners from various linguistic and cultural backgrounds.

Extract 97:

"Also, I encourage them to get help from their friends when they have problems in understanding. And most of the time I tell the other [local] students to benefit from

these international students and I tell them to sit next to them." (Participant-18, semi-structured interviews).

4.6.3. Conflicts Regarding Cultural, Religious, and Political Issues

A further theme that emerged from the analysis of the interviews was found to be *conflicts regarding cultural, religious, and political issues*. The analysis of the interviews revealed that some of the participating instructors claimed to have experienced challenges regarding cultural, religious, and political diversity in their classrooms. For instance, one of the participant instructors conveyed her experience with a group of students from diverse cultural backgrounds, who she claimed to have resisted obeying the rules and failed to adapt socially.

Extract 98:

But believe me, especially related with their teachers and friends, they didn't know any rules. They weren't polite. According to them everything was normal. They couldn't see their mistakes. They tend to change the system according to themselves. They wanted to change some rules, especially coming to the class after teacher. They resist to adapt to the system. (Participant-9, semi-structured interviews)

Another participant instructor claimed to have experienced *cultural conflicts among students* and identified this as the most challenging aspect of linguistic and cultural diversity in classrooms (participant-15, semi-structured interviews). In the interviews, a further participating instructor stated that she encountered *culture shock* as a challenge of diversity in her classes because she claimed that it caused motivational and adaptation problems. She added:

Extract 99:

"For difficulties, sometimes we encounter problems of culture shock. What I mean by a culture shock: sometimes in their country they have a totally different classroom atmosphere. They may find it difficult, sometimes they don't feel they belong to that classroom. For this reason, these students are too demotivated, so this is the main problem." (Participant-18, semi-structured interviews)

The analysis of the interviews also revealed that some of the participating instructors identified conflicts on religious and political issues as further challenges they

experienced in their classrooms. For instance, one of the participant instructors claimed that the political backgrounds of students caused some problems among different students and stated that she found it challenging to keep the balance between the groups.

Extract 100:

"About the challenges, sometimes in my classroom I have some problems with international students. They had some relationship problems with other Turkish students, not with the teacher but with the other students because of some political backgrounds also, they had some problems. It was difficult for me because as a teacher you should remain neutral but you should also solve the problem. You should also learn to keep your opinion for yourself, so it was a difficult balance for me sometimes." (Participant-18, semi-structured interviews)

4.6.3.a. Strategy: Taking Necessary Precautions

The qualitative analysis of the interviews revealed that a few of the participant instructors claimed to have been *taking necessary precautions* to avoid conflicts in their classrooms. For instance, one of the participants remarked the necessity of using proper language to avoid disappointing linguistically and culturally diverse learners. She further claimed to have refrained from making political or religious comments, which she considered as delicate issues.

Extract 101:

"I think, it is also important to use the proper language in order not to hurt them in the classroom. I don't want to talk about politics, and religion. They're critical [sensitive] issues in classes, and I want to focus on teaching English only." (Participant-1, semi-structured interviews)

In the interviews, another participant claimed to have made rapport with students at the beginning of the term to avoid debates and to prevent possible problems that might arise in the classroom.

Extract 102:

"At the beginning when I ask students to introduce themselves, I try to think about their background. What might be challenging in that classroom, or happen later because

there are students from different political backgrounds. I think about all these things beforehand, and tell students to be generous to their friends, and then they have to respect each other. I tell them not to debate on such things in the classroom. I create a rapport between me and the students, and even among students." (Participant-13, semi-structured interviews)

One of the participating instructors further claimed to have tried to identify delicate aspects for diverse students in their classrooms and avoid hurting them. She remarked the significance of learning as much as possible about students from diverse backgrounds.

Extract 103:

"I try to learn as much as about them because it helps me during classes. If they have any sensitive points, I try not to touch or hurt them [international students] in the classroom. Because maybe their sensitivity is different from our [local] students." (Participant-13, semi-structured interviews)

4.6.4. Diverse students' Lack of Classroom Participation

A fourth theme that emerged from the analysis of the interviews was found to be linguistically and culturally *diverse students' lack of classroom participation*, which participating instructors claimed to have considered as another challenge. A few of the participant instructors cited to have faced this difficulty in diverse classrooms (9 citations). For instance, one of the participants remarked the lack of interest and participation among diverse students.

Extract 104:

"Some [international] students close themselves to learning or to the classroom. They don't participate, they don't want to speak, or they don't go to school." (Participant-1, semi-structured interviews)

In the interviews, another participant claimed to have failed to ensure the classroom participation of diverse learners despite all the effort she had put.

Extract 105:

"I always try to tell them and talk to them to involve them in class, but to what extent is it really possible I don't know because there is a communication breakdown. We

are trying to make them participate in class but nothing comes from our hands after that." (Participant-2, semi-structured interviews)

In the interviews, a further participant remarked the *lack of classroom participation* as the most common challenge in regards to teaching linguistically and culturally diverse groups. She asserted that the hesitancy of these students might stem from the anxiety of being embarrassed.

Extract 106:

"The most appeared challenge for me is that they [international students] are shy students, they feel embarrassed because they are from different backgrounds and cultures. They might feel as if some other students will humiliate them." (Participant-13, semi-structured interviews)

4.6.4.a. Strategy: Encouraging Classroom Participation

In the interviews, some of the participant instructors claimed to have encouraged linguistically and culturally diverse students for classroom participation. For example, some stated that they encouraged classroom participation of the students by embracing cultural topics that might appeal to all. For instance, one of the participants claimed to have addressed discussion questions concerning cultural aspects to diverse students so that they might participate by presenting examples from their own cultural identities.

Extract 107:

"Whatever the topic is, there is a connection to the culture, so I can just ask them to give examples from their own culture." (Participant-5, semi-structured interviews)

In the interviews, another participant further emphasized the significance of cultural discussions and exchange in the classroom and its effects on comforting linguistically and culturally diverse students. He claimed that the expression of cultural identities, traditions and norms raised the classroom participation.

Extract 108:

"They like it because they feel valued when they share something from their own background. Asking about their cultures, norms, traditions, and especially their food, food culture maybe well work. While having a good conversation with them in the class

individually, [international] students feel better." (Participant-10, semi-structured interviews)

4.6.5. Diverse students' Difficulties Improving English Language Skills

Another challenge that emerged from the qualitative analysis of the interviews was found to be *diverse students' difficulties improving English language skills*. A few of the participant instructors claimed to have experienced challenges in teaching particular skills to students from diverse linguistic and cultural backgrounds (7 citations). For example, participant 3 stated that she had difficulties in teaching *writing skill*, especially in terms of spelling and the lack of using punctuation marks. She claimed that the students made a lot of mistakes in the spelling of words and linked sentences without using proper punctuation marks. She also added that linguistically diverse students had frequent problems in terms of *vocabulary* use in writing.

Extract 109:

"The spelling mistakes are terrible for this student. In general, they [international] do not use any punctuation marks, all the sentences are linked with commas, no stops at the end of sentences, and too long. Sometimes the sentence is a paragraph long, and I don't know how to correct the sentence. I have no idea what to do. They also have problems in vocabulary use in writing." (Participant-3, video-stimulated recall interviews)

In the interviews, another participant remarked that linguistically diverse students were not very competent in writing legibly and she wished they paid more attention to spelling and punctuation.

Extract 110:

"I used to ask them to write more legibly and pay more attention to spelling and punctuation. Their alphabet is very different, but they get used to the Latin alphabet in time." (Participant-8, video-stimulated recall interviews)

A further participant instructor stated that she "could not understand why linguistically diverse students keep doing [making] the same mistakes in grammar" (participant-9, semi-structured interviews). Likewise, another participant claimed to have faced challenges in teaching grammar to linguistically diverse students. She remarked

that these students had difficulties in learning grammar, and she also found it challenging to explain writing to diverse groups.

Extract 111:

"Especially in Grammar, while teaching grammar I have some problems. Maybe the structure in their language is different, and they have some difficulties. Also, I have some difficulties in teaching writing. It is difficult to make the explanation for writing." (Participant-7, semi-structured interviews)

4.6.5.a. Strategy: Paying Extra Attention to Students' Difficulties and Assigning Remedial Tasks

The analysis of the interviews revealed that majority of the participant instructors claimed to have been *paying extra attention to students' difficulties and assigning remedial tasks* (22 citations) inside and outside the classroom to the learners from various linguistic and cultural backgrounds. The participating instructors frequently cited assigning additional tasks and paying extra attention as strategies of further help for diverse learners. For instance, one of the participating instructors claimed to have paid special attention during classroom activities and put extra effort into helping.

Extract 112:

"I go near them when I tell other students to do an activity, I ask these [international] students if everything is alright. If there is no problem, I go on kind of feeling relieved, but if they can't understand, I try to explain in a different way." (Participant-4, semi-structured interviews)

In the interviews, another participant claimed to have assigned extra tasks outside the classroom as an additional support for diverse learners. She added that she was choosing suitable materials based on their competency in the target language and this helped them to improve their language learning process to some extent.

Extract 113:

"I especially try to give some extra time after classes. I'll give them some additional tasks outside the classroom like writing a paragraph. I try to give them simpler materials for learning which might help as an additional support. It helps them to improve to some

extent." (Participant-7, semi-structured interviews)

Another participant instructor remarked the importance of motivating and raising the classroom participation of linguistically and culturally diverse learners by showing a closer interest and paying additional attention. She stated that she always reflected on her teaching and attitudes and even provided greater care and support to diverse groups than local learners.

Extract 114:

"I always remind myself that I should motivate these [international] students maybe more than Turkish students. I always have a closer attitude towards those students. As I said, I give extra attention to those students and I try to make them participate in the classroom." (Participant-18, semi-structured interviews)

4.6.6. Instructors' Lacking the Necessary Multicultural Teaching Competencies

The findings acquired from the interviews revealed that some of the participant instructors claimed to have *lacked the necessary multicultural teaching competencies* to teach linguistically and culturally diverse classrooms (8 citations). For instance, two of the participants pointed out their incompetency due to linguistic diversity in their classrooms. Participant 18 cited that linguistic diversity was more challenging than cultural diversity because she was stuck on the language barrier. She emphasized the importance of switching to her mother tongue, which she could not do with linguistically diverse students. Another participant further asserted that these learners needed professional assistance and claimed that the effort she had put in was inadequate for diverse classrooms.

Extract 115:

"Handling cultural diversity can be easier but handling linguistic diversity can be more difficult because sometimes they used the benefits of native language. However, she really doesn't know how to overcome this problem. Sometimes I really don't know how to handle this linguistic diversity. It's a challenge for me." (Participant-18, semi-structured interviews)

Extract 116:

"But to what extent can I help? I think they need some professional support from someone who is in their native language, not us. We are trying to do something, but to what extent?" (Participant-2, semi-structured interviews)

In the interviews, another participant claimed to be incompetent with the students who could neither speak the local language nor the target language

Extract 117:

"They couldn't speak Turkish or English at all. …I suffered; I didn't know how to teach because as I teach, they didn't understand anything at all." (Participant-4, semi-structured interviews).

A further participant stated that he felt incompetent at times when the learners have a very low level of the local [Turkish] and target [English] languages. He also stated that he could not do anything when he had learners with very low levels of local and target languages.

Extract 118:

"I just thought I couldn't do anything, sometimes there are students like that, that's okay. But if they are very low level there is nothing that you can do, I felt really helpless at that point." (Participant-12, semi-structured interviews).

CHAPTER V

DISCUSSION

5.1. Introduction

The central emphasis of this research is to explore the EFL instructors' multicultural teaching competencies in terms of the dimensions, namely *awareness, knowledge, attitude* and *skill*, the challenges they face, and the strategies they use to cater for the needs of linguistically and culturally diverse classrooms. This chapter is devoted to the discussion of the findings obtained from the quantitative analysis of the CMETCS, and the qualitative analysis of the video-stimulated recall interviews and semi-structured interviews. The research questions will be addressed respectively along with the findings presented in the previous chapter in the light of a review of the literature.

5.2. Dimension of Awareness

The first research question of the study aimed to investigate the extent to which EFL instructors have an awareness in regard to their multicultural teaching competencies. The findings obtained from the qualitative analysis of the video-stimulated interviews and semi-structured interviews seemed to be remarkably consistent with the review of the literature. The three basic themes that emerged from the interviews are found to be *instructors' awareness and appreciation of students' cultures, worldviews, traditions, and values*; *instructors' awareness of their own feelings about different students,* and *instructors' awareness of local students' prejudices and conflicts.* First, it was revealed that participating instructors mostly claimed to have awareness on diverse students' *cultures*. In addition, three other subthemes emerged from the analysis of the interviews and they were found to be awareness on *students' worldviews, traditions,* and *values.* A second most frequently referred subtheme was found to be *showing empathy* towards linguistically and culturally diverse groups. Another interesting finding concerning the dimension of *awareness* was the participant instructors' claims on *the need to avoid prejudices, showing respect,* and *need to be fair*. Finally, participating instructors claimed to have an awareness of *local students' prejudices and conflicts towards diverse students.* Many scholars in the field of multicultural education underline the significance of teachers' role in the transformation of the society by ensuring equal and fair learning

opportunities at school (Banks, 2004; Gorski, 2010; Jones, 1997; Sue, 2001; Villegas and Lucas; 2002). For instance, Özdemir (2018) claimed to have found that cultural empathy as a personality trait acted as a significant predictor of multicultural awareness, skills, and knowledge. In addition, Marshall (1996) includes awareness of teachers' own beliefs and prejudices, and the effect of these biases in the assessment of learners as one of the four concerns of Multicultural Teaching Concerns Survey. Similarly, Acar-Çiftçi and Gürol (2015) identify awareness as one of the four salient components of teachers' cultural competencies and depict awareness as recognizing how their own beliefs and values are influenced by cultural conditions. As the findings indicate, the participating instructors distinctly claimed to possess certain characteristics of the dimension of *awareness* such as awareness on students' traits, and acknowledge the importance of their roles by emphasising the *need for being fair*, *showing empathy* and *respect*.

The findings provided evidence regarding that the society does not pay needed attention and that there is a need for understanding towards diverse populations and cultures in the society, which carries the scope of awareness beyond the classroom level and makes the teacher behave as the operator of transformation in the society (Fullan, 1999; Sue, 2001; Sutton, 2005; Gorski, 2010; Acar-Çiftçi and Gürol, 2015). Villegas and Lucas (2002) place the moral responsibility to promote change on teachers and claim that once they take charge of transformation, the interrelation between schools and society might better be understood.

The findings further revealed that some of the participant instructors admitted having experienced some failures in their approach towards diverse students in the past, but claimed to have recognized their biased behaviours and changed attitudes after reconsidering the issue comprehensively and reflecting on their practices. Such a change seems to be in line with what Elmeroth (2008) suggests by stating that it is essential to have a mindset of 'we-and-them thinking' in teaching culturally diverse populations and this requires an absolute consideration of minority cultures and multilingual learners (p20).

On the other hand, the findings obtained from the CMETCS displayed that although the participating instructors considered themselves the least competent on the dimension of *awareness* compared to the other dimensions, their average score on *awareness* dimension was found to be at the "Partly Agree" level. These findings are proven to be significantly consistent with the findings in Acar-Çiftçi's studies on the readiness of the academics at faculties of education for multicultural education (2019), and the preschool

teachers' perceptions on critical multicultural education competencies (2016b). In both studies, the findings proved that the participant academics and preschool teachers considered themselves to be moderately competent regarding the dimension of *awareness*.

Several scholars in the field of multicultural education state that multiculturally competent teachers need to possess an awareness of students' cultures, worldviews, traditions, and values in addition to recognizing their own culture, values, and prejudices (Byram, 1997; Gay, 2001; Sue & Sue, 2003; Banks, 2006; Acar-Çiftçi & Gürol, 2015). The participating instructors claimed to have awareness not only of their own culture, values and prejudices but also of students' cultures, worldviews, and traditions. There is evidence suggesting that most instructors seem to associate the dimension of *awareness* with such basic components as *culture*, *showing empathy* and *respect*, *equal treatment* and *assessment*, *values*, *worldviews*, and *prejudices*. It appears that the majority of the participating instructors claimed to become aware of their role as "change agents" (Villegas and Lucas, 2002, p. 24) for the transformation of school and society (Banks, 1993; Bennet, 1995) and to help students improve their individual and cultural values in interactions with those from diverse linguistic and cultural backgrounds.

5.3. Dimension of Knowledge

The second research question of the study aimed to explore EFL instructors' perception of their multicultural teaching competency in terms of knowledge level. The findings revealed that the participant instructors considered themselves moderately competent on the dimension of *knowledge*. These findings are compatible with the findings obtained by Acar-Çiftçi (2019, 2016a), and Özkan (2018). Both researchers found that academics or teachers perceive themselves moderately competent in terms of *knowledge* dimension of multicultural teaching competencies. Özkan (2018) further asserted that the participating instructors often utilized instructional practices that affirm priority on multicultural knowledge rather than skills.

The qualitative findings showed that the participating instructors mentioned the *essential role of experience* in the acquisition of multicultural knowledge in respect to dealing with culturally and linguistically diverse classrooms. The findings also revealed that most of participating instructors claimed to have found themselves knowledgeable enough to deal with learners from diverse linguistic and cultural backgrounds. This

suggests that the instructors viewed themselves to be multiculturally responsive (Sue & Sue, 2003) as they claimed to possess general and specific knowledge and information about the group they are working with, they are patient and tolerant in their treatment and they avoid discrimination and isolation in their classroom practices. According to the Critical Multicultural Education Competency Model (Acar-Çiftçi, 2014), it is the teacher's knowledge and understanding of basic constitutional and political foundations, doctrines and regulations that ensure students fair and equal opportunities in accessing education. Teachers are further expected to embrace the kind of knowledge that coincides with multifaceted aspects of diversity and new circumstances and the capability to respond to them.

On the other hand, there were few who asserted that they did not have sufficient knowledge and found teaching in diverse classrooms quite challenging. They emphasised their need for professional support to improve their teaching in these classrooms. There were even some who claimed it was not their responsibility to teach these students because linguistically and culturally diverse groups required some sort of specialized expertise. Butcher and McGrath (2004) also concluded that the instructors in their study claimed to have insufficient knowledge regarding diversity. Similarly, Gay and Howard (2000) revealed that teacher candidates expressed their anxiety in teaching culturally diverse classrooms due to the lack of knowledge, and reluctance in acquiring sufficient knowledge.

5.4. Dimension of Attitude

The third research question of the study aimed to explore EFL instructors' attitudes to diverse populations in their language classrooms. The findings acquired from CMETCS provided evince showing that the participant instructors considered themselves competent on the dimension of *attitude*. Similarly, a number of studies conducted in Turkey indicate that students, principals and academics perceive themselves to have highly positive attitudes towards cultural diversity in their educational contexts (Acar-Çiftçi, 2019; Damgacı & Aydın, 2013; Demir, 2012 Çoban; Dolapçı, 2019; Karaman & Doğan, 2010; Morkoç, 2019).

The qualitative findings pertaining to *instructors' positive attitudes towards* diversity provided further evidence that the participating instructors perceived diversity in their language classrooms as an *opportunity for students to communicate in the target*

language. The participant instructors claimed that they considered the linguistic and cultural diversity as a facilitator for communication among students from different backgrounds. In this respect, the findings of this study seem to be in line with what has been discussion in the relevant literature. For instance, Giles et. al. (1991) claim that culturally competent individuals learn to establish relationships and interact with people from different backgrounds. Similarly, Bondy et. al. (2007) asserts that teachers can create culturally responsive classrooms by promoting interaction among learners from various backgrounds and constructing explicit anticipation and achievement.

Furthermore, the findings proved that the participant instructors consider diversity as an *opportunity to learn about differences*. They claimed to be enthusiastic about diverse cultures and backgrounds. Just as Byram (1997) indicates, teachers who have gained cultural competency are eager to learn about various ethnic backgrounds and cultures, are able to hinder disbelief about different cultures, and connect these with their own values, beliefs and attitudes. In his three-dimensional multicultural competency approach, Banks (1991) places classroom level competency on the second level, in which the teachers need to acknowledge the class culture and the effects of this on learning, establish a classroom atmosphere where all cultures are welcomed and represented without being considered as 'others'.

Some participant instructors regarded themselves as *a positive role-model* towards the diversity in their classrooms. Some of the participating instructors attributed the responsibility of being a role-model to themselves in order to influence students' attitudes and behaviours towards linguistically and culturally diverse students, similar to the role attributed to teachers as they are expected to be the agents of change in and encourage their students to acknowledge and acquire democratic values for the transformation of the society (Banks, 2004; May & Sleeter, 2010; Villegas & Lucas, 2002). Considering the situation in Turkey, Polat and Kılıç (2013) further emphasised that the tendencies of the teachers play an important role in restructuring the society since the individuals are raised with a dominant culture in Turkey.

Moreover, the findings proved that the participant instructors have a *feeling of responsibility* in their language classrooms. Some of the participating instructors articulated that linguistically and culturally diverse learners should be integrated into the classroom community and that any potential alienation of them should be prevented by the help of the instructor. The need for taking special responsibility and displaying a closer interest towards minority groups is consistent with what Bowman (1994) suggested

for ethnic minority groups such as African, Latin and Native Americans who were more susceptible to failure at school. Bowman claims that students from different ethnic and sociocultural backgrounds demand special attention and care compared to other students in order to expect them to show similar educational achievement.

An indication of instructors' *positive attitudes* illustrated itself in their remarks concerning numerous components that were found to be in line with the relevant literature such as *encouraging mutual respect in the classroom, feeling of responsibility, opportunity for professional development, adaptation of students to school and/or classroom, being tolerant,* and *equal treatment*. For instance, *encouraging mutual respect* for differences can be regarded as the genesis of multicultural approach in a broad sense (Chisholm, 1994; Kubota, 2004; Pope and Reynolds, 1997). Some of the participating instructors claimed to have arrived at a consensus on respecting differences inside the classroom or at school in order to prevent possible biased attitudes or behaviour, just as numerous scholars associate this with the attributes of responsive teaching (Çelikten et. al., 2005; Pope and Reynolds, 1997; Spiecker and Steutel, 2001). According to Han and Thomas (2010), it is teachers' responsibility to inspire respect and expand the perspectives of students towards diversity and differences rather than considering cultural variety as an inconvenience.

A further indication of instructors' positive attitudes manifested itself in their remarks related to *opportunity for professional development*. Just as Sue and Sue (2003) describes the characteristics of culturally responsive counsellors, multiculturally responsive teachers ought to be the professionals who are in a continuous developmental process, and implement receptive, appropriate, and rational strategies and skills in their classroom practices. Summarizing the main purposes of multicultural education, Cırık (2008) also asserts that culturally responsive teachers need to acknowledge systematic change as a developmental process.

Finally, the findings proved evidence that the participant instructors claimed to have recognized the significance of *being tolerant,* and *equal treatment* towards students from diverse backgrounds. Scholars in the field of multicultural education (Lucas, et al.,1990; Ladson-Billings, 1994; Delpit, 1995; Nieto, 1996) state that the supportive and constructive approach of multiculturally responsive teachers generates a unity in class atmosphere and promotes interaction and exchange in terms of diversity in attitude and thinking, which in return reinforce student learning. In its report in 2001, the Council of European Union conferred the educational institutions with the prior responsibility to lead

people to recognise that racism, discrimination, and intolerance is not accepted under any circumstance. From this perspective, some of the participating instructors further cited the significance of creating an inclusive classroom atmosphere for all the students from different backgrounds and treating all the students the same and equally so that they can get the best from their teaching. Baptiste (1986) asserts that it is an essential role of multicultural education to secure the educational and social right of minority groups and assure equal opportunities for all. Similarly, Gorski (2010) claims that it is one of the most important aims of multicultural education to establish and preserve social justice and equal opportunities for all in order to ensure social transformation. Moreover, Gay points out (2000) that in order to boost learner achievement, besides allocating equal educational opportunities, it is vital to provide necessary assistance to culturally diverse groups in teaching and learning.

On the other hand, the findings also proved evidence that there were a few participant instructors who were seen to have *negative attitudes* towards cultural and linguistical diversity in their language classrooms. The reasons for their negative attitudes were found to be related with the learners' lack of proficiency both in the target and local languages, and hence, the challenge for these instructors to invest too much time and energy in teaching these students. This situation is summarised by a number of studies which concluded that students from minority groups tended to fail or had difficulty to achieve similar success to other students due to biased or unfavoured behaviours exhibited by teachers. As opposed to instructors who were found to have negative attitude towards diversity in this study, there are numerous studies which indicate that the attitudes of teachers towards culturally diverse groups considerably influence their academic achievements (Au, 1993; Chong, 2005; Easton & Guskey, 1983; Gay, 2000; Gilliard, 1996; Horm, 2003; Hue & Kennedy, Larke, 2013; 2012; Townsend, 2002; Spindler, 1987).

5.5. Dimension of Skill

The fourth research question of the study intended to investigate EFL instructors' perceptions of their multicultural teaching competency in terms of *skill* dimension. The descriptive findings obtained from the CMETCS revealed that the *skill* dimension of multicultural teaching competency was the dimension in which the participant instructors considered themselves the most competent of all the other three dimensions. These

findings were found to be substantially compatible with Acar-Çiftçi's (2019) findings related to the academics' readiness for multicultural education. Similarly, in another study on preschool teachers' perceptions of critical multicultural teaching skills, Acar-Çiftçi (2016b) found that the participant teachers considered themselves sufficiently skilled.

The qualitative findings also showed that the instructors claimed to *have the necessary skills* to teach linguistically and culturally diverse students. They remarked that they managed to bring students from diverse groups together as this provided learners with an opportunity to cooperate, benefit from each other, encourage to interact in the target language, and help to avoid isolation at school. There are numerous scholars who underlined the importance of bringing students together in order to promote working together and preventing isolation in classrooms (Leonard & Leonard, 2006; McCall, 1995; Montano, et.al., 2002). Gay (1990) further reported that initial attempts to transform the curriculum in accordance with the needs of multicultural education were launched once learners from various ethnic backgrounds were brought together in the same school environment. Accordingly, Leung and Hue (2017) state that teachers can become multiculturally competent only if they experience diversity in their actual classrooms, and they can design culturally responsive lessons by making use of all these experiences. Furthermore, the Association of American Universities (1997) emphasizes the significance of encouraging harmony, unity, and working and living together through extracurricular activities. In a similar line of thought, considering the situation in Turkey, Damgacı and Aydın (2013) suggest that the Ministry of National Education ought to implement an educational reform which incorporates the constructive views and contributions of academics on multicultural education.

Moreover, there is evidence showing that most participant instructors claimed to have integrated various *cultural elements of diverse students* into their teaching. These instructors claimed to have acknowledged the strong connection between language and culture, and thus, they established a connection between the classroom teaching and backgrounds of diverse students. They asserted that providing linguistically and culturally diverse students with an opportunity to introduce cultural aspects from their countries also helped local students to get informed about other countries and raised the motivation of all students during in-class activities. In their study on cultural adaptation of exchange students, İlin and Yıldırım (2013) found prejudices towards exchange students' home countries due to incorrect knowledge and suggested a process of "culture synergy" by encouraging in-class activities that would give room for presentation of cultural aspects

from diverse students. Similarly, Banks (1991) indicates that culturally responsive teachers comprehend the significance of class culture and its influence on students' learning, the representation of all cultures in class without recognizing minority groups as 'others', employ a culture sensitive approach and teaching strategies, and interact with all learners as well as encouraging interaction among students. Student learning can be improved and reinforced through a constructive and supportive approach (Ladson-Billings, 1994; Lucas, et al.,1990; Nieto, 1996). According to Delpit (1995), in classrooms where unity is ensured and multiculturally responsive teaching is inspired, teachers perceive that learners from various cultural backgrounds can contribute to the variety in views, attitudes, beliefs, and interaction.

Furthermore, the findings of the study showed that the participating instructors claimed to have *treated and assessed different students equally*, *provided a safe and caring environment*, *helped to improve the self-confidence of diverse students* and *helped diverse students to adapt to schools and/or classroom*. Gorski (2010) states that those who are teaching classrooms with diverse populations are supposed to frequently reflect on their practices and transform themselves because the indication of equal and fair treatment at schools is the indication of fair and equal treatment at society level. Therefore, they need to be aware of their own perceptions and destructive effects of biased attitudes on students' learning. This study provided evidence indicating that the participating instructors well acknowledged the multifaceted aspects of diversity in their classrooms and endeavour to ensure complete participation of the students as a whole in various ways. Numerous scholars attribute various traits and characteristics to multiculturally responsive teachers and professionals. For instance, Sue and Sue (2003) emphasize the importance of applying proper and sensitive mediational strategies and skills; Gutierrez-Gomez (2002) highlights the significance of providing a safe and caring environment; and Gay (2000) underlines the prominence of allocating equal learning opportunities to promote learner achievement.

Moreover, Gutierrez-Gomez (2002) warned that higher educational institutions have their own characteristic culture and system, which might not be familiar to those from diverse cultures and backgrounds; however, it is essential to create and sustain a caring and safe environment for all (Gutierrez-Gomez, 2002). Otherwise, when certain groups of students are isolated and deprived of essential support, educational opportunities could not be allocated equally and students may not be expected to perform similar achievement (Gay, 2000). In the creation of an inclusive classroom environment,

teachers are expected to take sincere care of all students, regardless of their linguistic, cultural and ethnic identities. Consequently, students can demonstrate their full capacity in a learning environment where they feel safe, valued, and respected and this has a significant effect on their engagement and performance (Garibay, 2015).

5.6. Challenges Posed by Diversity and Instructors' Strategies

The final research questions of the study aimed to reveal the potential challenges posed by the linguistic and cultural diversity in EFL classrooms, and explore the strategies that the EFL instructors use to overcome these challenges. The findings proved evidence that the instructors claimed to have most frequently experienced challenges concerning *learners' lack of proficiency in the target (English) and local (Turkish) languages*. The majority of instructors stated that they had communication breakdowns with linguistically diverse students because the students had poor linguistic competency both in the target language and the local language, and these students were unable to understand the instruction provided. Hence, they asserted that the students felt isolated and were not able to participate in classroom activities. This situation has also been mentioned by some scholars who claim that linguistic challenges stood as one of the main drawbacks that EFL instructors faced in linguistically and culturally diverse classrooms (Ippolito, 2007; Mena & Rogers, 2017). For example, in regards to the challenges posed by the lack of proficiency in target language at a multicultural university, Ippolito (2007) found that "language was perceived as a barrier that made communication slower and led to misunderstandings and inequality of contribution" (p. 758).

As to the strategies that the instructors claimed to use, the qualitative findings proved evidence that most of the instructors who asserted that they faced challenges in regards to language and communication also claimed to have used *strategies for facilitating learners' comprehension* such as *use of non-verbal language and translation*. They stated that they frequently made use of non-verbal language when there is a break-down in the interaction with linguistically and culturally diverse students. Tarone (1983) considers these attempts as the solutions to communication problems when there is a gap between the linguistic knowledge of second-language learners and that of the target language interlocutors in real communication situations. She further adds that individuals use such strategies when their interactional problems become apparent. Similarly, Poulisse (1990) asserts that compensatory interaction strategies are used by language

users as alternative means of expression when it becomes impossible for them to convey their intended meanings due to linguistic shortcomings.

The findings further provided evidence showing that most of the instructors claimed to have faced challenges posed by the *isolation of diverse students*. They stated that linguistically and culturally diverse students were demotivated because they felt isolated or alienated in the classroom. Some even asserted that this was because of local students' discriminatory attitudes and behaviours towards students from different cultural backgrounds who were treated as if they were outsiders in the classroom. In a recent study on the challenges of diverse students in Greece, Paraskevi and Nikolaos (2017) found that participating teachers considered the integration and acceptance of diverse students as a significant challenge, and that students from different cultural backgrounds faced the risk of being isolated from other students and had difficulty in communication. Those from dominant culture might consider being a part of a minority group as a negative attribute and hence, individuals from diverse backgrounds might be neglected, treated disrespectfully, and treated in a passive way (Achkovska-Leshkovska, 2013). In this regard, the findings revealed that the participating instructors claimed to have encouraged *peer support* as a strategy to overcome *isolation of learners* from diverse linguistic and cultural backgrounds. Most of the instructors claimed to have mixed the students from various backgrounds and encouraged them to help and benefit from each other so that they might ensure harmony and unity in the classroom. Some of the participating instructors stated that they paid special attention to put local and diverse students together in group and pair-work activities so that they could cooperate and work together.

The findings showed further evidence indicating that the instructors claimed to have experienced challenges posed by diversity due to *conflicts regarding cultural, religious, and political issues*. While some claimed that the students from diverse backgrounds tended to experience culture shock, difficulties in relationships with local students, and conflicts due to political or religious differences, some stated that they experienced a lot of challenges because the students from different cultural backgrounds had difficulties in adapting to school policies, and some even resisted obeying the rules in their classrooms. The findings also revealed that there were some who claimed to have felt almost helpless because they found teaching such classes relatively challenging, and suggested that some sort of expert support would be needed to deal with classrooms with diverse populations.

On the other hand, the findings revealed that some instructors claimed to have taken *necessary precautions* as a strategy for *conflicts regarding cultural, religious, and*

political issues. They asserted that it was the instructors' responsibility to create a safe zone of learning and encourage students to show tolerance and understanding towards diverse students. In order to maintain this safe zone of learning, some claimed to have avoided discussing political and religious issues in the class as a precautionary approach. Some further stated that they paid attention to standing neutral towards students' diverse political views, and keeping a balance in case of a debate among students. As Çoban and colleagues (2010) state, teachers need to be aware of religious, social, political, and ideological variety the students possess and should encourage respecting and reconciling diverse beliefs, views, and ideologies as an essential characteristic of culture-sensitive individuals.

This study also provided evidence that indicates that some of the participating instructors claimed to have experienced such challenges as *lack of classroom participation* and *difficulties improving English language skills* among linguistically and culturally diverse students. Although some stated that they endeavoured to encourage these students to participate, they were unable to efficiently raise the motivation of diverse learners. In their study on multicultural teacher education, Gay and Howard (2000) asserted that teachers were reluctant in teaching multicultural classrooms since they were worried about handling diversity in their classrooms responsively and humiliating students from diverse backgrounds unintentionally. Although none of the participating EFL instructors showed any sign of reluctance, there were some who claimed to have felt insufficient or despaired after numerous ineffective attempts. Some of the instructors further asserted that the lack of classroom participation among minority groups might stem from the anxiety of being embarrassed or humiliated. The relevant literature suggests that learners from minority groups tend to attain lower academic achievement because they are more sensitive when teachers do not provide required multicultural responsiveness (Horn, 2003; Townsend, 2002). In addition, the findings further proved that some of the participating instructors were posed by the challenges in teaching certain language skills such as writing, grammar and vocabulary to linguistically and culturally diverse students. The participating instructors claimed to have used strategies like *encouraging classroom participation*, and *paying extra attention to students' difficulties and assigning remedial tasks* by including cultural aspects of diverse students. All these efforts indicate that the participating EFL instructors demonstrate multiculturally responsive teaching attitudes and behaviours.

To reiterate, the findings acquired from the CMETCS suggested that a vast majority

of the participant instructors perceived themselves competent in regards to the dimension of *skill*, which implies that they found themselves skilled enough to deal with diversity in their classrooms. The qualitative findings, however, provided evidence as to a few instructors' feelings of incompetence in facing the challenge of teaching in such classrooms. In addition, linguistic diversity was found by some instructors to be more challenging than cultural diversity.

In today's globalized world, diversity in educational institutions has been a conventional phenomenon in numerous countries. The diversity at tertiary level might have such benefits as reducing social inequalities and conflicts, preparing students for work-life, and increasing social harmony and unity (Bergan & Damian, 2010). However, this study showed evidence that the participant instructors encounter more and more challenges because of the increase in the number of individuals from diverse ethnic, cultural, and linguistic backgrounds over the years. Concerning this, Acar-Çiftçi and Gürol (2015) assert that teachers working in multicultural contexts are supposed to deal with social, institutional, professional and personal challenges.

CHAPTER VI

CONCLUSION

6.1. Introduction

This chapter presents a summary and conclusions drawn from the findings of the study. It also presents implications and recommendations for further studies.

6.2. Summary of the Study

The current study presents perceptions of EFL instructors in relation to their multicultural teaching competencies. The multidimensional frame of the current study was based on Critical Multicultural Education Competency Model of Acar-Çiftçi. According to this model, educators are expected to possess multicultural teaching competencies such as *awareness*, *knowledge*, *attitude*, and *skill*. The study further aimed to explore possible *challenges* posed by linguistic and cultural diversity in language classrooms, and the *strategies* that are engaged to overcome these challenges. In that respect, the study provided a comprehensive insight under six dimensions in regard to multicultural teaching competency: *awareness*, *knowledge*, *attitude*, *skill*, *challenges*, and *strategies*. To do this, a mixed method research design was used and the data were triangulated by employing three data collection tools, namely CMETCS, video-stimulated interviews, and semi-structured interviews.

After selecting the participants from various state universities, data were collected through a scale designed by Acar-Çitçi (2007) and administered to 114 EFL instructors. Additionally, video-stimulated interviews were conducted with four instructors, and semi-structured interviews were conducted with 20 instructors who volunteered to participate in the study. For reliability purposes, the study aimed to find answers to the research questions through not only eliciting the participants' perceptions of their multicultural teaching competency, but also investigating their justifications for their actual experiences in the language classrooms including learners from diverse linguistic and cultural backgrounds. Based on the statistical and content analysis of the data, the perceptions of the students and instructors were revealed.

The quantitative findings of the study revealed that participant EFL instructors claimed to have perceived themselves *moderately competent* in regard to the dimensions

of *awareness* and *knowledge*, and *highly competent* in regards to the dimensions of *attitude* and *skill*. The following conclusions were drawn from the qualitative findings:

As regards to the dimension of *awareness*, instructors were found to have an awareness on the *culture*, *worldviews*, *traditions*, and *values* of the learners from diverse backgrounds. The study also revealed that the instructors acknowledged the significance of *showing empathy* and *respect* for, and the *need to be fair* towards differences. A final remark that the present study deduced regarding the dimension of *awareness* was the participant instructors' *awareness of local students' prejudices and conflicts* with learners from diverse backgrounds.

With respect to the dimension of *knowledge*, it can be concluded that the EFL instructors attributed their knowledge regarding multicultural teaching to their experiences in teaching in classrooms with learners from diverse backgrounds, as they claimed not to have had any formal training or courses on the issue. Considering the needs of those instructors who claimed to have insufficient knowledge, and those who stated that they needed expert support to be able to teach in these classrooms, the study also showed that there is a significant need for EFL instructors to have training on multicultural teaching competency either through in-service training programs, or during pre-service teacher education programs as a separate course.

As for the dimension of *attitude*, the findings of the study proved evidence showing that the EFL instructors had a positive attitude towards linguistically and culturally diverse learners. The study revealed that diversity in language classrooms was considered as richness and an opportunity both for the learners to communicate in the target language and for the instructors to learn about differences and to develop professionally. In regards to the positive attitudes of the EFL instructors, the study further disclosed that they had a feeling of responsibility for ensuring the adaptation and learning of linguistically diverse learners, and being a positive role-model for learners to ensure mutual respect, tolerance, and equal treatment.

As regards to the dimension of *skill*, the study revealed that the EFL instructors have the necessary skills to teach linguistically and culturally diverse learners. The findings of the study proved the evidence showing that the instructors claimed to have managed to bring learners from diverse backgrounds together, integrated the elements of diverse learners' cultures into their teaching, treated and assessed diverse learners equally, and provided a safe and caring environment for learners from diverse backgrounds. The study further indicated that the instructors claimed to have cooperated with their

colleagues in managing the classrooms with learners from diverse backgrounds.

With respect to the challenges posed by the linguistic and cultural diversity in language classrooms the findings of the study proved evidence showing that communication breakdown due to the learners' lack of proficiency in the target and local language stood as a major challenge the EFL instructors claimed to have faced. Considering the strategies that the EFL instructors used to overcome these challenges, they claimed to have utilized non-verbal language and translation in order to facilitate learners' comprehension. The study also revealed that the EFL instructors claimed to have encouraged peer support when learners from diverse backgrounds felt isolated and lacked classroom participation. The study proved further evidence showing that the instructors stated to have taken necessary precautions in order to prevent conflicts regarding cultural, religious, and political issues. Finally, the study showed that the EFL instructors paid extra attention and assigned remedial tasks for linguistically and culturally diverse learners who were having difficulties improving target language skills. It can be concluded that the majority of the participating EFL instructors have the required multicultural teaching competencies in addressing learners from various linguistic and cultural backgrounds in tertiary education.

6.3. Implications

Considering the evidences it provided, the present study has some implications for the stakeholders of education such as teachers (will be used for both teachers and instructors hereafter) and policy makers. To start with, teachers should be aware of their own culture, traditions and worldviews, and those of learners from diverse backgrounds. They should be aware of that they might have presumptions and prejudices towards learners from diverse backgrounds. Teachers' awareness of their own backgrounds and prejudices enables them not only to be more sensitive about diverse groups and accept differences, but also to realize how these affect the student-teacher interactions, classroom management, learning and teaching processes, and assessment. Therefore, they need to acknowledge that when they step into the classroom, they carry all this repertoire there.

This study revealed that instructors attribute an essential role to experience in constructing knowledge about learners from diverse backgrounds, and learning to manage them efficiently. There are studies which indicate that novice teachers tend to find teaching classrooms with learners from diverse backgrounds more challenging, and they

feel more reluctant about teaching these classrooms. Hence, teachers should acknowledge that experience has a significant role in learning to cope with these students. Another implication that the present study provides for teachers is that different learners from diverse backgrounds might have different traits. Thus, teachers should be open to learning about the characteristics of different learners, and accommodate a teaching approach that considers various needs of these learners.

The study proved evidence that although the majority of instructors feel knowledgeable about teaching learners from diverse linguistic and cultural backgrounds, there are also those who lack the necessary knowledge. Therefore, a significant implication of the study is that in-service teacher training programs can be held to help teachers gain more awareness, knowledge and skill about the issue. Another implication of the study is that considering the rising number of learners from diverse linguistic and cultural backgrounds in education institutions in our country, pre-service teacher education programs should provide prospective teachers with a separate course on multicultural teaching competencies.

With respect to the positive attitudes of the instructors towards diversity, the study suggests that teachers should consider diversity as richness and an opportunity both for themselves and for their learners. For instance, it can be an opportunity for professional development and learning about differences for teachers. Similarly, it can be help learners communicate in target language, learn about differences, learn to be tolerant and develop mutual respect with others. A further implication of the study is that teachers should acknowledge that they can be a positive role model for their learners on the issue, and that their attitude toward learners from diverse backgrounds can shape the attitude of their learners.

As for the skill of teaching linguistically and culturally diverse learners, the study provides evidence that teachers need to have various skills such as being able to bring learners from diverse backgrounds together, integrate diverse cultural elements into their teaching, provide a caring and safe environment for all learners, treat and assess different students equally, help learners from diverse backgrounds adapt to school and/or classroom and improve their self-confidence. In doing these, teachers should also be able to cooperate with their colleagues. Additionally, as suggested earlier, in-service teacher training programs and courses in pre-service teacher education programs should focus on developing these skills.

A final implication of the study is that the teachers who are already working, and

prospective teachers should be aware of that they might face numerous challenges in teaching linguistically and culturally diverse learners such as learners' lack of local and target languages, lack of classroom participation and conflicts regarding cultural, religious and political issues. However, they should also be able to develop various strategies to cope with these challenges.

6.4. Suggestions for Further Research

In this research inquiry, in addition to the quantitative data collection and analysis tools, qualitative research methods and observation of in-class practices were implemented. In this regard, the research questions have been addressed from a triangulated inquiry of mixed methods and an in-depth analysis of the research topic has been conducted to reveal various aspects of the issue. When the literature is examined, it is seen that the results obtained within the scope of quantitative research sometimes do not coincide with the results of qualitative research or actual in-class practices on the same subject. Therefore, an inclusion of qualitative and quantitative research is highly recommended in order to compare the fit between quantitative and qualitative research and reveal the insights of the topic from different perspectives.

The data obtained in this study are based on EFL instructors' perceptions and views of their own competencies, and examples of their actual classroom practices in the context of multicultural education. There might be a difference between the perceptions of competencies and in-class practices of instructors in various teaching fields. Therefore, a similar mixed methods research inquiry might be carried out with teachers or instructors from different fields of study.

A further recommendation for further study might be focusing on the reflections of students from diverse backgrounds in regards to in-class practices, possible challenges they experience, and instructors' and local students' attitudes towards them. This kind of a study might also be carried out using in-class observations and interviews in order to explore the issue in depth.

Last but not least, as some of the participating instructors claimed to have needed some sort of assistance from the experts in the field through in-service training sessions or academic lectures throughout teacher training programs, a further study might be based on an experimental or quasi-experimental research inquiry through in-service training for instructors or teachers. Participating teachers' or instructors' perceptions of their

multicultural competence in terms of awareness, knowledge, attitude, skills, challenges, and strategies might be addressed through pre-test and post-test designs at the beginning and at the end of the training session.

The final recommendation is that multicultural education needs to be considered more carefully especially in language teacher education programs at universities as culture and diversity are fundamental and inextricable aspects of language teaching. Hence, practicum sessions ought to include multicultural teaching competencies as a series of mandatory courses for all teacher candidates studying in language teaching programs.

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1. Critical Multicultural Education Teacher Competencies Scale

		Strongly disagree	Disagree	Partly agree	Agree	Strongly agree
1)	I can help fix the issues in my class stemming from the differences of students.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
2)	I can help my students analyze their prejudices and biases.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
3)	Wrong information gained on culturally different groups is not free choice.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
4)	My ethnic origin does not affect learning-teaching processes.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
5)	It is necessary to change teaching materials to ensure equality in education.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
6)	Culture and language play a role in interpersonal communication.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
7)	Different students do not have different styles of thinking, behavior and speaking.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
8)	I can analyze the prejudiced and biased in teaching materials.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
9)	I can develop appropriate teaching materials for a multicultural classroom.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
10)	Students who are culturally different do not learn in a different way.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
11)	I can continuously consult with my colleagues on the suitable teaching methods for different students.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
12)	I can organize activities that can improve the self-confidence of different students.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
13)	Different traits of students do not affect their learning-teaching process.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
14)	I have prejudices stemming from my ethnic background.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
15)	I treat different students equally.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
16)	I am aware of my negative feelings about different students.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
17)	There is no difference between the culture of different students and that of the school.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
18)	I can organize activities in my class that teach respect for different groups.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
19)	When offering a new piece of information, I can take into account the cultural background of students from different groups.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
20)	Multicultural education does not necessitate changing the teaching goals.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
21)	I can help my students understand the perspectives of ethnic and cultural groups who are different.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
22)	I respect the religions/spiritual beliefs of my students.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
23)	My cultural background does not affect my perception of events.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

24)	In my class, I present behaviors that consider differences and support diversity	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
25)	I have knowledge about my ethnic origin.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
26)	Discussing ethnic traditions and beliefs causes divisions and debates between students from different cultures.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
27)	Equal learning opportunities should be offered to different students at schools.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
28)	I can help my students view historical and contemporary events from different perspectives.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
29)	Ethnic origins of students are not influential on their behaviours.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
30)	In group activities, I can form groups bringing together students from different groups.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
31)	I can continuously review my feelings and ideas about different students.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
32)	In order to meet the needs of different students, I can adapt various teaching methods.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
33)	Different ethnic and cultural groups should be represented in curricula and textbooks.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
34)	I can develop teaching methods that will eliminate negative discourses on different groups.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
35)	I do not reflect my racial beliefs, attitudes and emotions on people from different ethnic groups.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
36)	I can plan teaching based on the personal and cultural knowledge of different students.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
37)	I know that I am biased when evaluating different students.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
38)	I can interfere with school practices that might harm different students.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
39)	I can develop close relations with the families of my different students.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
40)	I do not support teaching their mother tongue to students.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
41)	The aim of education is to transfer social culture without change.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
42)	I can understand what my different students want to say from their attitudes.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Appendix 2. Grant of Permission to Use the scale (CMETCS)

Ölçek Kullanımı (Doktora Tezi)
Akin GÜRBÜZ

Gönderildi: 17 Ekim 2020 Cumartesi 12:17
Kime: yasemin.acarciftci@yeniyuzyil.edu.tr

Merhaba Yasemin Hocam,

Ben Akın Gürbüz, Muğla Sıtkı Koçman Üniversitesi Yabancı Diller Yüksekokulu'nda Öğretim Görevlisiyim. Yaklaşık 1,5 kadar önce "Türkiye'de Yükseköğretim Kurumlarında Yabancı Dil Olarak İngilizce Öğreten Öğretim Elemanlarının Çok Kültürlü Öğretim Yetkinliklerinin İncelenmesi" konulu doktora tezim için "Eleştirel Çokkültürlü Eğitim Öğretmen Yeterlikleri Ölçeği"nizi kullanmak için izin talep almıştım. Fakat kurum değişikliğinden dolayı Gaziantep Üniversitesi'nden Muğla Sıtkı Koçman Üniversitesi'ne geçiş yaptığım için akingurbuz@gantep.edu.tr hesabım kapatıldı ve ne yazık ki onay mailiniz de kapanan hesapla birlikte silindi. Şuanda tezimi tamamladım ve yaklaşık 2-3 ay kadar sonra savunmasını yapacağız. Sizden, ölçeğin kullanımıyla ilgili tekrar izin talep ediyorum.

Saygılarımla,

Akın GÜRBÜZ
Muğla Sıtkı Koçman Üniversitesi
Yabancı Diller Yüksekokulu

Appendix 3. Semi-structured Interview Questions

1. What kind of groups/people are you working with? What kind of diversity do you face in your work? How would you define diversity?
    - **a.** Tell about those positive experiences that diversity brings to your work.
    - **b.** Tell about the challenging or problematic situations that diversity brings to your work.
2. What kinds of strategies do you use to overcome such challenging situations? How do you solve the problems?
3. Do you get any support for solving these problems? If yes, please specify the kind of support do you get.
4. Do you feel knowledgeable enough to handle cultural and linguistic diversity in your classroom?
5. Do you feel skilled enough to handle cultural and linguistic diversity in your classroom?
6. Have you ever been involved in any multicultural activities (cultural competency trainings, workshops, courses, conferences, etc.)? If yes, please give more detail about them.
7. Do you take into account cultural and linguistic backgrounds of your students regarding following issues? If yes, please specify how?
    - **a.** learning methods
    - **b.** contents of teaching
    - **c.** learning material

Appendix 4. Consent Form for Instructors

GAZİANTEP ÜNİVERSİTESİ
Yabancı Diller Yüksekokulu

GAZIANTEP UNIVERSITY
School of Foreign Languages

Sayın Meslektaşımız,

Bilindiği üzere gelişen ve değişen teknolojiyle birlikte yabancı dil öğretimi de gelişmekte ve değişmektedir. İletişim teknolojilerinin ve ulaşım araçlarının gelişmesiyle birlikte dil kullanımında verimli etkileşim büyük önem kazanmıştır. Bu anlamda öğretmenlerin mesleki gelişimini sürekli ve etkin kılmak adına sınıf-içi gözlemler kaçınılmaz hale gelmiştir. Bu görüşme ve/veya gözlemlerdeki amaç öğretim görevlisinin sınıf içi uygulamaları, dersi işleyiş biçimi, kullandığı teknikler gibi birçok etmeni de dahil ederek süreci nasıl daha iyiye taşıyabiliriz sorusuna cevap bulmaya çalışmaktır.

Videolar ve/veya ses kayıtları kesinlikle üçüncü kişilerle paylaşılmayacak, sadece akademik amaçlar doğrultusunda kullanılacaktır. Dersi kayıt altına alınan veya dersi gözlemleyen meslektaşımız olarak bu süreci onaylamanız bizim için çok önemlidir. Eğer onaylıyorsanız lütfen altta belirtilen kısma adınızı ve soyadınızı yazıp imzalayınız.

Saygılarımla,

Öğr.Gör.Akın GÜRBÜZ
23.10.2018

Öğretim Görevlisinin Adı, Soyadı:

İmzası:

Appendix 5. Consent Form for Students

GAZİANTEP ÜNİVERSİTESİ
Yabancı Diller Yüksekokulu

GAZIANTEP UNIVERSITY
School of Foreign Languages

Sevgili Öğrenciler,

Bilindiği üzere gelişen ve değişen teknolojiyle birlikte yabancı dil öğretimi de gelişmekte ve değişmektedir. İletişim teknolojilerinin ve ulaşım araçlarının gelişmesiyle birlikte dil kullanımında etkili etkileşim büyük önem kazanmıştır. Bu anlamda öğretmenlerin mesleki gelişimini sürekli ve etkin kılmak adına sınıf-içi gözlemler kaçınılmaz hale gelmiştir. Bu gözlemlerdeki amaç kesinlikle sizin yabancı dili kullanırken yapacağınız yanlışlara odaklanmak değil, süreci nasıl daha iyiye taşıyabiliriz sorusuna cevap bulmaya çalışmaktır.

Videolar ve ses kayıtları kesinlikle üçüncü kişilerle paylaşılmayacak, sadece akademik amaçlar doğrultusunda kullanılacaktır. Kayıt yapılan dersliklerde bulunan öğrenciler olarak bu süreci onaylamanız bizim için çok önemlidir. Eğer onaylıyorsanız lütfen altta belirtilen kısma adınızı ve soyadınızı yazıp imzalayınız.

Saygılarımla,

Öğr.Gör.Akın GÜRBÜZ
23.10.2018

Öğrencinin adı-soyadı:

İmzası:

Appendix 6. Grant of Permission from the School of Foreign Languages

Evrak Tarih ve Sayısı: 06/03/2017-14006

T.C.
GAZİANTEP ÜNİVERSİTESİ
Yabancı Diller Yüksekokulu

Sayı :35914063/108.99/
Konu :Bilimsel Çalışma İzni

Sayın Okut. Akın GÜRBÜZ

İlgi :03/03/2017 tarihli, 13607 sayılı ve "Bilimsel Çalışma İZni" konulu yazı

İlgi dilekçeye istinaden Yüksekokulumuzdaki bir sınıfta, öğrenci ve öğretim elemanlarının yazılı izniyle video kaydı ile gözlem yapma talebiniz uygun bulunmuştur.

Gereğini rica ederim.

Yrd.Doç.Dr. Emrah CİNKARA
Yabancı Diller Yüksekokulu Müdürü

Evrakı Doğrulamak İçin : http://193.140.136.124/enVision/Dogrula/NF3H6HV
Yabancı Diller Yüksekokulu
Tel: 0 (342) 360 15 32
E-Posta: : yabdil@gantep.edu.tr
Ayrıntılı bilgi için irtibat:
Faks: 0 (342) 360 15 32
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